FINAL REPORT

USAID/EGYPT WORKFORCE IMPROVEMENT AND SKILL ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

FINAL REPORT

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>3R</td>
<td>Recruit, Retrain, and Retain</td>
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<tr>
<td>AASTMT</td>
<td>The Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport</td>
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<td>ABA</td>
<td>Alexandria Business Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>AHK Egypt</td>
<td>German-Arab Chamber of Industry and Commerce</td>
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<td>ASRT</td>
<td>Academy of Scientific Research and Technology</td>
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<td>ATS</td>
<td>Applied Technology School</td>
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<td>BAC</td>
<td>Business Advisory Council</td>
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<td>BDSC</td>
<td>Business Development Service Center</td>
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<td>CAOA</td>
<td>Central Agency for Organizations and Administration</td>
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<td>CAPMAS</td>
<td>Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics</td>
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<td>CBA</td>
<td>Capacity building activity</td>
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<td>CEQAT</td>
<td>Center for the Enhancement of Quality Assurance of Technical Education</td>
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<td>CO</td>
<td>Contracting Officer</td>
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<td>COR</td>
<td>Contracting Officer’s Representative</td>
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<td>CUTE</td>
<td>Central Unit for Transition to Employment</td>
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<td>GOE</td>
<td>Government of Egypt</td>
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<td>ECP</td>
<td>Egypt Competitiveness Project</td>
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<td>EEAG</td>
<td>Enabling Environment Advisory Group</td>
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<td>Enabling Environment Unit</td>
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<td>EFIA</td>
<td>Egyptian Federation of Investors Association</td>
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<td>EMMP</td>
<td>Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan</td>
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<td>Egyptian National Competitiveness Council</td>
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<td>EPC</td>
<td>Economic Partnership Council</td>
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<td>ERCU</td>
<td><em>Ebdaa Rehletak</em> Central Unit</td>
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<td>ERU</td>
<td><em>Ebdaa Rehletak</em> Unit</td>
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<td>ETQAAN</td>
<td>Egyptian Technical Quality Assurance and Accreditation National Authority</td>
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<td>E&amp;I</td>
<td>Entrepreneurship and Innovation</td>
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<td>E&amp;LMI</td>
<td>Employment and Labor Market Information</td>
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<tr>
<td>FEI</td>
<td>Federation of Egyptian Industries</td>
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<td>GiZ</td>
<td>German International Cooperation Agency</td>
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<td>HR</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
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<td>LMI</td>
<td>Labor Market Information</td>
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<td>LOC</td>
<td>Letter of Cooperation</td>
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<td>LUTE</td>
<td>Local Unit for Transition to Employment</td>
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<td>MoETE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Technical Education</td>
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<td>MoLD</td>
<td>Ministry of Local Development</td>
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<td>MoSS</td>
<td>Ministry of Social Solidarity</td>
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<td>MoTI</td>
<td>Ministry of Trade and Industry</td>
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<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<td>MTC</td>
<td>Management &amp; Training Corporation</td>
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<td>MTS</td>
<td>Modern Technical School</td>
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<td>NAPPP</td>
<td>National Association of Peer Program Professionals</td>
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<td>NAQAAE</td>
<td>National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation for Education</td>
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<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental organization</td>
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<td>NREA</td>
<td>New and Renewable Energy Authority</td>
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<td>OSH</td>
<td>Occupational Safety and Health</td>
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<td>PAT</td>
<td>Professional Academy for Teachers</td>
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<td>PESTEL</td>
<td>Political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal</td>
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<td>PIP</td>
<td>Productivity Improvement Program</td>
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<td>PVTID</td>
<td>Productivity and Vocational Training Department (under MoTI)</td>
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<td>RMG</td>
<td>Ready-made garments</td>
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<td>SEED</td>
<td>Strengthening Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development</td>
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<td>SMEs</td>
<td>Small and Medium Enterprises</td>
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<td>SUTE</td>
<td>School Unit for Transition to Employment</td>
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<td>SWOT</td>
<td>Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats</td>
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<td>TAR</td>
<td>Training Achievement Record</td>
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<td>TCF</td>
<td>Textile Consolidation Fund</td>
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<td>TOT</td>
<td>Training of Trainers</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and vocational education and training</td>
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<tr>
<td>TVETA</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education Teachers Academy</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIDO</td>
<td>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</td>
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US  United States
USAID  United States Agency for International Development
VTEC  Vocational Training and Employment Center
WISE  Workforce Improvement and Skill Enhancement project
I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Workforce Improvement and Skill Enhancement (WISE) Project, implemented by MTC International Development Holding Company, LLC (MTC) and its partners, concluded at the end of February 2021, after over five years of implementation. The project was extended through May 31, 2021, only for disposition of property. This final project report describes activities and major achievements that took place from November 1, 2015 through February 28, 2021.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

WISE supported and collaborated with a variety of public and private sector entities as it provided training and capacity building for stakeholders and counterparts through three result areas: Result A focused on upgrading technical secondary education to meet the needs of the market in selected governorates and sectors; Result B focused on improving skills and productivity within the workforce and private sector in selected sectors and governorates; and Result C focused on supporting an enabling environment for improved labor market efficiency.

To achieve the objectives of the three result areas, WISE fostered strong working relationships across a wide array of partners. These included the Ministry of Education and Technical Education (MoETE), the Ministry of Local Development (MoLD), and the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) at the national and governorate levels, the Egyptian National Competitiveness Council (ENCC), the Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI), the Ministry of Trade and Industry’s Productivity and Vocational Training Department (PVTD), the Textile Consolidation Fund (TCF), a variety of private sector companies, and 64 technical schools across 11 governorates. This diverse group of partners was key to establishing a strong framework for WISE implementation over the course of the project. Of particular note are the lasting connections that were made between the Egyptian private sector and the technical secondary public schools. Such connections ensured that WISE and the schools remained current with labor market trends and the skills sought by employers looking to hire new employees. WISE’s engagement with local Egyptian partners succeeded in building their capacity and in providing room for local ownership, which in turn ensured sustainability beyond the life of the project.

Over the five years of implementation, the WISE project trained thousands of technical school teachers and leaders, produced a labor market study that led to several position papers on key labor market efficiency topics, provided capacity building training and assistance for multiple private sector entities, and guided the establishment and/or strengthening of structures that will carry on much of the work
begun under WISE. When the COVID-19 outbreak in March 2020 threatened to overshadow the final year of the WISE project, the resilience and commitment of teachers, students, government counterparts, private sector partners, and the WISE staff kept the project on track.

During the final year, schools closed for the most part, travel was restricted, and in-person gatherings of any sort had to happen in a virtual format or not at all. In response, WISE collaborated with its local partners and rapidly adapted to the situation. For the technical school teachers and staff, WISE offered training sessions on remote and distance learning techniques and how to use online education platforms to better communicate with students. Although Internet accessibility was inconsistent for many students and teachers and added to the challenge remote learning posed, WISE helped facilitate access when possible and supported teachers and students as they came up with creative ways to stay connected with each other. Using social media options, students helped their peers with everything from school registrations to learning about best practices to stay healthy and safe during the pandemic. Entrepreneurial-minded students built personal protective equipment and disinfecting devices for sale or donation and teachers created informal competitions to keep students engaged using a variety of online forums. Both teachers and students took the time to educate their peers and strengthen their fluency in technology. WISE also undertook the task of digitizing specific curricular materials to help the MoETE prepare for the continuation of online learning.

Under Results B and C, professionals from the public and private sectors adapted to virtual meetings as a means to design and share critical documents digitally. WISE helped facilitate these conversations at various levels, offering virtual trainings and coordinating online meetings with stakeholders to maintain progress on key project initiatives. Because of the adaptability of WISE’s leadership, staff, and partners, a relatively small number of activities had to be postponed or cancelled due to public health and safety protocols. Throughout the year, WISE kept stakeholders at all levels engaged with the project and positive about its progress. By using creative and cutting-edge solutions to the unique challenges of the project’s final year, WISE maintained momentum and ensured the best possible outcomes for the project under these unprecedented circumstances.

**Result A Major Achievements**

Under Result A, WISE selected 60 schools in 11 Governorates, through a competitive process, with which the project would work to establish and build capacity of the Unit for Transition to Employment (UTE) model. This model comprises three entities: (1) the School Units for Transition to Employment (SUTEs), (2) Local Units for Transition to Employment (LUTEs) at the governorate level, and (3) a Central Unit for Transition to Employment (CUTE) at the central level. Each unit consists of five departments:

- **Training and Skills Enhancement**: WISE reinforced teaching and training skills for over 1,200 school administrators and teachers whose newly acquired skills attracted large numbers of students to attend extra-curricular classes and led to the MoETE’s decision to incorporate new soft skills courses into technical education study plans.

- **Career Guidance and Counseling**: 73,427 students participated in career guidance training conducted by the SUTEs. The extremely positive impact of this training led to the formal adoption of career guidance classes in technical school study plans.
Entrepreneurship and Innovation: 67,741 students participated in entrepreneurship and innovation training. Many of these students showcased their new skills by competing and earning the top awards in national competitions such as the NAWAH Social Entrepreneurship competition. In coordination with MoETE and the donor community, WISE improved on this training by developing a unified entrepreneurship and innovation curriculum. As with the career guidance curriculum, MoETE formally adopted and incorporated this course into technical school study plans. In Year 4, to further assist graduates, WISE published a referral handbook that links students and graduates with financing platforms for entrepreneurs, technical opportunities, resources, incubators and accelerators throughout Egypt.

Employment and Labor Market Information (LMI): With support from WISE, the SUTEs secured employment for 33,128 graduates and in-company training for 19,479 students. To help MoETE align technical education with the labor market, the LMI UTE members mapped over 3,000 employers and produced LMI reports for each of the 11 WISE governorates.

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH): WISE introduced safety measures and training into WISE schools that meet international and Egyptian standards. The successful introduction of basic awareness training led to the establishment of an OSH department within the UTE model as of Year 2.

Among the many other accomplishments under Result A are the following:

Quality standards for technical education. WISE developed internationally benchmarked quality standards for technical education, thereby strengthening school governance and management. This was the first time in Egypt that such standards had been developed for technical schools.

Competency-based diploma programs. A core element of the WISE project approach was the introduction of the competency-based model into Egypt’s technical education system. In collaboration with MoETE and industry experts, WISE created competency-based curricula and developed diploma programs for new demand-driven specializations in Logistics and New and Renewable Energy. WISE completed the development of a competency-based curriculum for the Logistics three-year diploma in Year 3 of the project and the first cohort received their diplomas from schools in Port Said and Ismailia in July 2019. WISE was very proud to report that all 55 graduates had employment offers from private sector logistics companies upon their graduation. WISE developed the three-year competency-based curriculum for a Renewable Energy diploma in time for the academic year 2017/2018. It was launched in three schools with the first cohort graduating in 2020. To sustain the partnership with the private sector...
sector, WISE successfully collaborated with the Governor of Aswan and MoETE, to establish the Benban Advisory Board, the first public-private partnership board of trustees for a technical school.

The COVID-19 outbreak led the MoETE to request assistance with digitizing certain curricula to facilitate online learning. WISE responded to this request and oversaw the digitization of the renewable energy and logistics first year curricula.

**Innovation clubs and student competitions.** In Year 3, WISE established 24 innovation clubs, 10 of which were equipped with fabrication lab equipment. During the same year, WISE launched *Fanni Mobtaker*, an innovation competition that was open to students from all of the WISE-supported schools. This was the first entrepreneurship and innovation competition dedicated to technical education students and the largest innovation competition held in Africa and the Middle East. The competition proved to be extremely popular among students as well as within the private sector, and represented a successful and first of its kind public-private partnership to support innovation in Egypt’s technical schools. WISE cooperated with MoETE, the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), Eitesal, and Ideasepace to implement *Fanni Mobtaker*, which took place three years in a row. The final iteration was conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 outbreak. Applications for the competition totaled 1,364 in 2018, 2,144 in 2019, and 282 in 2020.

**Peer Helping Program.** In Year 3, WISE piloted the Peer Helping Program (PHP) with the goal of helping students with problem solving, dispute resolution, guidance on decision making, and tutoring support. WISE trained Peer Helping teams that included teachers and student volunteers, and worked with them to implement the program. During COVID-19, PHP students played a critical role in keeping their peers connected through social media and provided information about safe and healthy practices as well as assisting with academic and social support. The PHP program was so successful that by the end of the project it was being implemented in both WISE and non-WISE supported schools. Over the life of the project, WISE introduced PHP in 15 schools and trained a total of 921 students, 61% of whom are females.

**UTE Portal.** In Year 3, WISE launched a portal with multiple platforms within the MoETE website to serve as an educational social networking platform for the UTE members, administrators, teachers, and students. The portal was upgraded in Year 5 to serve as a distance learning platform for technical education during school closures.
Salhia Applied Technology School. In Year 4, WISE partnered with Salhia Investment and Development Company to establish the Salhia Applied Technology School (ATS) in Sharquia with new competency-based specializations in agriculture/water irrigation technology and animal/poultry production technology. This was the first applied technology school for agriculture in the technical education system in Egypt and the first ATS to use a competency-based education approach. In spite of the COVID-19 challenges, Salhia completed its academic year using online teaching and training.

Modern Technical School model. WISE laid the groundwork for MoETE to establish a Modern Technical School (MTS) model, a core pillar in MoETE’s technical education reform strategy. WISE designed and developed bylaws and operational manuals that will serve as the guide for establishing the MTS. The manuals include topics related to how to set up the infrastructure for these schools in terms of governance, budgeting, curricula, accreditation, IT, and more. The manuals represent a pragmatic tool to guide MoETE in the modernization of its technical schools. The manuals were developed in continuous dialogue with the government, and in coordination with relevant members of the donor community.

In addition to the MTS work, WISE also supported MoETE’s technical education reform plan by working with the donor community throughout Year 5 to prepare the foundation for the establishment of quality management institutions and a technical teachers’ academy.

Result B Major Achievements

Early in the project, WISE completed the *Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study*, primarily to validate the governorates and sectors in which WISE operated. A summary report was published and distributed widely among those working on economic growth in Egypt. The study was presented at a convening in May 2017, which brought together almost 200 stakeholders from the public and private sectors. The study findings were discussed and recommendations made for priority actions to address constraints to labor market efficiency. Ultimately, these recommendations helped inform the agenda of the Enabling Environment Unit and Advisory Group that are discussed under Result C.
Throughout the project, Result B provided training and technical assistance to enhance the productive capacity of private firms, improve their ability to attract and retain skilled employees, and improve their in-house employee training systems and processes. In addition to providing these services, WISE also succeeded in fully institutionalizing its three major Result B programs into Egyptian partner entities—a key to sustainability. The three programs include (1) the *Ebdaa Rehletak* job seeker program, (2) the Productivity Improvement Program, and (3) the Recruit, Retrain, Retain program. Private sector firms in Egypt partnered with WISE and Egyptian host entities to access these programs and reap their benefits. As part of the institutionalization process, WISE trained host entity staff and affiliated consultants so that there is a cadre of experts to carry on these programs without WISE support.

**Ebdaa Rehletak Job Seeker Program.** WISE designed and implemented the *Ebdaa Rehletak* ("Start Your Journey") program to support selected out-of-school job seekers in WISE sectors and governorates and connect them to factory-based training and jobs. The program included job readiness training for the job seekers, training of mentors inside the companies, and follow-up with the job seekers and the companies where they were employed. A total of 429 job seekers were gainfully employed through this program. Although WISE faced some challenges in finding appropriate hosting partners for *Ebdaa Rehletak*, by the end of Year 4, the program was being implemented by the Ministry of Trade and Industry’s Productivity and Vocational Training Department (PVTD) (Gharbiya, Damietta, and Sharquia), SEKEM (Sharquia), and the Arab Academy for Science, Technology, and Maritime Transport in Alexandria. In the summer of 2019, the Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS) expressed its interest in establishing a central *Ebdaa Rehletak* Unit (ERU) and an MOU was signed within weeks. By early 2020 WISE had trained six select ERU members to act as multipliers and train members of ERUs to be established by MoSS in other governorates. By the close of the project, MoSS had established and trained an ERU in each of six governorates.

**Productivity Improvement Program (PIP).** From WISE’s inception to project close, a total of 263 production supervisors and managers from 34 different companies participated in the five-day Productivity Enhancement Training and learned about strategies to improve productivity in their companies. A total of 12 companies completed the full PIP program and are now implementing productivity improvement strategies on their own. All reported positive results from this approach. During Year 4, WISE signed MOUs with TCF in Alexandria and FEI to advance the sustainability of the PIP program. WISE also produced and distributed a PIP manual to its partners and business associations to allow wider access to this practical program.

**Recruit, Retrain, Retain (3R) Program.** In Year 4, WISE completed implementation of its 3R program after having trained 143 human resources personnel from 47 companies in basic HR concepts and practices and worked with 31 companies to establish internal HR taskforces. Of the 31 firms that participated in all phases of 3R, 30 companies witnessed an improvement of their retention rate by an
average of 40%. In addition, with WISE’s assistance, FEI established a 3R Function within their Business Development Services Center that will host and manage the 3R program. WISE produced and distributed a 3R toolbox to all its partners and updated it periodically based on lessons learned through implementation, including during the pandemic.

Companies that have partnered with WISE on both the PIP and 3R programs have seen significant results—a testament to the effectiveness of the WISE interventions and incentive for the companies to permanently adopt the new strategies and processes they have learned.

In addition to the three main activities under Result B, in Year 2, WISE began an 18-month capacity building activity for the Alexandria Business Association’s Vocational Training and Employment Center (VTEC). The objective was to strengthen the institutional capacity of the VTEC. WISE accomplished this by developing operational manuals, upgrading VTEC workshops, enhancing trainers’ training skills, curricula development, and upgrading infrastructure systems. One result was that VTEC obtained ISO certification for quality management and BS OHSAS certification for occupational safety and health management.

To support its private sector partners during COVID-19, WISE developed a guide advising private companies on best practices for operations during the pandemic. The guide addresses fundamentals about the virus, as well as strategies for workplace management, remote work, and work planning during times of crisis. The guide proved to be very popular and was produced in both Arabic and English.

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In November of 2020, WISE held an event to highlight the importance of engaging with the private sector. The event included a panel discussion, showcased the successful partnerships that WISE achieved through the Ebdaa Rehletak, PIP, and 3R programs, and recognized achievements made by its private sector partners.

**Result C Major Achievements**

Result C’s primary objective was to enhance the capacity of Egyptian stakeholders to identify and address barriers to labor market efficiency at the local and national levels. In partnership with the MoLD, WISE established, at the local level, the Economic Partnership Council (EPC) in Beni Suef. At the national level, WISE partnered with ENCC to establish the Enabling Environment Unit (EEU) and Enabling Environment Advisory Group (EEAG).

The EEU was officially established in Year 3 as a research and support unit within the ENCC to promote enabling environment activities in support of labor market efficiency. WISE provided support to the EEU in developing communication tools such as the labor market web portal where labor market data can be collected and disseminated to various stakeholders. The EEAG was established the
following year as a subcommittee of the rejuvenated ENCC Business Advisory Council. The EEAG was made up of a select group of influential sector stakeholders whose organizations would be able to identify and advocate for policy reforms related to improved labor market efficiency.

As mentioned under Result B, WISE produced a *Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study* and corresponding report in Year 2. The study identified a menu of challenges and recommendations to labor market efficiency. Based on these findings and analyses, WISE and the ENCC working through the EEU and EEAG developed three position papers: (1) encouraging female participation in the labor market, (2) minimizing the informal sector, and (3) institutionalizing the dual education system. In 2019, the position papers were distributed and discussed during an EEAG-sponsored national conference on “Enabling Business Environment: Towards More Reforms in the Labor Market”. Conference participants agreed to implement a slate of recommendations as presented in the position papers to improve labor market efficiency. This conference marked an important milestone as it facilitated input from a broad range of stakeholders—input that was critical to drafting a policy advocacy strategy to foster an enabling environment for market-driven workforce development.

Also in Year 4, WISE and MoLD established the model EPC in Beni Suef, in cooperation with the Governor of Beni Suef. WISE began this process with the development of an economic survey that identified the most promising sectors for economic growth in the governorate. The sectors identified were agriculture, industrial mining, SMEs/handicrafts, and tourism. The survey included a mapping of the most influential stakeholders in each of these sectors. Based on this survey and WISE/MoLD recommendations, the Governor of Beni Suef issued a decree establishing, for the first time in Egypt, an EPC board, naming representatives, and clearly defining the board member functions.

WISE engaged local experts to develop an economic strategy for each of the growth sectors identified and an overarching general economic strategy that prioritized projects and assigned key performance indicators for their implementation. By the end of Year 5, all of the sector strategies had been completed. The EPC reviewed all the strategy documents at various stages of development, submitted recommendations, identified and started addressing local labor market challenges, and elevated other challenges to the EEU to be addressed on a national level.

In December of 2020, WISE held a national conference to share the success of the EPC model that WISE introduced in Beni Suef. The EPC model succeeded in establishing a mechanism for the stakeholders within a given governorate to contribute to a unified development strategy. Though this model, the government provided a platform for dialogue for all the economic players within the governorate, including the public and private sectors, as well as non-governmental organizations and academia. Moreover, the impact produced by the initiative encouraged the GOE to capitalize on the model by contributing to the implementation of the identified economic development projects, and promoting the roll-out of the model to other governorates.

**Private Sector Engagement and Coordination in the TVET Sector**

As is evident from the project achievements described above, partnerships, engaging with the private sector, and coordinating across the TVET sector has been an effective approach for the WISE project. Competency-based curricula development, job fairs organized in conjunction with the *Ebdaa Rehletak* program, the institutionalization of the PIP and 3R programs in Egyptian entities, the establishment of the Salhia Applied Technology School, and the work of the EPC and EEAG to give voice to policy issues related to improving the enabling environment for workforce development all relied on
coordination and cooperation of public and private sector entities that intersect with technical education system in Egypt.

Since its inception, WISE has worked to link the supply and demand of the labor market by connecting the private sector and the TVET system. In doing so, 62 MOUs were signed to engage the private sector in the school system and provide UTEs with networks to rely on in connecting students to employers. Throughout the life of the project, SUTEs worked closely with more than 150 companies through the employment and internships activities. Despite the COVID-19 challenges, in Year 5 alone, the SUTEs were successful in employing 5,981 graduates and providing 2,428 internship opportunities for students.

WISE was designed, in part, to bridge the divide between the TVET system and the private sector. Private sector engagement ensured the relevance of the interventions across all fronts, from improving TVET skill provisioning at one end to improving overall private sector competitiveness at the other. Private sector engagement was pivotal in the design and implementation of the new Logistics and New and Renewable Energy specializations. The two specializations were chosen based on private sector recommendations to fill gaps that had not been addressed prior to WISE. Relevant private sector companies participated in the workshops that were held to identify the competencies needed, devise the assessment materials, and review the final output of the curricula content.

The private sector supported both specializations by providing internships and on-the-job training for students and teachers. A partnership in Aswan with the private firm Alcazar Energy served as a model for private sector engagement. Through the arrangement, 25 teachers and 96 students in the renewable energy diploma program from Benban Technical Secondary School learned technical skills and experienced a real work environment where classroom learning was put to use. The Fanni Mobtaker innovation competitions would not have been possible without the partnership with the private sector—first to set up fabrication labs in selected technical schools and then to provide sponsorship and technical support for the actual competitions. These are two examples of public-private partnerships that not only are beneficial to the students and teachers but also provide positive visibility for the technical education sector.

In a joint MOU with MoETE and the Salhia for Investment and Development Company, WISE embarked on a new public-private partnership to establish the Salhia Applied Technology School. The Salhia for Investment and Development Company adopted a public agricultural technical school and renovated the school’s infrastructure and facilities, provided incentives for teachers and students, and is contributing to the technical training of students and teachers by offering internships and in-company training opportunities. WISE facilitated the design and roll-out of competency-based curricula for two new agro-industry specializations. The school will continue as a public-private partnership between
MoETE and Salhia for Investment and Development using a competency-based education approach that aligns with MoETE’s planned reform of the technical education system.

The understanding that the private sector is essential to economic growth was a founding principle of the EPC in Beni Suef. The EPC board members and MoLD representatives who participated in the 2019 U.S. study tour to North Carolina witnessed firsthand how cooperation and coordination among governments at all levels, technical education institutions, and the private sector can spur economic growth and enable a region to adjust to changing market demands.

Coordination among donors was also important to some of WISE’s achievements. The unified curricula for career guidance and entrepreneurship and innovation resulted from the joint effort of multiple international donors working with the MoETE. Support for some elements of the GOE’s technical education reform strategy, such as laying the groundwork for the quality assurance and teacher training entities, was also provided through the joint efforts of international donors with WISE taking the lead role.

Input from and ownership by multiple partners is essential to sustaining development efforts such as those undertaken by the WISE project. WISE is proud of the role it played in bringing together government, schools, business associations, non-governmental institutions, the private sector, and international donors. The connection between the technical education system and the private sector are stronger as a result.

GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Maintaining project momentum.** Development projects routinely experience delays and changes in work plan activities and being able to adjust is part of good project management. MTC’s WISE experience underscored the need to both gain leadership buy-in early in the project and to work at the “on-the-ground level” (directly with the teachers and school administrators) to avoid or minimize delays in implementation. Activities that required approvals or input from high level government officials were subject to the availability of such officials, changes in these positions, and/or GOE policy changes. WISE Result A activities were able to continue even when there were changes at the central MoETE because the project was working directly with the teachers at the school level. Results B and C were more dependent on central Ministry input and approvals, which just made it more challenging to adhere to original work plan schedules. The best practice is therefore to work with civil service level government staff as well as the top officials so that when there are changes at the top, there are still staff within a ministry who understand and are engaged with the project.

2. **Partnerships and Sustainability.** As the WISE project has shown, partnerships between public and private sector entities are essential for sustaining project interventions. Establishing these partnerships requires dialogue and a willingness of all parties to commit to a common objective and share in the responsibility for and ownership of the activity. Private sector entities as well as government entities are better contributors and partners when they are involved in the project or activity design. Each player wants to gain from, not just give to the partnership, and the project management must assume the role of facilitator. The earlier in the design process that potential partner leaders are involved and on board, the more likely it is that the partnership
will succeed and the project activities will be sustained. Ideally, this begins when the overall project is designed and continues through project implementation.

3. **TVET educational system.** Although the MoETE is moving towards a more coordinated technical education system to include national quality standards and a centralized technical and vocational teacher training entity, the TVET system in Egypt is fragmented. Currently, Egypt does not have a national qualification framework for vocational and technical education. There are over 150 specializations in technical education, a large number of which are not aligned with labor market needs. While WISE initiated important steps toward resolving this dilemma (including the development of technical standards), it will be many years before the GOE’s technical education reform strategy can be fully realized. Establishing a sector skills council, for which WISE developed a framework and the EEAG is promoting, could contribute significantly in helping bring a coordinated structure to Egypt’s technical/vocational education system. MTC recommends that USAID coordinate with other donors and work together on advancing the establishment of a sector skills council.

4. **Limited GOE resources.** GOE funding of the TVET sector is very limited. School administrators and teachers are unable to meet all the needs of schools and students whether in maintaining the facilities and the equipment, securing on-going internet connections, or providing incentives. To ensure that USAID technical education interventions are long lasting and keep the beneficiaries engaged, in-kind incentives such as tablets or laptops, prepaid phone cards, or other classroom equipment could be provided in the early years through the project and agreements made with the GOE and other donors to continue these incentives in the later years of the project.

5. **Conducting surveys.** In Egypt, surveys cannot be conducted unless the questions are pre-approved by the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS). This requires a very lengthy process that is not usually compatible with project work plans and deadlines. To conduct a survey related to a labor market study in select governorates, WISE partnered with the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research, known as Baseera. Because of its good standing with CAPMAS, Baseera was able to obtain approval for its questionnaires within a reasonable period of time. However, engaging a firm to conduct all surveys rather than being able to use project staff or a consultant for this work is not always feasible and can be more costly. If surveys are unavoidable, it is recommended that projects engage one firm as a subcontractor that is experienced in navigating the approval process for conducting surveys. This is particularly important if a project is to conduct tracer studies to monitor the longer-term results of project interventions. MTC recommends that USAID avoid or limit the requirement for surveys in future projects.

6. **Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) data collection.** The collection of required data for MEL related to public education, and technical education specifically, is very challenging. In general, participants are apprehensive about sharing copies of their identification documents with US Government-funded programs. For Result A, project staff were not authorized to take attendance in public schools. Therefore, to report on training sessions conducted by WISE-trained teachers in technical schools, WISE had to accept data that was provided by the school administration. For Result B, WISE was unable to create a baseline at or collect data from the
private sector and had to depend on secondary data as provided by each company. Factories do not allow outsiders to inspect or to witness their operations. These challenges should be taken into account by the Data Quality Assessment teams in future projects.

7. **Online accessibility.** The corona virus pandemic forced technical education to move from traditional classrooms to remote learning modes. WISE training and coaching for teachers also moved to various online platforms. This approach revealed the serious gap in online accessibility for both teachers and students. While the GOE has taken responsibility for providing devices and internet connections for students, the teachers and school administrators have to rely on their own resources to participate in remote trainings and meetings as well as to teach classes online. Inadequate internet connectivity in the technical schools as well as in teachers’ homes, meant that many missed out on training opportunities that WISE offered. In the early months of the pandemic, teachers were eager to learn new ways to stay connected and continue their teaching online. However, without proper devices or connectivity, they faced numerous challenges. As remote learning will continue and likely increase in importance for the technical education sector in Egypt, support and incentives for teachers will be essential. As the novelty of online teaching wears off, teachers may be less willing to use their own resources to stay connected and accommodate online teaching. Future USAID projects should consider including incentives such as prepaid SIM cards for cell phones, prepaid USB internet connectors, and/or tablets or laptop computers.

The WISE project ended its final year of operation with many accomplishments and successful partnerships to celebrate. Over the five years of the project, WISE built on its many accomplishments, reinforced approaches and skills that participants and stakeholders learned and adopted, and undertook new initiatives that were aligned with the project goals and objectives. The WISE project has demonstrated how working together across government and private entities and with school, communities, and donors can bring about real change.

This report includes sections on results and achievements for each of the three result areas, cross-cutting themes, successful methodologies and approaches, and annexes where training program descriptions, monitoring and evaluation data and other supporting documentation can be found.
II. ACCOMPLISHMENTS BY RESULT AREA

RESULT A: UPGRADING TECHNICAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

Result A’s primary objective was to improve the quality of labor in Egypt by strengthening the skills of the workforce and increasing the employability of women and youth. This has been achieved through the enhancement and expansion of the model for the School Units for Transition to Employment (SUTE), the Local Units for Transition to Employment (LUTE) at the governorate level, and the Central Unit for Transition to Employment (CUTE) at the national ministry level. The impact of WISE technical support and capacity building translates directly into a stronger, more comprehensive Units for Transition to Employment (UTE) model and high achievement across all five SUTE departments. Teacher training, career guidance, and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) components can be linked to positive student outcomes as students are better prepared to enter the workforce. Additionally, entrepreneurship training has developed students’ critical thinking skills, an essential skill in the labor market whether starting one’s own business or working in a factory. Integration of the five UTE departments under WISE resulted in a high rate of retention of employed graduates as recognized by the employers. To further strengthen the sustainability of the UTE model and align activities in support of the Ministry of Education and Technical Education’s (MoETE) vision for reforming the Egyptian technical education sector, WISE developed and submitted to MoETE a concept paper on the way forward for the UTEs beyond the life of WISE.

In the concept paper, WISE acknowledged that the UTE’s Training Skills department be transferred to the Technical and Vocational Education Teachers Academy (TVETA) which is under establishment in accordance with Technical Education 2.0 (TE 2.0) Reform. In addition, WISE suggested that the OSH department be moved under the MoETE structure to align with TE 2.0. Finally, WISE recommended that the UTE model with its remaining three departments be either integrated as an administration within the structure of the Central Administration of the Technical Education Development or be transferred to a special purpose unit.

Throughout the life of the project, WISE continued to support LUTEs and SUTEs in their mission to enhance the overall quality of the workforce and to connect students and graduates to employment opportunities. The last year of the project presented a set of unprecedented challenges due to the COVID-19 outbreak as of mid-March 2020, the Government of Egypt (GOE) decided to close all schools and universities nationwide and set restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings. This challenge resulted in the cancellation or delay of many WISE scheduled activities and in the adaptation of its programs accordingly.
WISE responded rapidly and was able to achieve one of the project’s most significant pandemic period impacts by supporting MoETE’s request in assisting technical schools and teachers as they transitioned to virtual education and remote learning. During the second and third quarters of Year 5, WISE activities shifted to training teachers on using online programs and tools including Edmodo, Zoom, Google Forms, and MS Teams, enabling them to implement online learning. WISE also offered teachers training on soft skills such as emotional intelligence, E-learning, and behavioral theories to better equip them with the skills needed to teach virtually.

In an effort to shift all activities online, WISE also supported SUTEs in hosting digital career days, providing entrepreneurship and career guidance sessions online, and spreading awareness on COVID-19 precautionary measures. During the project’s last quarter, some activities returned to an in-person mode but with proper precautionary measures in place. OSH members played a crucial role as schools opened up for students to take their end of semester exams.

Objective A.1 Schools’ capacity improved to provide students with technical, practical, entrepreneurial, innovation, and soft skills needed by the market to enhance employability

ACTIVITY A.1.1 IMPROVE THE SUTE MODEL AND ROLL IT OUT TO SELECTED SCHOOLS

During the first two years of operation, WISE coordinated with other donor projects providing technical and vocational education and training (TVET) assistance in Egypt to complete the selection of 60 schools across the 11 governorates. WISE also completed the establishment of 60 SUTEs, 11 LUTEs, and the CUTE. The WISE school selection process resulted in near gender parity with support being provided to 22 boys’ schools, 20 girls’ schools, and 18 mixed gender schools.

During Year 1, WISE refined the SUTE/LUTE/CUTE model based on lessons learned from USAID’s previous projects in Egypt and best practices provided by WISE staff. This included more well-defined roles for each of the departments within the UTE structure and emphasizing problem-solving and student engagement in the SUTE teacher training. Refinements also included incorporating elements about work culture and positive work ethics in programs for students and more actively engaging with the private sector and potential employers located in the governorates where the schools are located.

WISE incorporated these elements across all 60 schools and within the LUTEs.

Over the course of the project, WISE conducted trainings and refresher programs for the UTE members in the 11 governorates and Cairo every summer and during mid-year school vacations. In total, 1,275 teachers received training.
ACTIVITY A.1.2 PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO TRANSITION TO EMPLOYMENT UNITS

Through technical assistance and coaching, WISE further strengthened the capacity of the SUTEs in the 60 WISE-supported schools and the LUTEs in the 11 governorate LUTEs. Technical experts and coaches helped SUTEs to continuously improve the services they provide to students. To ensure that each LUTE was working in coordination with the CUTE and MoETE, WISE assisted and coached the LUTEs to develop annual plans that are in alignment with the CUTE and MoETE strategic plans. Both the SUTEs and LUTEs were supported in honing their abilities to cascade the UTE model to additional schools, and to be committed to sustaining these interventions to realize the long-term impact of the project.

In Year 5, WISE continued to focus on strengthening the sustainability of the UTE model and supporting LUTE and SUTE activities. The second quarter of Year 5 marked the rise of new challenges facing the program as the COVID-19 outbreak led to unprecedented restrictions on travel, in-person gatherings and school closures. Nonetheless, LUTEs and SUTEs collaborating with WISE adapted swiftly to the new situation and in-person meetings were alternatively held online.

Teachers and students were trained on how to use digital platforms including MS Teams, Google Forms, Zoom, and Edmodo—an E-learning platform that supports virtual classrooms and allows teachers and students to collaborate by communicating and sharing educational content among others to facilitate remote communication. Towards the end of the project, meetings were slowly resuming to in-person meetings with precautionary measures in place.

Throughout the project’s fifth year, WISE and LUTE staff conducted weekly visits to or online meetings with each SUTE to monitor their activities, provide technical support, ensure knowledge transfer, and facilitate relationships with the private sector. WISE used the SUTE monthly progress reports to guide activities, direct resources, and plan additional trainings to further build the capacity in each of the five UTE departments—Employment and Labor Market Information, Career Guidance and Counseling, Training and Skills Enhancement, Entrepreneurship and Innovation, and OSH. WISE also met regularly with the MoETE Undersecretaries for Education and Directors of Technical Education in each of the 11 Governorates to review progress to-date and coordinate future efforts.

**SUTE Initiatives to Support Employment.** From the start of the project, WISE capacity building for the SUTEs was designed to ensure that they are able to continue beyond the life of the project. SUTEs have provided in-person and virtual services to students by organizing job fairs, career days, interview days, seeking out potential private sector employers and matching them with students, job seekers, and

### UTE ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE YEARS
- Established 60 School Units for Transition to Employment (SUTEs), a LUTE in each of 11 governorates, and the CUTE at MoETE.
- Trained 1,275 teachers and school leaders.
- Employed 32,000 graduates and secured 19,000 in-company internships.
- Introduced OSH standards in all participating schools.
- Facilitated the development by the SUTEs of Labor Market Information Report on 11 Governorates.

### WISE-SUPPORTED SCHOOLS RECOGNIZED NATIONALLY
Two WISE-supported schools in Gharbiya ranked in the top five schools in a 2020 nationwide competition of academic achievements in technical schools. El Santa Advanced Hotel and Tourism School was awarded 1st place in the hotel sector and El Santa Technical Secondary School was awarded the 3rd place in the industrial sector. (See Annex I for the announcement.)
graduates, as well as arranging site visits for students with potential employers. The SUTEs consistently employed tactics that were developed with WISE’s support to ensure the strength and sustainability of the UTE model. During the pandemic and in spite of the severe challenges and restrictions, the SUTEs succeeded in employing 5,981 and in securing in-company training for 2,428 students between March and December 2020.

After two years of operation, WISE had built the capacity of all 60 SUTE, 11 LUTE, and the CUTE members of the Labor Market Information and Employment (LMI) department. The impact of the training programs was evident in the growing number of employed graduates and job seekers. Employment numbers and in-company training were increasing year by year. In Year 5, the COVID-19 outbreak created a challenge for the SUTEs employment department as factories and businesses had to partially or fully close their operations for a certain period of time. Nevertheless, with WISE continued support, the SUTEs far exceeded their target for the year.

During the last quarter of the project, SUTE and LUTE members continued to support students through a series of initiatives that connects students to employment. Ismailia’s LUTE Manager launched a “Technical Support Team” training initiative that facilitates communication between LUTE and SUTE members, provides them with technical support, offers soft skills training, and creates a platform for SUTEs to launch their own initiatives. In Menoufia, LUTE members collaborated with "مهنة ومستقبل" ("Mehna wa mestakbal" meaning profession and future), a local association, to launch the “Survival Boats” initiative. The goal of this initiative was to provide job seekers with skills relevant to the labor market thereby increasing their employment opportunities. It also focused on reducing illegal migration of youth out of Egypt. One hundred job seekers from El Horia Advanced Hotel and Tourism School participated in this initiative.

Employment and In-Company Training Secured. Based on validated data, the 60 SUTEs secured employment for 5,981 graduates and in-company training for 2,428 students during the year ending September 30, 2020. Since the beginning of the project:

- 33,128 graduates have been employed
- 19,479 students have participated in in-company training

Career and Interview Days: LUTEs and SUTEs in WISE-supported governorates annually hosted a multitude of career and interview days to optimize employment opportunities for students. They continued to hold similar events during Year 5. The safety measures imposed during the COVID-19 outbreak restricted such gatherings. When the measures eased up, the LUTEs and SUTEs resumed their efforts including these key activities that took place in 2020:
- At the Governor of Alexandria’s request, the Ministry of Manpower’s employment office in Borg El Arab and LUTE employment department members in Alexandria hosted an employment day at Borg El Arab Technical School on August 30. Eighty job seekers, including job seekers with disabilities, and six private sector companies participated. A total of 39 job seekers were matched with employment opportunities as a result of the event. The event was covered by the media through Alexandria’s Channel 5 and El Kenana Newspaper. (See Annex I for media coverage details.)

- On September 29, Ismailia LUTE members hosted a meeting with five private sector companies. The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the private sector companies to LUTE and SUTEs activities and match graduates and job seekers with employment opportunities. Ismailia’s Director of Technical Education attended the meeting that was hosted at the directorate’s conference room.

- On November 8 and 12, Domty Cheese Factory conducted interview days in collaboration with employment members in Fayoum. The first interview day was hosted in collaboration with SUTE employment members from Nasser Industrial Secondary School; 14 job seekers applied to vacancies throughout the day. The second interview day was hosted in collaboration with SUTE employment members from Fayoum Industrial El Hadkah School; 73 job seekers applied to vacancies throughout the day.

- On November 24, SUTE employment members from El Zagazig Technical Industrial School # 2 and Sharquia LUTE members conducted a career day for job seekers who are physically disabled or deaf. Representatives from Swiss Garments Co. attended the event and selected 10 applicants who are now being hired.

- On December 12, Alexandria’s LUTE employment members and El Wardian Technical School hosted a career day at the school. 20 private sector representatives and 2,000 job seekers participated. The event was covered in the local news. See Annex I.

Another activity of note was that the Alexandria LUTE signed of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Alexandria Business Association’s Vocational Training and Employment Center (VTEC) to provide soft skills training for 300 VTEC students. The training took place at VTEC in December 2020.

**GRADUATES WITH DISABILITIES FIND PURPOSE IN EMPLOYMENT**

With assistance from the Alexandria LUTE, two technical school graduates with disabilities found employment with Galik for RMG in the Borg El Arab Industrial Zone. During follow-up visits with these two graduates, LUTE members found them both very happy in their jobs.

- One is an office assistant and expressed that getting hired has finally given him hope and a fair chance to pursue his dreams and his future plans, once thought to be impossible to achieve.
- The other is a production worker. He expressed that his experience of having a job has given him the opportunity to be a productive member of society and a purpose to live for and the ability to independently earn a living.”
Labor Market Information Reports. In Years 3 and 4, WISE worked with the SUTE LMI Coordinators to develop labor market information reports that identify and provide information on employers at the governorate-level. With WISE training, coaching, and technical assistance, the LMI Coordinators conducted extensive field work to collect and validate essential information on over 3,500 private sector companies in the 11 WISE Governorates. The published LMI reports serve as an important resource for the SUTE Career Guidance and Counseling and Employment departments. The reports provide SUTES with current job placement and in-company training opportunities for students at the local level. They also serve as a tool for MoETE to better align technical education with the labor market in each of the governorates. Ultimately, the reports provide the Ministry with a system blueprint for updating the information and replicating this resource across all governorates.

Career Guidance and Counseling.

The Career Guidance and Counseling department plays a critical role in student development and preparing technical secondary school students to explore and plan viable career options. The teachers in this department also help students understand the breadth of skills and responsibilities that are required for successful and satisfying employment. Training of the teachers and other professionals working with the Career Guidance and Counseling departments began in Year 1 of the WISE project and evolved throughout the project to include coaching and mentoring. The success of this element of WISE is evident in the numbers of students who enrolled for career guidance training and the positive feedback they provided. Over the five years of WISE, more than 73,427 students have participated in career guidance and counseling training and activities and almost half were female.

Training for the teachers was designed to cover a broad range of topics including foundational career guidance concepts in the context of Egypt, career guidance services, facilitation skills, and interactive exercises to promote self-awareness, among others. WISE coordinated with the German International Cooperation Agency (GIZ) to adapt career guidance training materials and had greatly expanded the training for SUTEs and LUTEs by Year 2. WISE provided teachers with a facilitation guide and student activity books—materials that would serve as the basis of a formal career guidance curriculum to be used across the TVET sector in Egypt. WISE coordinated with GIZ, TVET-Egypt, and MoETE to finalize the curriculum and develop criteria for selecting high quality career guidance and counseling facilitators. This collaboration has ensured consistency across the TVET sector and a framework that has been institutionalized by MoETE.
WISE conducted an assessment of the teachers’ performance annually and used feedback from these assessments to develop the refresher programs that were held semi-annually. Beginning in early 2019, in partnership with GIZ, which also conducts career guidance sessions in the schools they support, WISE trained facilitators to be multipliers who then train teachers in other schools to serve as career guidance and counseling professionals. This training was conducted in advance of an important directive issued by MoETE in October 2019, requiring all technical schools to include one period each week for career guidance. This was further testament to the importance of this SUTE department.

In Year 5, as a result of the pandemic, WISE shifted its training and coordination to online interventions. In spite of the restrictive measures to ensure everyone’s safety, the impact that career guidance training had on students was evident. Here are two examples that underscore the impact:

- A graduate of the Decorative Technical Secondary School in Beni Suef is pursuing a career in journalism as a direct result of having attended career guidance training during his second and third years. As a grade 2 student, he attended sessions on “منهج إدراك الفرص” or “guide to realizing opportunities” and applied what he learned to create a job profile, which he shared with a journalist at Akhbar El Watan newspaper. After completing the career guidance curriculum for grade 3, he used techniques he learned about transitioning to the labor market and secured an internship with Akhbar El Watan newspaper.

- A student from Beba Technical Secondary School in Beni Suef found her voice and gained self-confidence as a result of grade 1 career guidance sessions on self-awareness. She overcame her discomfort with social interactions and began drawing, painting, writing poetry and storytelling. She was able to recognize her strengths and artistic talents and now sells her portraits and has created a Facebook page where she posts voice clips of her storytelling and poetry. She is also pursuing additional course work on broadcasting to further sharpen her skills. See Annex I for how to access her postings.

Training and Skills Enhancement.

The Training and Skills Enhancement department was created by WISE to optimize the impact of teacher training programs. The teachers selected to be a part of this department not only became master trainers but also learned to conduct training needs assessments in their respective schools, write annual plans, and design interactive training packages for their fellow teachers. In addition to facilitation skills, training included teaching techniques for better student engagement and effective methods for providing and receiving constructive feedback. In Year 2, WISE began holding refresher programs to reinforce the training and provide a forum for teachers and school leaders to share ideas and challenges.
As a major step towards the standardization of teacher training across Egypt’s technical education system, WISE developed five training packages during Year 3. With input from various stakeholders as well as the SUTEs, the unified packages included: active learning; technology in technical education; evaluation for technical schools; classroom management; and thinking skills (critical, creative, etc.). In 2018, these five training packages were accredited by Egypt’s Professional Academy for Teachers (PAT). In addition, PAT decided that in lieu of the PAT Training-of-Trainers (TOT) certification course, teachers who participated in the WISE TOT program could be certified immediately.

During Year 5, teachers and students had to adapt to the abrupt school closures and restricted movement. To minimize the impact of these measures on student learning and access to educational materials, MoETE adopted virtual education and distance learning through the use of the Edmodo platform that allows teachers and students to collaborate virtually by communicating and sharing educational content. In collaboration with the CUTE and SUTEs, MoETE remotely trained a select cadre of teachers on how to use digital tools and online platforms including Edmodo. Once trained, these teachers trained colleagues on using digital platforms for education. The cadre selected for training included 61 teachers who are TOT certified from the WISE SUTEs.

MoETE’s interest in pursuing virtual learning for education in Egypt became an urgent need as the pandemic forced the closure of schools. To support MoETE with this rapid transition in early 2020, WISE worked collaboratively with teachers and principals in WISE supported schools to provide them with training on how to use online platforms including Edmodo, MS Teams, Zoom, and Google Forms. This allowed teachers to not only continue offering lessons but provided a way for teachers to maintain communication among themselves and with their students. The challenges of reliable connectivity and access to computers limited some efforts but WISE made every effort to find solutions.
Entrepreneurship and Innovation (E&I).

To develop a strong foundation for promoting and encouraging entrepreneurship and innovation in their schools and departments, SUTE, LUTE, and CUTE members participated annually in training and refresher programs on topics related to entrepreneurship and innovation for technical schools. The International Labor Organization’s (ILO) “Know About Business” program served as an introductory course for the UTE members.

WISE developed reference materials for the E&I departments to use and coordinated with other donors to complete a more comprehensive entrepreneurship curriculum for technical schools. Innovation clubs and competitions were designed to encourage students to come up with ideas that had the potential to become viable businesses. These elements are discussed in detail under Activities A.1.3 and A.2.2 later in this report.

To overcome the challenges caused by the pandemic in Year 5, WISE held several entrepreneurship refresher sessions via Zoom with SUTE/LUTE entrepreneurship members to prepare them for the 2020/2021 academic year. The sessions provided participants with the opportunity to discuss lessons learned from previous semesters, the importance of digital competence, how to conduct training sessions during the pandemic, and the role of blended learning in technical education.

Over the life of the project, 67,741 students have participated in entrepreneurship training and almost half were female.

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH).

WISE engaged an international expert in occupational safety and health in Year 1 to convene selected teachers and school management for a basic introduction to OSH awareness in schools. This included learning how to assess safety and health hazards, how to develop safety and evacuation plans, and how to engage all school employees and students in maintaining a safe space and adhering to sound OSH practices. The international expert developed a basic OSH handbook for technical schools that was subsequently revised and expanded by local experts.

WISE built on this initial awareness program and conducted training programs for supervisors selected to maintain safety and health standards in schools. At the end of Year 1, MoETE approved the formal addition of an OSH department in the CUTE and LUTEs to handle safety and health issues in the governorates and centrally. Recognizing the importance and necessity at the school level for occupational safety and health, Martyr Mahmoud Mohsen Abou Gamra Advanced Technical School in Port Said collaborated with the Fund for Drug Control and Treatment of Addiction to launch an initiative titled “You Are Stronger Than Drugs” to raise awareness on the dangers of drug addiction. Photo Credit: WISE.
OSH, MoETE agreed to add a similar department to the SUTEs in 2017. OSH departments helped to establish OSH committees within their schools and now maintain updated evacuation plans and hold regular evacuation drills.

The importance of the OSH department became very evident in Year 5, during the pandemic. OSH members from all WISE-supported schools launched several initiatives to spread awareness among students and teachers on how to implement precautionary and safety measures throughout the schools to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Safety measures included taking students’ temperatures at the school gates prior to entering for examinations, distributing masks to students, and posting signs with information on COVID-19. Here are examples of these initiatives:

- OSH members from El Tahrir Technical School in Port Said conducted an orientation meeting with 20 teachers to raise awareness on appropriate measures that would help to curb the spread of COVID-19.
- In Gharbiya, OSH members from El Mahala Technical Secondary School, Tanta Advanced Hotel and Tourism School, and El Shin Technical Secondary School launched an initiative titled “شعبيتيك” or “Your Safety is in Your Hands” that raises awareness about COVID-19 and precautions to take to avoid potential spikes in COVID-19 cases.

Because of the evident success in their own schools, OSH members took the initiative to train teachers in non-WISE supported schools on safety measures that can be replicated. Moreover, OSH members launched initiatives to spread awareness on other health issues including the dangers of smoking and drug addiction. OSH members have continued implementing evacuation drills at schools and sanitizing schools on a regular basis.

**ACTIVITY A.1.3 ENCOURAGE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION WITHIN THE TECHNICAL SCHOOL SYSTEM**

The entrepreneurship and innovation program has been an important element of the UTE model and has proven to be a critical motivator for students in the technical education sector. The success in this area from the development of curricular materials to the establishment of facilities and implementation of student competitions is evident from the number of students who have participated in entrepreneurship and innovation activities. Their online entrepreneurial undertakings, particularly during the pandemic, are further testimony to the benefit of this element.
Entrepreneurship Reference Materials. Early in Year 3, WISE completed and published an Entrepreneurship Referral Handbook and distributed 2,500 hard copies to the 60 WISE-supported schools, MoETE, other stakeholders, and entrepreneurship facilitators. The handbook, a product of a close collaboration among ILO, GIZ, and TVET II, is designed to link students and graduates with financing opportunities for entrepreneurs, technical opportunities, resources, incubators and accelerators throughout Egypt. In Year 4, WISE updated the handbook and posted it on the MoETE portal. To ensure sustainability, WISE transferred “ownership” of the handbook to the CUTE and trained CUTE staff on how to best use and make periodic updates to the handbook.

Innovation Clubs. To encourage and support student entrepreneurs, WISE partnered with Egyptian firm, Innoventures, in Year 3 to establish innovation clubs in 24 schools with fabrication laboratories (Fab Labs) set up in 10 of those schools. “Fab Labs” are equipped with computer numerical controls, laser cutters, and 3D printers, providing access to state-of-the-art tools for young innovators. The innovation clubs offer a safe space for student entrepreneurs to further explore and hone their innovative ideas by transforming these ideas into concrete projects through the development of prototypes. The innovation clubs were established in the governorates of Aswan, Ismailia, Alexandria, Port Said, and Red Sea. To guide and assist the students, WISE trained 36 facilitators on innovation club management.

NAWAH Social Entrepreneurship Competition. The NAWAH Competition is a national event that is held annually during the Egypt/Global Entrepreneurship Week. NAWAH’s objective is to promote social entrepreneurship in Egypt and support innovative social businesses that attempt to solve social and/or economic issues. Young social entrepreneurs, both female and male, are encouraged to partake in the competition by identifying a business response that alleviates a persisting social challenge or fulfills a social need in Egyptian society. In 2017, WISE joined ILO and GIZ as a third strategic partner in the competition and introduced a track for TVET students. WISE participated in two consecutive years:

- In 2017, the first two of three prizes were awarded to students from WISE-supported schools.
- In 2018, all three prizes were awarded to students from WISE-supported schools.

First-place winners from the “Aswani” team during their presentation on the semifinal for the Nawah Competition, October 24, 2017, Pyramisa Hotel, Cairo. Photo Credit: WISE.
Fanni Mobtaker Competition.

In 2018, WISE launched an innovation competition for all WISE-supported schools making it the first entrepreneurship and innovation competition dedicated to technical education students and the largest innovation competition held in Africa and the Middle East. The Fanni Mobtaker (innovative technician) competition was designed to encourage technical school students to think like entrepreneurs, develop their own innovative ideas and transform those ideas into successful products or services that can benefit Egyptian communities while contributing to a growing labor market and, by extension, growth of the Egyptian economy. Applicants were judged on the quality of the idea/innovation, its feasibility for implementation, its scientific logic, and its value to the community and the target market. These competitions have been implemented in cooperation with MoETE and the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology (ASRT), Eitesal, and Ideaspace.

The first two Fanni Mobtaker competitions, held in Years 3 and 4 of WISE, attracted an impressive number of applicants—1,364 in 2018 and 2,144 in 2019. In 2020, COVID-19 restrictions prevented many students from being able to participate, resulting in a lower number of applicants. A total of 247 project ideas were submitted by 282 applicants for the third Fanni Mobtaker competition.

To accommodate the new restrictions, WISE designed a different platform to hold the competition, relying totally on digitization and electronic communication methods. Competition activities, trainings, and technical support were held virtually, and the applicants could be either current students or graduates of WISE-supported schools. Out of the 282 applicants, 47 were graduates. The theme of Fanni Mobtaker 3 was “Fanni vs. COVID-19” or “Technician challenges Corona”. The main goal of the competition was to incentivize technical school students to solve technical challenges that are a result of COVID-19.

The process leading up to the final competition round was as follows.

- An evaluation committee selected 104 project ideas submitted by 174 applicants (60.3% of whom were females) representing 15 governorates (10 applicants were graduates residing in 4 non-WISE governorates).

- The selected applicants received training and a set of tasks to improve their ideas.

- In the second selection round, 29 project ideas submitted by 55 applicants were qualified to compete for the final cut.

- 10 projects, submitted by 16 applicants (43.8% of whom were female), were qualified to compete in the final stage on December 14, 2020.
Over the course of these selection rounds, the applicants had received a combined total of 107 virtual training sessions and workshops.

On December 14, 2020, WISE held a virtual closing ceremony for the Fanni Mobtaker 3 competition. This event was the first virtual competition of its kind promoting innovation in diverse technical fields in Egypt. The event was attended by the Deputy Minister for Technical Education as well as representatives from MoETE, the WISE team, and other stakeholders.

A three-member jury committee questioned and then ranked the presenters and all attendees were invited to score the projects as well. Jury scores represented 70% of the total ranking and audience scores represented 30%. In addition to the three top prizes, a recognition award was given to a project idea that received the highest number of votes from the audience. Winning project descriptions can be found in the side bar.

Although the closing event was held virtually, it was offered live on the following social media:

- Facebook page of Ideaspace (WISE’s partner in the Fanni Mobtaker competitions since their inception in 2018)
- Facebook page of “Core of Change in Technical Education” (a page established for technical education)
- YouTube
- Zoom

WISE is pleased to report that 11,316 participants interacted on the event post on Facebook. Fanni Mobtaker has proven to be a very popular competition and there are several entities including MoETE, the Academy of Scientific Research & Technology, Eitesal, and Ideaspace that have expressed an interest in keeping it going even after the WISE project has ended.

**ACTIVITY A.1.4 ESTABLISH A REPLICABLE SYSTEM FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAMS**

In Year 2, WISE facilitated a series of roundtables with representatives from MoETE, the Mubarak-Kohl Initiative (Dual Education System), and private sector companies participating in the Dual Education System, including Toshiba, Americana, and Jaz Hotels to select and implement a work-based learning model for student internships in Egypt. WISE worked with its partners to finalize the assessment methodology for the adopted work-based learning model and selected schools to target for pilot implementation.

At the request of the Deputy Minister of Education and Technical Education, WISE began collaborating with TVET-II (currently known as TVET-Egypt), to develop competencies related to student training that would be used by WISE and TVET-II to measure the acquisition of skills by students during in-company training.
At that time, WISE requested that MoETE issue a ministerial order for the pilot implementation of the work-based learning model. However, due to changes in personnel at MoETE in Quarter 2 of Year 3, the Ministry deprioritized this activity.

ACTIVITY A.1.5 ESTABLISH OR BUILD CAPACITY OF LUTE MEMBERS TO CASCADE THE SUTE MODEL

LUTEs provide critical support to SUTEs and serve as a source of information and communication with the national level CUTE. Within the first two years of operation, WISE had established a LUTE in each of the 11 governorates and assisted the MoETE Undersecretaries and Technical Education General Managers in the member selection for each LUTE. LUTEs were then provided with capacity building trainings on various topics such as entrepreneurship, coordination and strategic and annual planning. WISE worked with the LUTEs as they identified potential non-WISE schools in which to establish additional SUTEs. WISE also provided ongoing and on-demand technical support and advice to assist the LUTEs in cascading the UTE model to additional schools and preparing these schools to implement the model. SUTE members from the WISE-supported schools served as valuable resources for the LUTEs and new SUTEs in their respective governorates. WISE’s support for the LUTEs falls within MoETE’s goal of extending key components of the transition to employment model throughout the technical education system.

ACTIVITY A.1.6 DEVELOP STRATEGIC PLAN FOR MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUTE MODEL

In Year 1, WISE initiated the drafting of a strategic plan for the UTE model. Working with CUTE and LUTE members, WISE drafted the organizational structure and reporting system, bylaws, roles and responsibilities, and templates for key documents, such as memoranda of understanding (MOUs). In Year 2 and in cooperation with GIZ, WISE helped the CUTE and LUTE members to finalize the strategic plan, which provides MoETE with an important tool to deliver services in a sustainable and consistent manner. The plan provides the structure for CUTE oversight of the LUTEs and SUTEs at the national level and tasks CUTE members with collecting and storing all data gathered at the school and governorate levels in one centralized location. In June 2017, MoETE formally approved the strategic plan.

ACTIVITY A.1.7 FACILITATE THE COMMUNICATION AND REPORTING FOR CUTE/LUTE/SUTE THROUGH ONLINE PORTAL

To facilitate the work of the UTEs and MoETE, WISE managed the development of a web portal. In Year 2, WISE conducted a needs assessment with the SUTEs, LUTEs, and CUTE to determine what was needed from a web portal including the portal’s functions and features, accessibility, and user interface. In Year 3, WISE proceeded with the development of the portal on the MoETE’s website, and in Year 4, the portal became fully operational. The WISE-developed portal provides an educational social networking platform for students, teachers, and school administrators while also serving as a central database for the schools and MoETE where updated enrollment and other school-related data and reports can be easily accessed. The portal consists of three gateways:

- A main portal that offers information relevant to technical education including news, success stories, and lessons learned; provides access for technical education students to seek
employment opportunities; and serves as a platform for conferences, workshops, and related activities, as well as publications, reports, and related books.

- A data collection portal that quickly and easily allows for disseminating information on UTE activities, results, and updated data collected in all governorates.

- A social portal that can be accessed via computers and mobile devices to provide a platform for technical education students and teachers to share experiences, best practices, and lessons learned.

WISE trained MoETE representatives and CUTE, LUTE, and SUTE members on how to use the main portal and the data collection portal.

In Year 5, to assist MoETE in rapidly expanding distance learning in light of the pandemic, WISE upgraded the portal so it can be used for interactive learning for technical students and developed two tutorial videos for students and teachers on how to use the portal. Before handing over the portal, WISE provided an online training session for MoETE’s E-Learning administration staff.

**ACTIVITY A.1.8 UPGRADE FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT TO SUPPORT LEARNING**

To ensure that SUTE members have the necessary equipment to provide the highest quality of support to their students, WISE procured IT equipment for schools, LUTEs, and the CUTE. Through a full and open request-for-proposals process, laptop computers, multifunction printers, projectors, digital cameras, and items such as toner, printer paper, flash drives, and electricity connectors were procured for all sites and a photocopier was procured for the CUTE. As part of the procurement agreement, training on the use and maintenance of all equipment was provided by WISE’s subcontractor.

**Objective A.2 Curricula developed and implemented that meet international standards and address market needs**

Based on updated industry trends and in support of MoETE’s longer term plans for improving Egypt’s technical education sector, WISE undertook the development of two new market-driven specializations: Logistics and New and Renewable Energy. Additionally, WISE took the lead in coordinating with other donor projects to create unified entrepreneurship and innovation curriculum that could be taught in all of Egypt’s technical schools.

**ACTIVITY A.2.1 CREATE CURRICULA FOR TWO NEW SPECIALTIES**

WISE worked with MoETE to select two new technical areas for which competency-based curricula would be developed. The topics selected aligned with the priorities of the Egyptian government and economic trends in Egypt. In Year 1, Logistics was selected to support the country’s new “mega-projects,” such as the construction and economic development project of the Suez Canal Special
Economic Zones. In Year 2, renewable energy was selected to support the Benban Solar Energy project in Aswan and the wind energy project in Hurghada, Red Sea.

WISE began the process by identifying an experienced competency-based education expert to draw up a conceptual framework for development of these curricula. This expert worked with teams of local industry representatives, public entities, teachers, and a variety of subject matter experts throughout the curricula development process, training and guiding the teams through the various stages of developing occupational standards and identifying required competencies for specific jobs, developing classroom materials, creating assessment tools, and managing the training of assessors. The process was a collaborative one that was successful in large part because of the joint input from educators and the private sector.

In Year 5, WISE updated both the logistics and renewable energy diploma competency frameworks to ensure that curricula development and related materials remain aligned with MoETE’s most updated requirements for a competency-based approach to technical education. This is integral to MoETE’s ongoing commitment to reforming Egypt’s technical education system.

**Logistics Diploma.**

The three-year Logistics Diploma program includes three sub-specializations:

- Warehouse operations
- Transportation supervision
- Stevedoring

With the participation and cooperation of MoETE, the National Authority for Quality Assurance and Accreditation for Education (NAQAAE), private sector, academia, and subject matter experts, WISE completed the development of the competency-based logistics curriculum for Grade 1 in the first year of WISE. The logistics program was launched in academic year 2016/2017 in two pilot schools in Port Said and Ismailia. The program was well received by the private sector and students, which led MoETE to expand the program to two additional schools in academic year 2017/2018 in Ismailia and Suez. In 2018/2019, MoETE expanded the logistics diploma to two non-WISE supported schools in Red Sea and Damietta.
WISE completed the three-year logistics curriculum in Year 3 of the project and made refinements and modifications over the next two years based on feedback received from teachers, students, and private companies. In July 2019, the first logistics classes from the Port Said and Ismailia schools were awarded their diplomas. Upon their graduation, each of the 55 graduates was offered employment with logistics companies.

In 2020, WISE completed the revision of all 14 logistics diploma study books and introduced a technical mathematics book that will serve as a reference book for the logistics program students.

As a testament to the students’ performance after their graduation, a Logistics employer acknowledged to WISE “I am sending this mail on behalf of Agility to thank you and all the team for your effort in providing us with qualified, well educated, and well trained operators - 'the graduated young men from the new logistics schools’. We really found them different when it comes to the logistics background and especially talking about their awareness of safety and quality [issues].”

**Partnership with the German-Arab Chamber of Industry and Commerce.** In 2020, WISE accepted the German-Arab Chamber of Industry and Commerce (AHK Egypt)’s invitation to become a member of its newly established executive board in the logistics sector for TVET. In July 2020, WISE participated in a webinar for the Chamber members and shared its experience on how it developed the logistics diploma.

WISE also nominated 25 logistics teachers to participate in an AHK Egypt training program titled “Training of Logistics Examiners in Vocational Training and Education.” These teachers were trained and certified by AHK Egypt as independent examiners who will be able to serve at any interested vocational training center and for the industry at large. Selected examiners also became members of the logistics examination committee.

**Renewable Energy Diploma.**

The three-year New and Renewable Energy Diploma program includes two sub-specializations:

- Wind energy turbine installation and maintenance
- Solar energy panel installation and maintenance

The collaborative process used to develop the logistics curriculum was also used to develop the renewable energy curricula in Year 2 of the project. WISE worked with MoETE officials, supervisors from the Central Electricity Office, New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA) representatives, the private sector, academia, NAQAAE, and subject matter experts to develop competency-based curricula for a three-year diploma program. The three-year program was launched for academic year 2017/2018.
in three schools – two in Aswan offered the solar energy specialization and one in the Red Sea offered the wind energy specialization.

The renewable energy diploma proved to be extremely popular, particularly among female students, as well as solar energy investors. The result was a very high number of applicants for the program and a keen interest among the Benban Solar Park investors. The New and Renewable Energy diploma program was widely publicized and attracted many visitors to see the progress being made by the students. In spite of having to move classes to virtual learning in March 2020, the first cohort of renewable energy students graduated in the summer of 2020.

Expansion of the Diploma. In Year 4, WISE began developing curricula for Grades 4 and 5 of the solar energy specialization, following the same methodology of partnering with concerned stakeholders to create the required competencies and standards. In Year 5, WISE completed the development of Grades 4 and 5 curricula and they were formally adopted by MoETE. Students who successfully complete the two additional years of the diploma program will graduate as Senior Technicians.

Private Sector Involvement. Private sector involvement with the New and Renewable Energy program has been essential to the success of the program. In addition to role that industry played in the development of the competency-based curricula, two particular examples are worth noting:

- Alcazar Energy: In the summer of academic year 2018/2019, Alcazar Energy, an investor in the Benban Solar Park, conducted a capacity building program for 25 teachers and all 96 Grade 2 students at Benban Technical Secondary School. This interactive, hands-on program demonstrated Alcazar’s commitment to a partnership with the technical school to ensure workforce-ready graduates. Teachers and students alike learned technical skills and experienced a real work environment where their classroom lessons were applied. At the end of the program, Alcazar hosted a closing ceremony in Aswan to honor all stakeholders—partners, students, teachers, and engineers. Alcazar is committed to continuing this partnership when COVID-19 restrictions are eased.

- Benban Advisory Board: In July 2019, the Governor of Aswan established the Benban Advisory Board. This Board is the first public-private partnership advisory board in an Egyptian technical school and serves as a key interface with the private sector. This is particularly important for students in the diploma program to learn about employment and internship opportunities in the Benban Solar Park. Because of his particular interest in the subject, the Governor expressed his intent to remain involved and requested that he be kept up-to-date on all interventions approved by the Board.
Competency-based assessment. In Year 5, WISE conducted a competency-based assessment training for 30 renewable energy teachers from El Ramady Qebly Technical School in Aswan and Hurghada Technical School for Girls. Each training consisted of three 3-hour sessions. A pretest given prior to the training allowed teachers to compare their results before and after the training. The purpose of the training was to:

- Familiarize teachers with the competency-based assessment model, emphasize its importance, and provide guidance on how to integrate assessment into the teachers’ daily schedules.
- Practice the teacher’s role as assessor and learn how to use the competency-based assessment guides.
- Help the trainees to prepare and conduct assessments of any educational content and practice the method of collecting evidence.
- Enhance teachers’ understanding of the qualifications framework in Egypt.

At the end of the training, teachers were given an assignment to practice what they had learned. The post-training test showed very positive results. In December 2020, two 2-day refresher trainings on competency-based assessment were conducted online. Twelve of the previously trained teachers participated in this training.

Digitization of Competency-based Curricula.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the need for effective virtual learning tools and platforms. MoETE turned to donors to assist with responding to these immediate needs and WISE took on the task of digitizing the Grade 1/first year curricula for the new and renewable energy and logistics diploma programs. WISE successfully completed the digitized versions of these curricula and obtained MoETE’s approval of the final products in early February 2021. (See Annex F for details.)

ACTIVITY A.2.2 DEVELOP/ADAPT AND LAUNCH ENTREPRENEURSHIP CURRICULUM

In coordination with other donor projects that support entrepreneurship education in schools (ILO, UNIDO, GIZ, and TVET-Egypt) WISE led the development of a unified entrepreneurship curriculum that was piloted in 2017/18 and rolled out in 2018/19. WISE conducted capacity building training for 295 teachers on the unified curriculum and the new entrepreneurship curriculum was being taught in technical schools in accordance with the schedule agreed to by MoETE and the Entrepreneurship Donors’ Committee.

The October 2019 MoETE directive that required the Career Guidance curriculum to be taught one period each week in the technical schools also directed that the Entrepreneurship and Innovation curriculum be taught for one period each week. WISE coordinated with the other donor projects to train multipliers who can cascade this training to other schools, similar to what was done for the career guidance curriculum.

Objective A.3 Quality of education enhanced through quality control and assurance system benchmarked to international best practices

During Year 1, WISE introduced an internal quality review system to promote a deeper understanding of quality in technical schools and empower school governance bodies to lead quality adherence programs. Through a participatory process, WISE held round table discussions with NAQAAE, private
sector representatives, and MoETE to review and adapt the quality standards for MoETE technical schools. The development of technical education quality standards was completed and approved by MoETE and adopted by NAQAAE in Year 3. WISE developed the Education Quality Assessors Manual and trained a cadre of technical assessors, selected from MoETE’s governorate-level education offices, to pilot a self-evaluation process for technical education institutions in WISE-supported schools.

The final technical education quality standards, introduced for the first time in Egypt, are benchmarked to international standards, reflect the requirements of the labor market, and integrate comprehensive transition-to-employment elements and OSH activities.

In Year 4, the Government of Egypt decided to create an independent entity for accreditation and assessment in technical education. Once established and operating, this entity will be able to benchmark the technical education system and schools, and also provide teachers with a tool against which they can measure themselves, thereby empowering them to excel in their work. The standards will constitute the basis for the creation of a national competitiveness index for technical education in Egypt by which technical education institutions will be assessed and accredited. (See Activity A.5.3 below for details about this entity.)

**Objective A.4 School governance and management improved**

An essential part of WISE’s work was building the capacity and expertise of Egypt’s technical school principals, senior management, and MoETE officials. Throughout the project, WISE trained key education leaders as well as technical school teachers, to ensure that there is lasting support for the systemic change WISE has advocated for and implemented at the school, local, and national levels.

Feedback from principals and a training needs assessment resulted in WISE redesigning the 2016 WISE leadership development program conducted for the principals from the first group of WISE-supported technical schools. The new, redesigned leadership training program, implemented in Years 2 and 3, was more responsive to the specific needs of principals andvice principals, and included relevant post-training activities.

**ACTIVITY A.4.1 ENHANCE THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR WISE SCHOOLS**

**ACTIVITY A.4.2 ENHANCE THE CAPACITY OF PRINCIPALS, AND MINISTRY OFFICIALS TO MANAGE AND GOVERN SCHOOLS**

WISE conducted leadership and management workshops for school principals and LUTE staff in Year 1. The five-day program was designed to improve their leadership and management skills and top performers in the course were eligible to participate in an off-shore program in advanced leadership and management. Eleven principals and vice principals were chosen through a competitive selection process that included: (1) completing an exam covering the workshop topics and a brief online survey; and (2) writing a short essay describing what s/he hoped to learn.
from the advanced course and how s/he intended to share and use what was learned upon returning to Egypt.

In December 2016, a group that included the selected principals and several officials from the MoETE traveled to the United States for a 13-day observation/study tour that took place in Washington, D.C. and Utah. Participants met with various policy makers and educators in the Washington, D.C. area to learn about current trends in vocational and technical education and share ideas and approaches to technical education. In Utah, the group attended the Advanced Leadership and Management Training course facilitated by MTC and visited a vocational training institute run by MTC to observe and experience a school in session. Upon their return to Egypt, WISE held several follow-on workshops in which the study tour participants presented the concepts and lessons they had learned and worked on school improvement plans for their respective schools. Some of the highlights they shared included the importance of building strong community connections, using active teaching methods, and strategically designing courses to include workforce readiness training.

A second observation/study tour in December 2017 brought a group of 12 school managers and MoETE officials to Utah for a nine-day program that included intensive visits to four different types of technical schools. Participants learned about unique approaches to technical education at these institutions and engaged in discussions with school leaders, teachers, and students. The program provided the participants with enhanced knowledge to help them more effectively promote improved technical education in Egypt. The participants were selected based on their pre- and post-test results from leadership training, trainer evaluations, and the quality of the school work plans they had developed. As with the first study tour, WISE held a series of follow-up workshops in Egypt during which the participants shared what they had learned and how they were making use of their experience.

During Year 3 of the project, in coordination with MoETE, WISE opened up the leadership development activities to include technical education general managers and directors of the various technical education sectors such as tourism, agriculture, and industry among the participants. Simultaneously, WISE developed a school leadership needs assessment that helped refine and tailor the Year 4 Advanced Leadership Development Training programs.

**Objective A.5 Develop and pilot innovative and student-centered approaches to technical education**

To better reflect the work being undertaken by WISE, USAID approved WISE’s recommendation to revise the title of Objective A.5 from “Innovation Model for student-led technical education piloted” to the above-stated title. Activities under this objective focused on supporting MoETE’s vision for reforming the technical education sector as articulated in their “Technical Education 2.0” plan. This reform package includes:

- Establishing a Modern Technical School (MTS),
- Expanding the Applied Technology School model and integrating it with the MTS model,
- Establishing an accreditation and assessment authority for technical education,
- Creating a center for quality assurance, and
- Creating a training academy for technical teachers.
ACTIVITY A.5.1. DEVELOP A COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION MODEL TO BE PILOTED WITHIN CURRICULA DEVELOPMENT OF TWO NEW SPECIALIZATIONS

The development of the competency-based education framework and the competency-based curricula for the logistics and renewable energy specialization is detailed under Objective A.2 above.

ACTIVITY A.5.2 DEVELOP AND PILOT A PEER HELPING PROGRAM FOR TECHNICAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS

In Year 2, WISE designed the Peer Helping Program (PHP) and, in Year 3, piloted it in eight schools in four governorates. The four primary elements of the program are:

1. Helping - personal problem solving,
2. Mediating - dispute resolution,
3. Orienting - guidance for new students on choosing courses and program decisions, and
4. Tutoring - guidance on courses, academic and study skills, and improving grades.

The program formalizes and capacitates student-to-student helping roles. It has proven to be immensely popular and has had a positive impact on the school environment in those schools where the PHP was piloted. The program draws out student talents and abilities in helping their fellow students and promotes a culture of self-awareness and self-confidence among technical school students.

WISE tapped the U.S. National Association for Peer Program Professionals (NAPPP) to provide expertise and guidelines that could be adapted to the Egyptian context during the establishment and piloting of the peer helping program. Working with the Career Guidance and Counseling SUTE departments, WISE carried out the pilot program in three phases.

- Phase 1: WISE led strategic planning and design of the PHP in schools.
- Phase 2: WISE trained the school Peer Helping teams.
- Phase 3: WISE assisted with implementation and conducted a technical assessment of the program.

Upon the conclusion of pilot phase at the end of the 2017/2018 school year, WISE reviewed the pilot implementation and conducted a qualitative evaluation, which served as the basis for enhancing the program’s training and strengthening implementation.

During Year 4, a number of non-WISE schools showed great interest in the program and began establishing their own peer helping programs. Over the life of the project, WISE has introduced PHP in 15 schools and trained a total of 921 students, 61% of whom are females.

When COVID-19 closed schools and required students to rapidly transition to online learning, PHP students played a critical role in keeping their peers connected via social media and provided essential information regarding safe and healthy practices to avoid the spread of COVID-19. When schools opened for exams, PHP students assisted with handing out masks and hand sanitizer. PHP students also

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PEER HELPING STUDENT ROLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Helper</strong>: Listens to other students, helps them problem solve, and makes referrals to professionals as needed.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Mediator</strong>: Assists disputants with resolving conflict.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Ambassador</strong>: Helps students new to the school feel connected and select a trade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peer Tutor</strong>: Helps peers build academic skills and improve their grades and attendance.</td>
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helped their peers remain focused on school requirements. For example, in Gharbiya, PHP students from El Santa Technical Secondary School undertook the following:

- Launched an initiative titled “نحنا دليلك بالمدرسة” or “We Are Your Guide at School” that provides new students with insights on the technical specializations offered by the school.
- Created two videos that orient new students on paperwork required for general school as well as departmental registration. The videos were circulated on the school’s page, and Facebook and WhatsApp groups.

Career guidance teachers continued to offer PHP training as they recognized the impact of the PHP and its value in keeping students engaged.

ACTIVITY A.5.3 SUPPORT MOETE VISION FOR REFORMING THE EGYPTIAN TECHNICAL EDUCATION SECTOR

Modern Technical School (MTS) Model for MoETE.

In Year 4, WISE began assisting MoETE in the establishment of Modern Technical Schools in the Egyptian technical education system. In coordination with USAID and MoETE, WISE assumed responsibility for creating “how to” manuals that will guide the development of a model for modern technical schools. Through a series of meetings, WISE and MoETE agreed on the general content areas for the manuals, and a process for producing a comprehensive school model. The manuals would cover a range of topics including:

- School Governance and Stakeholders Communication Plan
- School Financial Modeling and Fundraising
- School Career Development Center (CDC)
- School Infrastructure (New and Old Schools)
- Competency-based Curricula, Faculty, and Administration Development
- School Accreditation and Education Quality

By the end of the project, WISE had finalized the MTS manuals and submitted them to MoETE. As with other activities, the pandemic affected the schedule for completing all of the manuals. The governance and finance model to be incorporated into the MTS manuals required physical visits to a specific school that were not authorized until late in Year 5 as the 2020/2021 academic year was delayed until October 17, 2020. Once WISE was able to conduct the visits, the manual was completed. The
quality manual, a cross-cutting manual, was subsequently finalized. A set of completed manuals was submitted to MoETE on January 31, 2021.

As GIZ is supporting MoETE in structuring the Applied Technology School model, a public-private partnership model, WISE coordinated with GIZ throughout Year 5 to integrate the MTS manuals with the Applied Technology School standards.

**Salhia Applied Technology School (ATS).**

In 2019, MoETE, Salhia Investment and Development Company, and WISE signed an MOU to establish the first applied technology school for agriculture in the technical education system in Egypt. The objective was to offer new competency-based specializations in (1) agriculture/water irrigation technology and (2) animal/poultry production technology. The initiative was piloted at Salhia’s farm in Sharquia in academic year 2019/2020. At the time the programs were launched, Salhia was the only applied technology school in Egypt that had a fully developed Grade 1 competency-based curriculum for its two specializations and the first ATS that included application projects in its curricula.

In spite of the COVID-19 challenges, Salhia was the only ATS that completed its academic year using online teaching and training for the last two modules of the curricula.

Based on feedback received from the teachers, WISE revised the school’s first year curriculum for each specialization and obtained MoETE’s approval to use the modified curricula in academic year 2020/2021. By summer 2020, WISE had completed the development of the curricula for Grades 2 and 3. By December 2020, WISE had delivered 54 hard copies of student guides and 3 copies of teacher guides on Agriculture/Irrigation and Animal/Poultry Production to Salhia ATS for all three grades.

Based on the school’s success during its first academic year, Salhia ATS opened its enrollment for the 2020/2021 academic year to students from all governorates, not just from Sharquia and received over 160 applications. Eighty-two candidates were interviewed by a committee consisting of MoETE representatives, Salhia Investment Company representatives, Salhia school administrators, and WISE. Based on their test scores in mathematics, English, and Arabic, 50 students (25 in each specialization), were selected to enroll in the programs.

As a result of the Salhia ATS’s success, MoETE requested WISE’s support in establishing Ryada Applied Technology School in Port Said specializing in the field of dairy industry. In coordination with USAID, WISE hosted a two-day workshop in September 2020 to guide the general framework for the curriculum. Representatives from MoETE’s agricultural sector and the Ryada Corporation attended the workshop.
Teachers’ Vocational Education & Training Academy (TVETA).

In accordance with its Technical Education 2.0 reform package, MoETE began the process of establishing TVETA in 2020. Still under development, TVETA is mandated to train technical education teachers and to regulate and coordinate TVET training to assure its quality and relevance. TVETA will train and develop the skills of technical teachers, trainers, assessors, internal verifiers, technical school management and administrative personnel, as well as representatives of the private sector who are involved in TVET activities (mainly in-company trainers). TVETA will establish policies for teacher development, undertake research on TVET trends and principles and will ensure a commitment to international quality standards. TVETA will be located in Cairo with representation in all Egyptian governorates and economic sectors through satellite centers affiliated with TVETA and housed within Centers of Excellence.

In Year 5 of the WISE project, a TVETA taskforce was founded, composed of representatives from the donor community. As part of the taskforce, WISE took the lead in developing a first-year operational plan for TVETA. The plan was vetted by both MoETE and the taskforce.

WISE also undertook the following steps in the design of TVETA’s administrative structure:

- WISE chaired a committee of GIZ, TVET-Egypt and WISE to decide on an administrative structure for TVETA. The committee also developed seven job descriptions for currently anticipated staff. The proposed structure was submitted to the GOE’s General Authority for Administration for approval.

- Given its extensive experience with competency-based structures, WISE developed all of the competencies and tasks for each of the seven staff positions for which the committee had developed job descriptions. WISE also identified the professional training modules that should be required or recommended for each position.

- WISE drafted bylaws for the entity and submitted them to MoETE before the close of the WISE project.

Center for the Enhancement of Quality Assurance of Technical Education (CEQAT).

Another entity planned to be established in accordance with Technical Education 2.0 is CEQAT. CEQAT ensures that MoETE’s provision of technical education meets the skill and education needs of industry and individuals in a changing national and globalized economy. CEQAT will monitor, evaluate and continuously improve the quality of all technical education programs delivered by MoETE institutions.
In coordination with the CEQAT committee made up of donor representatives, WISE completed a concept paper that was approved by MoETE in WISE Year 5. WISE also reviewed the job description for the Head of CEQAT and an organizational chart for the center. WISE took the lead in finalizing a draft of the legal framework for CEQAT’s operation at the central, governorate and school levels. The draft legal framework takes into account the three ministerial decrees that were issued to establish CEQAT as an entity.

By the end of WISE, in addition to the above accomplishments, the CEQAT committee had accomplished the following:

- Core job descriptions for the CEQAT central, directorate, and district levels have been finalized and sent to MoETE for review and approval.
- A timeline to prepare for the operationalization of CEQAT was drafted and was shared with MoETE for review and approval.

**Egyptian Technical Quality Assurance and Accreditation National Authority (ETQAAN).**

ETQAAN is another entity that is being established as part of the GOE’s Technical Education 2.0. ETQAAN’s role will be exclusively to ensure the quality and accreditation of technical, vocational and professional education training institutions and programs. The Authority will establish the general framework for the quality of technical and vocational education and training programs, teaching and learning methods, and all necessary evaluation methods. In addition, it will set the criteria for the accreditation of the different types of TVET institutions, including pre-university technical education.

To prepare for a quick start, a committee representing the donor community was established in late 2020. In cooperation with MoETE, the committee completed a concept note. WISE’s role in the committee included the following:

- Creating a set of bylaws.
- Developing a stakeholder map that shows linkages between various stakeholders and a high-level organizational structure for ETQAAN.
- Developing a general framework for the quality of technical and vocational education and training programs, teaching and learning methods, and the necessary evaluation methods.
- Setting criteria for the accreditation of TVET institutions, including pre-university technical education.

A draft of each of these items was submitted to MoETE before the project closed.
RESULT B: ENHANCING PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY AND ABILITY TO ATTRACT AND RETAIN SKILLED EMPLOYEES

The main objectives of Result B were to enhance the skills and productivity of workers, and to decrease workforce turnover in selected sectors and governorates. WISE Result B activities focused on the demand for skilled labor by engaging directly with the Egyptian private sector through: (1) Ebdaa Rehletak, a training and job matching program for out-of-school job seekers; (2) the Productivity Improvement Program (PIP), an intensive capacity building program to help companies improve workforce productivity; and (3) an expansion of the successful Recruit, Retrain, Retain (3R) pilot program. To successfully achieve its goals in this result area, WISE established partnerships with and commitments from individual companies. These partnerships were formalized through MOUs or Letters of Cooperation (LOCs), signed by both parties.

Through the life of the project, WISE recruited companies across the WISE-supported governorates and ultimately signed MOUs or LOCs with 110 companies. Annex E includes the full list of all 110 companies that have signed MOUs or LOCs with WISE since the beginning of the project.

Institutionalizing WISE Result B Programs. To a large degree, WISE focused on building sustainability for its three Result B programs by signing agreements with a variety of entities, as follows:

- The Textile Consolidation Fund institutionalized the PIP within their organization in Alexandria.
- The Federation of Egyptian Industries (FEI) institutionalized the PIP and 3R Program at FEI’s Business Development Services Center.
- Ebdaa Rehletak Program was institutionalized at:
  - The Ministry of Social Solidarity (MoSS),
  - The Ministry of Trade & Industry’s Productivity and Vocational Training Department (PVTD),
  - SEKEM, an organizational development entity in Sharquia, and
  - The Arab Academy for Science, Technology and Maritime Transport (AASTMT).

WISE also assisted the Alexandria Business Association with capacity building for its private vocational employment and training center under an activity that was added in Year 2.

The sections below provide details on WISE’s implementation of Result B objectives through its partnerships with government entities and the private sector.

Objective B.1: Labor skills, productivity, and human resource management problems faced by private firms contributing to restrictive labor regulations analyzed and understood

ACTIVITY B.1.1 CONDUCT “LABOR SKILLS, PRODUCTIVITY, AND HR MANAGEMENT STUDY”

WISE produced a report on the Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study. The main purpose of the study was to validate the governorates and sectors in which WISE operates. The two-volume study was finalized in Year 2 through the collaborative efforts of WISE, the Egyptian National Competitiveness Council (ENCC), and Baseera, the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research. WISE summarized the study in a publishable report geared towards a wide audience working
on economic growth in Egypt. Through this publication, the partners behind the study aimed to enhance the understanding of Egypt’s economy and enable evidence-based actions to improve labor market efficiency and Egypt’s overall competitiveness. In May 2017, WISE held a launch event to present and discuss the findings of the study. The event was attended by almost 200 stakeholders from the public and private sectors and included key speakers, presentation of the study, and a panel discussion on labor market efficiency and the study recommendations.

The constraints related to labor market efficiency that were identified in the report informed activities that were later undertaken by the entities created under WISE Result C. These entities include the Enabling Environment Unit (EEU), the Enabling Environment Advisory Group (EEAG), and the Economic Partnership Council (EPC).

Objective B.2 Technical, practical, and soft skills of selected job seekers upgraded and those job seekers linked to the private sector for employment

*Ebdaa Rehletak* is the WISE training-for-employment initiative that targeted out-of-school youth between the ages of 18 and 30. The program provided job seekers with market-relevant life skills, work-readiness training and support, and hands-on training, while also linking them to potential employment opportunities. Training and support were provided by *Ebdaa Rehletak Units* (ERUs) that were established by WISE in cooperation with a variety of Egyptian partners. The program consists of several stages that continue to be carried out by the WISE institutional partners:

1. Private sector companies participate in the selection of job seekers and provide candidates advance notice of potential opportunities for employment for those who successfully complete an on-the-job training phase.

2. The selected job seekers participate in the WISE-developed soft skills training conducted by the ERUs, whose members were trained as trainers to provide employability skills.

3. Job seekers then proceed to the on-the-job training phase with the companies that helped to select them.

4. WISE (and now ERUs) train supervisors from the employing companies on mentoring and coaching skills. This helps the supervisors to better communicate with and support the recruited job seekers, enhancing the likelihood that these trainees/employees will remain with the company.

5. Job seekers who successfully complete their on-the-job training are hired as company employees.

This program was designed to reduce gaps between job seeker skills and actual employer needs. The initiative’s ultimate goal was to increase employee retention, which in turn leads to better productivity, products, and services, thereby enhancing Egypt’s overall global competitiveness.

**ACTIVITY B.2.1 ESTABLISH *EBDAA REHLETAK* (“START YOUR JOURNEY”) PROGRAM FOR OUT-OF-SCHOOL JOB SEEKERS**

WISE developed and finalized the design for the *Ebdaa Rehletak Units* (ERUs) where job seekers would be able to sign up for the program, receive career counseling and work-readiness training, and connect with potential employers. There was an initial delay in the start of the program as the original targeted partner, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, ultimately did not sign an MOU. Subsequently, WISE looked to the private sector and signed an MOU with the Egyptian Federation of Investors Association (EFIA)
in late 2016. During the first quarter in 2017, WISE built the capacity of select ERUs members in 10 governorates as well as members of a central unit in Cairo. Unfortunately, citing the proposed new NGO law, EFIA pulled out of the agreement in the summer of 2017.

WISE then decided to pilot the program with a portfolio of beneficiaries with different profiles: NGOs, government organizations, academia, and private sector entities linked to NGOs. Later in the project, WISE piloted a different implementation modality, strengthening central government to establish local offices in different regions. In early 2018, WISE reached agreement with a collection of entities and started building the capacity of select ERU members in the following organizations:

- PVTD centers in Sharquia, Gharbiya, Damietta, and a central Headquarters unit in Cairo,
- Alexandria Business Association’s (ABA) Vocational Training and Employment Center (VTEC), and
- SEKEM (Sustainable Development Organization) in Sharquia, linked to a conglomerate of private sector companies that operate in the agro-business sector.

At the end of the WISE capacity building for VTEC activity in October 2018 (see Activity B.2.7), VTEC decided not to continue operating their ERU. The ERU members, who had been recruited by WISE for VTEC, were moved to the Industrial Services Complex of the AASTMT where they trained new unit members on the ER program and shadowed the unit members for a period of three months. The ERU at AASTMT proved to be sustainable and continues to operate.

In the summer of 2019, MoSS contacted WISE and expressed interest in establishing a central ERU. An MOU was signed; the Ebdaa Rehletak Central Unit (ERCU) was established; and by the close of the project, MoSS had established and trained ERUs in six governorates.

ACTIVITY B.2.2 SET UP, TRAIN, AND OVERSEE THE EBDAAR REHLETAK UNITS

Set Up and Train ERUs. Over the course of the project, WISE built the capacity of ERUs at six organizations, two of which later decided to refrain from fully implementing the program, as reported in section B.2.1. The training program consisted of two phases:

- Phase I focused on program orientation, communication skills, TOT fundamentals (for work-readiness training), presentation and facilitation skills, SWOT, PESTEL analysis, action planning, team building, LMI fundamentals, and career counseling.

- Phase II covered understanding the workforce environment for TVET positions, employability skills, working with youth, OSH, gender integration, and human capital marketing. WISE also incorporated short sessions on report writing, negotiation skills, motivational skills, time management, and work ethics.

As activities were initiated, WISE conducted site visits both to facilitate meetings with private sector companies, and to provide technical support and monitoring assistance.

The ERUs then began holding orientation sessions to introduce the program to job seekers and private sector companies. At the same time, ERUs began to collect information on job vacancies, recruit potential mentors, and promote the program at events.
To assist the ERUs in identifying job seekers, WISE partnered with Forasna (BasharSoft) at the start of Year 4. This partnership allowed for the development of an intake system and portal through which job seekers could apply to the *Ebdaa Rehletak* program and ERU staff and companies could share employment data. In cooperation with WISE, Forasna conducted trainings for ERU members from PVD, AASTMT, and SEKEM. Participants learned how to use Forasna’s online portal to record data on job seekers and job opportunities and also received an overview of the labor market challenges facing job seekers. As a follow up to the training, WISE’s field officers conducted regular site visits to ERUs to provide assistance and facilitate usage of the Forasna portal.

The limitations on in-person activities that were implemented due to COVID-19 presented a particular set of challenges for the *Ebdaa Rehletak* program. Counseling for job seekers and tracking their progress had to transition to virtual platforms while access to reliable connectivity was not consistent for all participants. Finding employers who were hiring during the pandemic was also more challenging but ERU members made their best efforts to maintain communications with job seekers and employers. The ERU network proved helpful for the PVD ERU Manager in Zagazig/Gharbiya as he was able to tap into a database of over 400 job opportunities that was shared by the head of employment at the industrial zone in Belbies/Sharquia.

**MoSS Multipliers:** During Year 4, WISE signed an MOU with MoSS that provided an additional measure of sustainability for *Ebdaa Rehletak* by embedding a core of multipliers at the MoSS headquarters. The six multipliers, representing MoSS’s ERCU, were selected in accordance with WISE established criteria.

Early in Year 5, between November 2019 and January 2020, WISE conducted a four-phase capacity building process for the MoSS multipliers. The training program equipped the ERCU with TOT skills to cascade the training of ER units to other governorates. The training program also addressed the way ER units could develop necessary mentoring skills in supervisors working in private sector firms.

At the end of Year 5, WISE supervised and supported the MoSS multipliers as they established an ERU in each of six governorates: Beni Suef, Fayoum, Minya, Luxor, Sohag, and Assiut. Due to COVID-19 safety precautions, the training sessions were conducted online in October 2020. As of January 31, 2021, these six new ERUs had employed 49 job seekers. In support of WISE’s commitment to the sustainability of *Ebdaa Rehletak*, WISE also assisted the ERCU at MoSS through a series of workshops held between August and November of 2020 to develop the following manuals:

- Policies and procedures manual
- Training and capacity building manual
- Monitoring and information management manual
- Communication and outreach strategy

As part of its efforts to enhance the efficiency of the Egyptian workforce, MoSS issued a decree in Quarter 3 of Year 5 to institutionalize the WISE-established ERCU under the Ministry’s “Training and Employment Unit”. The Training and Employment Unit is affiliated with the Forsa program, which was created by MoSS to reduce poverty by facilitating access to the labor market.

In the last quarter of Year 5, WISE delivered IT equipment to the ERCU to help the unit continue to effectively support ERUs around the country for years to come. At the start of Year 6, WISE trained the ERCU members on how to use the equipment and associated software programs.

**ACTIVITY B.2.3 SET UP, TRAIN, AND SUPPORT PRIVATE SECTOR MENTORS**

*Adapt Training Achievement Tools for Identified High-priority Jobs.* Over the life of the project, WISE established partnerships with numerous private sector companies to collaborate on Ebdaa Rehletak. WISE agreed to provide in-company training for job seekers, while private sector firms agreed to hire individuals who completed the training regime. To design optimal training programs, WISE worked with industry experts to develop industry specific Training Achievement Records (TARs). TARs are thorough checklists that detail the skills, knowledge, and behaviors necessary to perform a job. Through the use of TARs, private sector mentors are able to measure the progress of employees in identified entry-level positions. WISE also trained private sector mentors on how to use the TAR and mentoring skills with new employees or trainees.

Beginning in Year 2 of the project, WISE conducted four rounds of Private Sector Mentors Capacity Building training. Using a participatory approach, private sector representatives learned how to provide trainees and new employees with high-quality mentoring. The mentors also learned about the tools and techniques for evaluating the skill level of each trainee and new employee, and how to develop new TARs to be used to assess in-company training. (See Annex B for training descriptions.)

**ACTIVITY B.2.5 CONDUCT A MODEL JOB FAIR AND OUTREACH CAMPAIGNS**

During Year 4, AASTMT and WISE implemented the Fourth Technical Education Forum at AASTMT’s Industrial Services Complex in Alexandria. The Forum featured a national skills competition, a job fair, and a product exhibition.
The nationwide Egypt Skills Competition finals and awards ceremony featured 18 skills categories with 183 competitors. Eighteen of these finalists were selected by the PVTD and SEKEM ERUs established by WISE. The third-place winner in carpentry skills was sponsored by the PVTD ERU. Four students from WISE-supported schools who entered the competition on their own also received awards—second place in entrepreneurship skills, and third-place awards in the baking, sewing, and electrical maintenance categories.

WISE was responsible for implementing the Forum’s Ebdaa Rehletak Job Fair component. Over the two days, the fair attracted 2,162 job seekers, including 247 AASTMT students. The 64 participating companies offered nearly 3,000 job opportunities and 1,000 training opportunities to participants. The successful implementation of the model demonstrated to the ERUs how to conduct a job fair, and the ERUs are now capable of independently conducting job fairs.

**ACTIVITY B.2.6 CONDUCT ASSESSMENT OF EBDAA REHLETAK PROGRAM AND DOCUMENT RESULTS**

During Year 5 of the project, the WISE monitoring and evaluation team was scheduled to conduct field visits to ERUs, however, due to the COVID-19 outbreak and restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings, the team was able to conduct a limited desk assessment, where they reviewed reports, outputs, challenges and lessons learned. In collaboration with its partners, WISE’s efforts in institutionalizing the Ebdaa Rehletak program achieved the following:

- Built the capacity of the ERU members within the partner organizations.
- Executed 57 MOUs with participating employers.
- Mapped a total of 7,225 employment opportunities.
- Developed 50 TARs.
- Built capacity of 128 supervisors in mentorship skills.
- Trained 473 job seekers on employability skills, to date.
- Employed 429 job seekers, to date.

**ACTIVITY B.2.7 EXPLORE WAYS IN WHICH WISE MAY STRENGTHEN THE CAPACITY OF ABA VTEC**

Based on a market assessment and business plan that WISE developed for the ABA’s VTEC, the Capacity Building Activity (CBA) for VTEC was launched in April 2017. WISE staffed the CBA for VTEC team and began assisting the nascent VTEC team in hiring, establishing systems, adopting its business plan, and launching training programs with the focus on quality and financial sustainability. During the 18-month CBA for VTEC intervention, WISE worked closely with ABA and the VTEC
team to build institutional capacity, establish employment and training services, effectively market the center, and support the long-term goals of VTEC through strategic fundraising. WISE’s technical assistance for VTEC, during this activity, included:

- Delivery of a series of training courses in welding, culinary arts, OSH, carpentry, automotive maintenance, Siemens certified PLC Program, air conditioning and refrigeration, electrical systems, and retail fundamentals.

- Curricula development (both trainer and trainee manuals) in automotive maintenance, welding, and retail fundamentals.

- Development of manuals for VTEC’s operations that included an operations manual, a fundraising strategy, and a social media strategy.

- Upgraded training workshops for welding, culinary arts, automotive, electrical, as well as carpentry and HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning).

- Upgraded and/or provided equipment for the security system, the firefighting system, and office equipment.

*Milestones for ABA’s VTEC:* Although the 18-month CBA for VTEC successfully closed on October 31, 2018, WISE continued to oversee the process required for two ISO standards certifications. This oversight concluded in Year 4 following two significant actions:

- VTEC obtained official approval from the Egyptian Civil Protection Authority for the civil defense installation system that WISE assisted with in Year 3. This approval was a prerequisite for the BS OHSAS 18001:2007 (Occupational Safety & Health) certification.

- On February 5, 2019, VTEC received ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management) and BS OHSAS 18001:2007 certification from Germany’s TUV Thuringen.

These certifications and the corresponding approval represented a significant milestone for VTEC and are a direct result of the WISE capacity building efforts.

**Objective B.3: Productivity of the existing labor force improved**

Through PIP, WISE helped employers improve the productivity of their current workforce. In the first step of the program, a five-person task force consisting of middle managers and supervisors was formed in each participating company. WISE then provided the task force members with introductory training on productivity concepts and methodologies. Later, experts in five targeted sectors—ready-made garments (RMG), food processing, tourism, textiles, and furniture—worked with each partner company to assess the company’s labor productivity, develop improvement plans, and monitor improvement plan implementation.

**ACTIVITY B.3.1 RAISE AWARENESS OF COMPANIES ABOUT METHODS TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY**

The PIP design document, developed by WISE, defines the program’s methodology and approach, and clearly demonstrates the benefits companies could reap through PIP implementation. WISE partnered with private sector companies to raise awareness about methods for improving labor productivity and develop interest in the PIP. See Annex E for list of companies that have engaged with WISE for the PIP.
Late in Year 4, WISE signed MOUs with the Textile Consolidation Fund (TCF) in Alexandria and FEI to advance the sustainability of the PIP program. WISE assisted the two entities as they embedded the PIP approach into their own organizations so the program’s benefits could continue on beyond the life of the WISE project.

Pursuant to the MOUs and before the end of Year 4, WISE conducted two five-day workshops in cooperation with FEI’s Business Development Service Center (BDSC) and one five-day workshop for TCF. Through these workshops, private sector participants learned about techniques that they can use to improve productivity in their companies, and FEI employees and TCF consultants received capacity building training that will enable them to orient other companies on productivity improvement techniques. The trained FEI employees will manage PIP interventions conducted by productivity consultants including experts currently being used by WISE. The BDSC will also use WISE-developed PIP resources in support of these efforts. TCF’s trained experts will directly assist member companies in the implementation of the PIP.

Early in the first quarter of Year 5, WISE successfully closed out its PIP interventions in private sector partner companies. Over the course of the PIP, WISE provided its five-day Productivity Enhancement Training to 34 private sector partner companies, building the capacity of 263 production supervisors and managers to implement productivity improvement strategies for the benefit of their companies. Of the 34 partner companies, 24 continued on to create PIP task forces and proceeded with the program’s eight-step, two-phase implementation process (shown in the box to the right).

From the time WISE ceased to undertake direct PIP interventions, WISE continued to reinforce the sustainability of the PIP within each of its partner organizations. WISE provided additional in-depth productivity improvement program training designed to build the capacity of the BDSC and TCF to implement the PIP and ensure the sustainability of the WISE interventions after the project ends. In addition, WISE continued its assistance in each organization as follows:

- **TCF.** Between November and December 2019, WISE conducted two capacity building training workshops at TCF’s facility in Alexandria for a total of 32 participants. During these workshops, WISE built the capacity of 22 TCF in-house experts and trained 10 additional
participants representing four TCF member companies. The workshops equipped the TCF-trained experts with the skills needed to directly assist member companies in the implementation of the PIP. The private sector participants invited by TCF learned about techniques that they can use to improve productivity in their companies. As a result of the technical assistance WISE provided to TCF, TCF established a Productivity Improvement Central Unit at the end of 2019. This unit manages the WISE-trained TCF consultants who assist private sector companies in productivity improvement. In March 2020, WISE’s support was halted by the pandemic as discussed in section B.3.4 below.

- **BDSC.** Before the COVID-19 outbreak, WISE conducted two PIP awareness workshops for 37 participants representing 18 companies invited by the BDSC. To sustain the program beyond the WISE project, BDSC charged each participant in the program a fee of EGP500. From the time when the pandemic began through the end of the WISE project, WISE conducted four online PIP awareness training sessions for 77 participants representing 39 companies. BDSC charged each participant in the online programs a fee of EGP350. Going forward, the trained BDSC employees will manage PIP interventions conducted by productivity consultants including experts used by WISE. In managing this work, BDSC staff will use PIP resources first developed by WISE. In an effort to ensure the program's sustainability over the long term, PIP consultants will be compensated through the BDSC’s participant fees.

**ACTIVITY B.3.2 START THE PRELIMINARY PRODUCTIVITY SURVEY FOR SELECTED COMPANIES**

In Year 2, WISE developed two surveys: one for middle management and another for workers. The preliminary productivity improvement surveys were designed to gather important information from employees on both internal and external factors affecting labor productivity. External factors affecting labor productivity are salary, delays in payment, financial incentives, and the quality of supervisors and the administration. Internal factors affecting labor productivity include employee health and other physical aspects of working in a certain environment, as well as technical skills and experience.

Through these written surveys, WISE gained a better understanding of each company, particularly that company’s current understanding of productivity and what factors affect it (e.g., arriving on time or talking while working). In particular, the surveys gathered data regarding the effect that employees at different levels of the company have on productivity, whether they are line managers or workers.

The companies’ five-person task forces were responsible for distributing and collecting the surveys. Then, with the support of a WISE Productivity Advisor, the task forces analyzed the productivity problems, setting a baseline to measure future improvements, and identifying possible solutions to any productivity bottlenecks.

**ACTIVITY B.3.3 DEVELOP INDIVIDUAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR EACH COMPANY**

WISE Productivity Experts conducted both a baseline assessment and gap analysis for each company. Based on the results, the productivity experts developed individual action plans to guide the implementation of each company’s improvement plan. The current situation was documented, targets were set, and a root cause analysis was conducted in order to formulate the countermeasures to be implemented through the company’s action plan. The experts worked with the company task forces to
implement the recommended corrective measures, and conducted regular follow-ups to ensure the implementation was proceeding.

After the initial productivity improvement training, each company's task force began a two-phase implementation process with the assistance of a WISE expert. The first phase consisted of seven steps as noted previously in Activity B.3.1. The second and final phase was a single step that included the adjustment and standardization of the production process related to the productivity problem or problems that had been resolved in phase one. This final phase began when the company task force took direct responsibility for PIP implementation, and received only as-needed, on-demand guidance from the WISE.

During Year 2, WISE developed a productivity toolkit that all companies could use for help in the implementation of their improvement plans. The toolkit guided the productivity task force in developing, implementing, and monitoring a work plan for a productivity improvement project. The toolkit detailed a structured approach to tackling a productivity issue and described the recommended productivity tools to be used in each step. WISE also worked with experts to develop assessment tools for selected companies. These tools were designed to ascertain the challenges and issues affecting productivity based on the needs of each sector.

**ACTIVITY B.3.4 OVERSEE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL IMPROVEMENT PLANS FOR EACH COMPANY**

The implementation process proceeded at different paces for different companies. One primary challenge causing slow implementation could be attributed to the willingness and/or ability of management to stop production in order to implement the corrective measures. Over the course of the project, nine PIP partner companies reported completing the second and final phase of the WISE PIP. These companies are now implementing productivity improvement strategies on their own. Annex E shows the status to date of the WISE PIP, including the 33 companies that have received training and the six companies that withdrew before receiving training.

In Year 5, TCF began lending its expert support to member companies interested in implementing the PIP. Between February and March 2020 for example, a TCF trained expert visited with the trained task force team at Sogic (a TCF member company that was in the midst of implementing the PIP) on five separate occasions. WISE accompanied the TCF expert on the first visit to lend support. Unfortunately, as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, the textile factory significantly reduced its production and was unable to bring it back to full capacity during the year. The textile industry continues to suffer, and it will not be possible to fully implement the PIP program in textile firms until they are operating again at full capacity.
ACTIVITY B.3.5 CONDUCT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (PIP) AT PRIVATE SECTOR FIRMS, IDENTIFYING CHALLENGES, LESSONS LEARNED, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

WISE applied impact assessment methods to measure the improvements to productivity following the implementation of the company’s action plan in order to assess the impact of the interventions. WISE conducted an assessment of 12 companies, the results of which highlighted the following accomplishments for WISE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of companies that signed MoU to implement PIP</th>
<th>37</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of companies that attended the PIP training</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of companies that cancelled the PIP training</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of companies that withdrew after the PIP training</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of companies that completed phase I</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of companies that completed phase II</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within the 12 companies that completed Phase I of the PIP, the productivity rate improved by between 22% and 65%.

ACTIVITY B.3.6 DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER MECHANISMS WITHIN PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

As reported above, WISE had completed the transfer of knowledge to partner organizations, FEI’s BDSC and TCF, by the end of October 2019.

In early 2020, WISE conducted a survey of private sector companies to assess the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on their operations. Not surprisingly, the survey results indicated that some private sector companies across all sectors were becoming increasingly affected by the outbreak, with the sole exception of the food processing sector. At the time of the survey, companies had been operating at a lower capacity and had been able to retain all their employees at reduced pay (eliminating bonuses or reducing pay by a limited percentage). Some RMG companies were studying the option of producing health supplies, in particular, face masks. Based on the challenges these companies were facing, they requested WISE’s assistance in: 1) supplying them with the know-how to manufacture face masks, 2) providing a guide on how to deal with the crisis, and 3) conducting an online training on the psychological impact of operating under this crisis.

In response to these private sector requests, in the second quarter of Year 5, WISE developed a guide demonstrating how companies could continue to operate in the COVID-19 environment. (See Annex E.) The guide covers topics that include:

- A description of the virus and its effect on individuals and businesses.
- Workplace management and a business continuity work plan that illustrates concrete steps on operating during this crisis.
- Examples of measures adopted by organizations.
- Economic decisions and decrees adopted by the GOE to minimize the impact of the crisis.
- The Egyptian Ministry of Health’s mobile application that provides recommendations and responds to inquiries about the virus.

WISE distributed the guide to a variety of associates and companies including FEI and TCF. The guide was well received by WISE partners, so much so that WISE translated the guide into English to increase its accessibility in the summer of 2020.

**ACTIVITY B.3.7. ORGANIZE AWARENESS SEMINAR FOR SHARING KNOWLEDGE WITH THE INDUSTRIAL COMMUNITY**

In Year 5, WISE completed the development of a PIP manual. The manual was ultimately distributed in hard copy during the private sector event that was held on November 23, 2020. (This is described in detail in section B.4.8 below.) It was also distributed as a soft copy to all WISE private sector partners.

**Objective B.4: Firms better able to recruit, retrain, and retain their staff**

The 3R Program was designed to deliver human resources interventions that addressed skill shortages and exorbitant turnover rates by enhancing industrial enterprises’ ability to attract, retrain, and retain a qualified and loyal workforce. Under the 3R approach, master trainers visited partner companies to gather information on turnover, recruitment, training, and retention practices. WISE then conducted an in-depth analysis of human resources policies and practices against international benchmarks that are compatible with domestic culture, values, and business norms to identify gaps and develop an improvement plan for each company. A task force was created in each company to coordinate 3R implementation. WISE provided ongoing technical support to each company as it worked to implement the recommended interventions, including gender awareness.

Throughout the life of the project, 31 companies implemented the 3R program and achieved impressive results with reductions in their turnovers and improvements in their recruitment, retraining, and retention practices and systems.

**ACTIVITY B.4.1 REVIEW AND ENHANCE THE 3R APPROACH**

In Year 1, WISE reviewed the approach used by USAID’s previous project, the Egypt Competitiveness Project (ECP). WISE surveyed 12 companies that participated in the first 3R program under ECP, compiled lessons learned, and enhanced the 3R approach to adapt to the current economic environment in Egypt. WISE compiled its recommendations in “An Updated 3R Implementation Approach” and submitted the document to USAID before proceeding onward with the refined approach.

**ACTIVITY B.4.2 CREATE A 3R UNIT WITHIN PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO LEAD 3R IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSIST PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS TO DEVELOP A FEE-FOR-SERVICE SCHEME TO MAINTAIN SUSTAINABILITY**

**Partnering with the Federation of Egyptian Industries.** In late 2016, WISE signed an MOU with FEI. FEI is Egypt’s largest employer association, with 20 industrial chambers as members, representing over 60,000 industrial enterprises of which more than 90 percent belong to the private sector. In committing to this partnership, FEI established a 3R function, or task force, to host and manage the 3R Program beyond the life of the project. By the end of Year 2, WISE had trained the 10 members of the 3R function. The 3R function at FEI is headed by the HR department and managed by the Special Projects Department.
During Year 3, with the support of USAID’s Strengthening Entrepreneurship and Enterprise Development (SEED) project, FEI established its Business Development Services Center. At the request of FEI, the 3R program (along with the PIP as mentioned in section B.3.1 above) was moved under the BDSC. Late in Year 4, FEI and WISE signed an MOU to institutionalize both the 3R and PIP programs under the BDSC. Upon execution of the MOU, WISE conducted a workshop to refresh members of the 3R function on the 3R program.

In accordance with the MOU and in coordination with the BDSC, WISE started holding workshops to orient companies on basic HR concepts during Year 5. To further build their training capacity, the newly trained FEI trainers participated in the delivery of the programs and were coached by the 3R expert. During the first and second quarters of Year 5, and up until the implementation of safety restrictions due to the COVID-19 outbreak, WISE held six workshops for a total of 109 participants representing 73 companies. To sustain the program beyond the WISE project, the BDSC charged a fee of EGP400 per participant in the program.

As a result of the pandemic, WISE coordinated with BDSC to tailor the 3R program and toolbox into a 3-day online training package that discussed how to use the 3R approach in light of the COVID-19 outbreak. WISE subsequently conducted two online training sessions for 24 participants representing 17 companies. BDSC charged each participant in the online programs a fee of EGP250.

The 3R capacity building program at FEI equipped the BDSC with the following resources:

- Six trained trainers from various FEI branches who will work on marketing the program to industries throughout Egypt.

- Eight trained trainers who will organize and conduct orientation workshops for interested companies. The workshops will cover basic HR concepts that are fundamental to the implementation of the 3R program. A WISE-developed 3R toolbox that will be distributed to each participating company.

- The BDSC will also be able to tap into the pool of WISE’s experienced 3R experts to help interested companies in implementing the 3R program.

**ACTIVITY B.4.3 TRAIN MASTER TRAINERS ON THE 3R METHODOLOGY**

In Year 1, WISE organized an orientation and skills transfer training program for 24 local experts on the 3R methodology. Ultimately, 9 women and 6 men for a total of 15 were selected as Master Trainers to work with WISE within private sector companies that were assigned to them. The 15 selected master trainers were trained on 3R concepts and methodologies, and gained the knowledge required to implement the 3R Program in selected industries, as well as the ability to replicate the approach after the close of the project.

**Development of 3R Toolbox.** In Year 2, WISE facilitated a three-day workshop with 15 master trainers to develop the tools to be used in the 3R Program. The 3R Toolbox included information and tools that could be used for fieldwork at the company level. Once finalized, the 3R Toolbox was distributed by the WISE experts (or master trainers) and by BDSC to companies looking to achieve positive change in their employee recruitment, retraining, and retention practices. The 3R Toolbox was updated periodically based on lessons learned through actual implementation with companies, including during the pandemic.
ACTIVITY B.4.4 SELECT COMPANIES TO PARTICIPATE IN 3R INTERVENTIONS

In Year 2, WISE worked steadily to encourage interest in the 3R Program, meeting with companies and business associations, and conducting introductory sessions on program requirements and benefits of participation. Throughout the project, WISE worked with 44 companies on the 3R Program. All companies completed Stage 1 of the process, which was the 5-day basic HR training for the 3R task force in each company. At the outset of Stage 2, 13 companies did not proceed; they were excluded due to lack of commitment to the program. WISE worked with the remaining 31 companies and conducted a pre-implementation assessment to determine the adequacy of each company’s systems and strategies for recruitment, retraining, and retention, and managing its turnover rate. WISE then assisted the trained 3R task force teams to develop a customized action plan for each company.

ACTIVITY B.4.5 IMPLEMENT THE 3R PROPOSED INTERVENTIONS FOR SELECTED COMPANIES WITH LOCAL PARTNER AND MASTER TRAINERS

WISE introduced companies to the 3R experts who were assigned to work closely with them through the implementation of their plan. During these initial meetings, the companies and their respective experts discussed the implementation process and their broad plans and goals. With each company team, the assigned 3R expert worked quickly to identify gaps and propose interventions, so that a tailored action plan could be refined and quickly approved by company management.

ACTIVITY B.4.6 ORGANIZE STRUCTURED TRAINING AND GUIDANCE FOR HR MANAGERS AND OTHER LINE MANAGERS INVOLVED IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE IMPROVEMENT PLANS

Participant task force members developed new knowledge and skills related to human resources basics through the HR training sessions that were conducted by WISE. This collection of new knowledge and skills served as a foundation for the 3R initiatives. Among other topics, participants learned about HR activities, job analysis and descriptions, competency-based interviewing, recruiting, employee

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**3R HUMAN RESOURCES BASICS TRAINING TOPICS**

- Cascading star objectives to HR activities
- Job analysis & job descriptions
- Introduction to competencies
- Personality assessment using Myers-Briggs
- Screening CVs
- Interviewing using competencies
- Writing a recruitment ad
- Employee orientation
- Introduction to compensation & benefits
- Gender integration in the workplace
- Exit interviews: conducting & analyzing results
- Training needs analysis
- Analyzing performance problems
- Evaluation of training
- Performance appraisals
- Setting key performance indicators
- Linking appraisal results to pay raises
- Employee motivational theories
- Culture & code of ethics

Annex B includes a full description of the Human Resources Basics Training Program.

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**WISE BASIC 3R PROGRAM**

The 3R Program provides human resources interventions that address skill shortages and high turnover rates by enhancing industrial enterprises’ ability to recruit, retrain, and retain a qualified and dedicated workforce. The Program includes:

- Basic HR training for company HR offices.
- In-depth analysis of HR policies and practices benchmarked against international standards.
- Identification of gaps and creation of improvement plans.
- In-company HR task force coordinates 3R interventions in line with improvement plans.
orientation, compensation and benefits, gender integration, training needs analysis, performance appraisals, key performance indicators, and employee motivational theories.

During implementation of the companies’ individual action plans, WISE provided technical assistance through coaching and workshops for the task forces. The starting point for WISE technical assistance often included developing or refining company objectives, mission, vision, and values, as well as creating a structure for improved human resources strategies and systems. Based on the gaps and needs identified at each company and the recommended actions, WISE provided targeted assistance, support, and guidance to develop and implement various elements of the 3R approach. This included:

- **Recruitment**
  - Hiring policies, workforce plans, and organizational charts.
  - Candidate interviews, employee inductions, and exit interviews.
  - Job analyses and descriptions, with competencies specific to the company’s sector, and performance systems.

- **Training**
  - Training needs assessments (including legal requirements, client requirements, and performance management outputs), training plans, and training evaluation systems.

- **Retention**
  - Job grading, career paths, job rotations, compensation and benefits, and pay structures, and related monitoring and evaluation.
  - Employee satisfaction surveys.

**ACTIVITY B.4.7 MEASURE IMPACT OF THE 3R PROGRAM**

Employee turnover rates improved at 30 of the 31 companies as a direct result of the 3R program. The average percentage improvement in turnover rate was 35.8% for the 31 companies—rising to 40% when excluding the one company that was not able to show improvement in this category. More than half of the companies improved their turnover rates by at least 32%, and three companies achieved improvements of 88%, 87%, and 83% respectively. The chart below shows the number of companies that improved their turnover rate by at least 10%, 25%, 50%, or 75% through 3R implementation.
As noted above, WISE conducted an in-depth analysis of human resources policies and practices to identify gaps and develop an improvement plan for each individual company. Each company received a percentage score (0 to 100, with 100 being the best possible score) that reflected the strength of its systems for employee recruitment, retraining, and retention. Following the implementation of the recommendations described in the company’s improvement plan, the company’s 3R systems were reassessed.

Through 3R implementation, all 31 companies improved their scores for recruitment and retention. All but two of the 31 companies improved their scores for retraining. The chart below shows the impact of the 3R program on improving recruitment, retraining, and retention systems.

Annex E includes the results of 3R implementation at the 31 companies that worked with WISE to improve their human resources systems, as well as the 13 companies where 3R interventions had been started, but WISE assistance was discontinued.

WISE’s achievements in reducing turnover rates and improving HR systems in 3R include:

- Building the capacity of 143 HR personnel within 47 firms and associations.
- Assisted 31 companies in the implementation of the program which resulted in:
  - 34% average improvement in recruitment of job seekers.
  - 31% improvement in retraining of employees.
  - 40% average reduction in turnover of employees.

**ACTIVITY B.4.8 ORGANIZE AWARENESS SEMINARS AFTER FINISHING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 3R PROGRAM WITH A GROUP OF COMPANIES**

**Workforce Efficiency Initiatives Conference.** Towards the end of Year 3, WISE organized and hosted the Workforce Efficiency Initiatives Conference in Cairo on September 10, 2018. The event showcased the successes of private sector companies that were partnering with WISE to implement PIP and the 3R
Program. The event was attended by representatives from FEI, donor organizations, and 22 private sector partner companies. Conference presenters included:

- Two WISE partner companies – Givrex/food processing and Marib International/RMG – presented their achievements through implementation of the PIP.
- Three WISE partner companies – Swiss Garment/RMG, Isis Organic/food processing, and El Ghannam Group/RMG – presented their accomplishments through implementation of the 3R Program.

The presentations were followed by a panel discussion on the benefits of each of the WISE initiatives presented, and recommended follow-on activities to sustain the momentum of these initiatives. One follow-on activity discussed was to explore the willingness of some firms that benefited from the WISE programs to transfer their knowledge to other firms. The participants in the panel included FEI’s Executive Director and two private sector representatives. The panel was moderated by the WISE Deputy Chief of Party.

**Development of Private Sector Engagement.** On November 23, 2020, WISE hosted an event focused on the “Development of Private Sector Engagement” where WISE showcased successes achieved through its interventions with the private sector. The event was attended by several partners including the MoSS, FEI’s Executive Director, representatives from TCF, PVTD, AASTMT, SEKEM, various private sector companies, and a number of WISE experts and consultants. WISE shared a number of achievements including:

- MoSS’s success in implementing WISE’s *Ebdaa Rehletak* Program and the MoSS *Ebdaa Rehletak* Central Unit’s strategic plan;
- Achievements of specific private sector companies as a result of implementing WISE’s 3R, PIP, *Ebdaa Rehletak* initiatives;
- Established partnerships with FEI and TCF for the institutionalization of the PIP and 3R programs, and promoting these programs among private sector entities.

The event also provided the opportunity for:

- Sharing knowledge, challenges, lessons learned, success stories, and recommendations about ER, 3R, and PIP programs within the industry and its partners;
- Formally recognizing *Ebdaa Rehletak* Unit members and private sector entities that successfully completed the implementation of ER, 3R, and PIP programs.

A panel discussion moderated by the Chairman of the Egypt’s Business Women Association concluded the day. The panel addressed “how to develop and strengthen private sector engagement in the Egyptian labor market” and included the following participants: FEI Executive Director, Advisor for Training and Capacity Building at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, ISIS Organics (a SEKEM company) Industrial Manager, the Head of FEI’s HR committee, and the WISE Private Sector Programs Lead.
RESULT C: ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF EGYPTIAN STAKEHOLDERS TO IDENTIFY AND ADDRESS BARRIERS TO LABOR MARKET EFFICIENCY

Result C is designed to enhance the capacity of Egyptian stakeholders to identify and address barriers to labor market efficiency at local and national levels. This is achieved through the creation of entities such as 1) the governorate-level Economic Partnership Council (EPC), an entity made up of representatives from the public and private sectors as well as associations tasked with identifying and prioritizing government actions and interventions to enable businesses to function better at the local level; 2) the Enabling Environment Unit (EEU), a team of professionals focused on developing an enabling environment for efficient labor market demands at the national level; and 3) the Enabling Environment Advisory Group (EEAG), a collection of influential national organizations that have a primary interest in labor market efficiency and strategically guide the work of the EEU.

Objective C.1: Policy issues and other challenges that prohibit efficient labor market dynamics are identified and interventions for improvement are proposed

WISE identified constraints related to labor market efficiency through the Labor Skills, Productivity and Human Resource Management Study, feedback collected from stakeholders, and the WISE labor market study launch event that was held in Year 2 under Activity B.1.1. The list of constraints collected and detailed in the study and then refined through the stakeholder launch event informed the activities that were implemented by the entities created under Result C.

ACTIVITY C.1.1 CONDUCT LABOR MARKET ANALYSIS OF WISE SECTORS

WISE experts conducted field research, desk research, and attended conferences in order to best understand the Egyptian labor market. With this foundation, WISE completed the Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study. The study provided an overview of the current labor market situation and analyzed interventions that could be introduced or amended to improve labor market efficiency. WISE used the assessment results to inform all stakeholders of general labor market trends and, more importantly, to highlight areas in which interventions could improve the labor market environment in the direction of greater flexibility and security to benefit both workers and employers.

ACTIVITY C.1.2 IDENTIFY POLICIES, INTERVENTIONS, AND STRATEGIES THAT IMPROVE LABOR MARKET EFFICIENCY

As referenced above, WISE finalized and published a summary of findings report for the Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study, a study that was produced through a collaborative effort between WISE, the Egyptian National Competitiveness Council (ENCC), and the Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera). This publication was geared toward a wide audience working on economic growth in Egypt and summarizes the most pertinent elements of the full study. WISE distributed the report to stakeholders with the aim of enhancing economic understanding and enabling evidence-based actions to improve the labor market efficiency and Egypt’s overall competitiveness. Stakeholders included private sector companies, policy research organizations, business associations, community organizations, governmental entities, and international donors. A mapping of the relevant stakeholders was addressed in the Labor Study.

Chapter 4 of the Summary of Findings report was devoted to policy assessment and recommendations. It provided an analysis of labor market issues, Egypt’s previous and current labor laws versus new proposed laws, and recommendations. The chapter assesses the efficiency and flexibility of Egypt’s
labor market and the need to create an environment that enables workforce development. The recommendations gleaned from the study pave a pathway for activities that contribute towards improving Egypt’s labor market efficiency.

**Objective C.2 Selected organizations are assisted in developing strategies to advocate for reforms related to labor market efficiency (and positive outcomes of implementing these strategies substantiated)**

Due to the delay in obtaining MoSS’s approval for its subcontract with WISE, ENCC was unable to proceed with the implementation of activities until October 22, 2018, when the EEU was established. Between November 2018 and January 2019, WISE assisted with the creation of the EEAG, which consists of influential national associations and entities, to promote labor market efficiency. The EEU serves as a support unit for the EEAG in drafting briefings, updates, and position papers on labor market development and challenges. During the life of the project, the EEU organized workshops and conferences in coordination with EEAG. The EEU also developed a road map that defined the roles of the EEU and EEAG and laid out a plan that will continue to promote labor market efficiency beyond the life of WISE.

**ACTIVITY C.2.1 DEVELOP AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT UNIT (EEU) WITHIN A NATIONAL ENTITY**

As mentioned above, WISE established the EEU within ENCC in August 2018, Year 3 of the project. An EEU Director and Junior Economist were hired to begin the work of the EEU. In February 2019, Year 4 of the project, the EEAG was established.

**ACTIVITY C.2.2 PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT TO THE EEU**

As soon as the EEU was established, WISE initiated efforts to build the unit’s capacity to develop research and promote enabling environment activities in support of labor market efficiency. WISE provided ongoing technical support to build the capacity of the EEU staff on a range of topics, including developing partnerships and networks, and formulating strategies and methods for promoting an enabling environment for labor market efficiency.

The result of WISE’s initial capacity building of the EEU was the establishment of the EEAG (described under Activity C.2.3, below) and the development of position papers on selected challenges to Egypt’s labor market, as identified in WISE’s Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study.

The EEU provided support to the EEAG in drafting briefings and updates, and managing the development of position papers on labor market development and challenges. The EEU also organized workshops and conferences in coordination with the EEAG, and developed a plan that defines the roles that the EEU and EEAG will continue to play in enhancing labor market efficiency beyond the life of WISE. Throughout the project, WISE provided ongoing support to the EEU as the entity developed the following important communications tools:

- **The EEU labor market web platform.** This platform provided a central location for collecting and storing useful labor market data. This data can then be disseminated along with analyses generated by the unit.
- **The EEU’s joint communications plan with the Economic Partnership Council.** This communication plan established a platform for exchange of information and best practices. The plan was developed in conjunction with the central and local EPC units that were established in partnership with the Ministry of Local Development (MoLD) under WISE Objective C.3.

**ACTIVITY C.2.3 ASSIST AND SUPPORT THE EEU IN CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT ADVISORY GROUP (EEAG)**

The EEAG was established through close cooperation between WISE and ENCC. Through discussions with ENCC’s Chairman, Executive Director, and Chief Financial Officer, it was agreed that ENCC would rejuvenate its previously established Business Advisory Council (BAC), which consists of 17 very influential institutions. ENCC completed the bylaws for the BAC and selected the ENCC Chairman to serve as the temporary Chairman of the BAC. He endorsed the establishment of the EEAG as a BAC sub-committee to promote labor market efficiency, and ENCC selected a group of influential stakeholders identified in the labor study to serve on the EEAG.

WISE coordinated with USAID’s SEED project to provide ENCC with a copy of the SEED-developed advocacy training manual. In accordance with its subcontract with WISE, ENCC engaged a consultant (recommended by SEED) to complete a needs assessment of EEAG member organizations. The assessment documented EEAG member organizations’ existing capacity to promote and advocate for policy reforms related to improved labor market efficiency. The gaps in their advocacy capabilities were identified through the needs assessments. This work then served as the basis upon which the consultant customized the SEED advocacy materials developed for the Policy Advocacy Training Workshop that was organized by WISE and successfully completed in January 2019. This workshop included both EEAG members, the EEU, and members of the EPC central and local units. (See Objective C.3 below).

**ACTIVITY C.2.4 SUPPORT THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT UNIT (EEU) TO DEVELOP A LABOR MARKET EFFICIENCY STRATEGY WITH EMPHASIS ON LABOR MARKET EFFICIENCY FOR EGYPT WITH PARTICULAR FOCUS ON SECTORS AND GOVERNORATES IDENTIFIED BY WISE**

In Year 4, the expert consultants selected by WISE and ENCC finalized three position papers on: (1) encouraging female participation in the labor market, (2) minimizing the informal sector, and (3) institutionalizing the dual education system. These three topics were selected by the EEAG from the WISE-developed *Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study* that was completed in Year 2. The development process for each of the three position papers involved collecting feedback from a wide range of relevant stakeholders to build consensus for recommendations offered in the papers. The final position papers were publicized and discussed at the EEAG National Conference, “Enabling Business Environment: Towards More Reforms in the Labor Market” in 2019. This conference marked an important milestone as it facilitated input from a wide range of stakeholders that will be used in the future for drafting a policy advocacy strategy to foster an improved enabling environment for market-driven workforce development.

In consultation with concerned stakeholders, in Year 5 the EEAG selected two recommendations proposed in the three position papers to advocate for:

1. GOE’s adoption of a sector skills council framework, which was identified in the position paper on the dual education system.
2. Integration of gender in macro-economic policies in Egypt, which was identified in the position paper on female participation in the labor market.

Both these recommendations were considered by the stakeholders as the most important since they are part of the GOE reform agenda.

**Sector Skills Council.** Three consultative sessions were held by the EEAG before and after COVID-19 lockdown measures were implemented. Participants included stakeholders from MoETE, GIZ, TVET-Egypt, the private sector, and academia. The sessions concluded with an agenda for future actions that included the dissemination of each session’s discussions and collecting feedback from additional stakeholders to support the building of a consensus over the legal framework of the sector skills councils.

**Integration of gender in macro-economic policies.** A roundtable session was held by the EEAG in October 2020 to discuss a draft position paper prepared by an ENCC consultant on the integration of gender in macro-economic policies. The meeting was attended by public and private sector representatives. Recommendations adopted during the meeting include:

1. Importance of establishing an “Equal Opportunity Unit” in each ministry. Based on a model being implemented in Japan and Germany, establishing an Equal Opportunity Unit would be required before a ministry’s budget could be adopted.

2. Importance of including an awareness program on the role of females in society within the educational system.

3. Necessity to develop a law to protect against Gender-Based Violence.

4. Importance of softly promoting anti-gender-based violence in the media and in TV series.

Based on feedback received during the session, the consultant updated the position paper and the final version was published on ENCC’s website.

**Objective C.3 Stakeholders at the governorate level are supported in addressing identified challenges to labor market efficiency**

The model EPC in Beni Suef is the first of its kind in Egypt and serves as the main entity for addressing the goals of objective C.3. The EPC board consists of local representatives from the public and private sectors, as well as business associations. The board members collaborate to guide the local government on how to enable businesses to function more efficiently through the adoption of local policy reforms that lead to an improvement in labor market efficiency. Based on an MOU executed in 2018 between WISE and MoLD, both entities agreed to cooperate in the establishment of an EPC in Beni Suef.

In accordance with the MOU, an Economic Survey for Beni Suef was completed early in Year 4. The survey informed MoLD and the Governorate of four promising economic sectors in Beni Suef and mapped the most influential stakeholders in each sector. In Years 4 and 5, a sector strategy for each promising sector was completed. The four sector strategies relate to industrial mining, small and medium enterprises (SMEs)/handicrafts, agriculture, and tourism. At the end of Year 5, a general economic strategy that included the utility needs for each aforementioned sector was completed.
ACTIVITY C.3.1 DEVELOP A GOVERNORATE-LEVEL EPC AS A MODEL TO ADDRESS LABOR MARKET EFFICIENCY CHALLENGES THROUGH COLLABORATION AMONG LOCAL GOVERNMENT, THE PRIVATE SECTOR, AND NGOS

As noted under Objective B.2, the MOU between WISE and MoLD allowed WISE to work with MoLD on the establishment of a model EPC in Beni Suef.

The EPC’s primary purpose is to provide its members with the opportunity to discuss issues and challenges related to labor market efficiency and to collaborate to identify solutions. Therefore, an important task for the EPC was the compilation of a list of issues and challenges that its members could address.

ACTIVITY C.3.2 ESTABLISH EPCS IN SELECTED GOVERNORATES

WISE worked with MoLD and the Governor of Beni Suef in Year 3 to establish the six-member Beni Suef EPC local unit and the six-member EPC Central Unit in Cairo. Offices were dedicated for each unit and WISE equipped and furnished each office. Through a decree in Year 4, the Governor of Beni Suef formally established the EPC Board and appointed representatives from the private and public sectors as well as business associations and NGOs. The representatives were selected from the list of mapped stakeholders in the WISE-developed economic survey. The Beni Suef EPC was the first economic advisory committee in Egypt to be formally established with representatives named and functions clearly defined.

The EPC board held its first formal meeting on April 10, 2019, Year 4 of the project. In attendance were the 20 members of the EPC board: 3 representatives from academia, 11 representatives from the private sector, including NGOs, and 6 representatives from the public sector. During the meeting, the structure, mission, and objectives of the EPC and the functions of the council members were discussed.

WISE Capacity Building for the EPC. WISE delivered five separate capacity building programs for a total of 70 participants from the EPC units and board. Topics included policy advocacy (as noted above under Objective C.2), feasibility studies, economic sector analysis, and local economic development. Local economic development training was conducted by a U.S. expert who prepared the participants for and accompanied them on an upcoming study tour.

In October of 2019, WISE, in cooperation with subcontractor AMIDEAST, organized and facilitated a six-day EPC Study Tour to Hickory, North Carolina, U.S.A. The town of Hickory in Catawba County was selected because of certain economic development similarities with Beni Suef. Hickory and Catawba County had once been a single industry area. As competition from elsewhere increased and
resulted in a serious decline in that industry, through regional cooperation and a decentralized approach to economic development, the Hickory/Catawba area was transformed into a successful model of multiple economic sectors doing business with domestic and international firms. During the study tour, 17 participants including the Minister of Local Development and the Governor of Beni Suef, learned about best practices in operating an effective economic partnership council and strategies for diversifying and growing local economies. The group met with local government leaders, business executives, and community members and toured multiple businesses, a community college, and vocational training center. Throughout the study tour, the U.S Local Development expert helped the participants connect what they were experiencing with the training they had completed in Beni Suef.

**ACTIVITY C.3.3 SUPPORT EPCS IN IDENTIFYING, CATALOGING, DISCUSSING, AND ADDRESSING LOCAL CHALLENGES, CAPACITY BUILDING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (GOVERNORATE LEVEL) AND IDENTIFYING NATIONAL-LEVEL POLICY ISSUES TO BE REFERRED TO THE EEU**

WISE worked closely with an Egyptian expert to complete the Beni Suef Economic Survey that identified the four most promising sectors for economic development in the governorate. Those sectors were identified as agriculture, industrial mining, SME/handicrafts, and tourism. Utilities to service each of these four sectors were also identified as critical to economic development. The final draft of the agriculture and industrial mining sector strategies were completed in Year 4 and the remaining sector strategies were completed in Year 5. Once the four sector strategies were completed, WISE developed a General Economic Strategy for Beni Suef that included a section on the utilities sector. The general strategy was presented by the Governor during the EPC National Conference that took place in December 2020.

The team of experts that EPC and WISE engaged to develop these strategies received support and assistance from the local EPC unit in Beni Suef. The experts collected data and met with stakeholders related to each sector in order to elicit their input, and incorporate it into the draft strategies. As input was incorporated, MoLD’s central unit reviewed the draft strategies and provided feedback. The drafts were revised based on MoLD’s feedback and presented to the EPC board and the Governor. Final versions were then issued.

Early in Year 5, changes in the GOE resulted in the Governor of Beni Suef and some of the public officers who were serving on the EPC Board being replaced. The new Governor nominated replacement officers to the EPC Board, and expanded the Board to 22 members, half of whom represented the private sector and NGOs. The USAID Mission Director and WISE COR met the new Governor and briefed him on USAID’s activities in Beni Suef. WISE staff were present for this briefing and shortly afterwards, MoLD and WISE conducted a two-day workshop to review the strategies completed to-date, mainly the agriculture, industrial mining, and tourism strategies, with the Governor, the EPC Board, and the consultant recruited to develop the general economic strategy. During the workshop,
held in February 2020, the participants, including the Governor, worked in small groups to select the most feasible projects for the near term from the three strategies. The projects identified were:

1. Create a central farmers market for fruit and vegetables.
2. Establish packing facilities for vegetable exports with an annual capacity of 3 tons.
3. Establish production facilities for sun-dried tomatoes with an annual capacity of 256 tons.
4. Develop the industrial compound for medicinal and aromatic products.
5. Reopen Sonoor Cave and develop the surrounding area.

In closing the workshop, the Governor spoke about his interest in the proposed Kom Abo El Nour village/Maydom Pyramid project, which was identified in the tourism sector strategy.

In an effort to keep the SME/handicraft strategy development on track, early in March 2020, WISE and the SME/handicrafts consultant visited Beni Suef Governorate to meet with and collect additional data from relevant stakeholders.

The COVID-19 travel restrictions made it impossible for the SME/handicrafts consultant to travel to Beni Suef for meetings with specific SMEs that were to provide information for the sector strategy. Together, MoLD, WISE and the consultant agreed to replace the in-person visits with a data survey and questionnaire for SMEs to complete. The consultant developed a survey that was reviewed and approved by WISE and MoLD. During the last week of April 2020, the survey was sent to the local Beni Suef EPC unit and distributed to select SMEs to collect their feedback. Based on the feedback received, the SME/handicraft consultant completed the strategy. The strategy was reviewed by MoLD, and presented to the Governor and EPC board in late August 2020.

The findings in the SME/handicrafts strategy fed into the general economic strategy that was already under development. The general strategy was completed in October 2020, reviewed by MoLD, and presented to the Governor and EPC board.

**Putting Beni Suef on the Tourism Map.** As soon as the GOE eased pandemic travel restrictions in June of 2020, the Governor became very active in promoting local development in Beni Suef—particularly in the tourism sector. He met with civil society organizations that focus on local development to discuss the WISE-produced five-year tourism development strategy. The Governor was very supportive of moving ahead with the plan that would lead to placing Beni Suef on the tourism map, locally and internationally. The WISE strategy capitalized on several criteria that qualify a location as a tourist destination. This included: 1) historical monuments, which Beni Suef possesses from the Pharaonic, Roman, Coptic, and Islamic eras; 2) archaeological monuments such as the Maydoom
Pyramid with its unique structure; and 3) natural monuments such as the Sonoor Cave, one of the rarest cave types in the world.

The Governor also requested assistance from the Ministry of Tourism to include Beni Suef in its Holy Family Path and Nile Tourism project as the path runs through Beni Suef. In July 2020, he had the Maydoom Pyramid illuminated, began planning for a sound and light show, and announced plans to provide incentives to SMEs to open shops around the Maydoom Pyramid. On October 30-31, the Governor organized a two-day event to promote tourism in Beni Suef. The event consisted of motorcycle rides and sports activities implemented by members of the Cairo Hawks Club (Harley Davidson riders).

**WISE Included in a Report by the Minister.** Based on a request from the Council of Ministers, the Minister of Local Development issued a report in October 2020 outlining donor activities. WISE’s partnership with MoLD and the Governorate in Beni Suef were included in the report. The Minister’s report emphasized that WISE’s general and sectoral strategies are being adopted and prioritized by MoLD and the governorate of Beni Suef. Specifically, highlighted strategies included:

- Placing Beni Suef on the tourist map through the Holy Family Path.
- Developing the area surrounding Maydoom Pyramid.
- Establishing a local industry for medicinal and aromatic plants to boost the agricultural sector.

The report also highlighted cooperation between the public and private sectors at the local level through the establishment of the EPC unit and board through WISE’s support. The report clarified how the EPC unit assisted the governorate in achieving its sector strategies, and also described the training opportunities that were provided to EPC board members and local and central development unit members through the U.S. study tour to North Carolina. Finally, the report noted that the Beni Suef model will be replicated in two or three other governorates, and that MoLD planned to continue its collaboration with WISE.

**General Economic Development Strategy.** In February 2020, WISE engaged a consultant to develop the general economic strategy for Beni Suef. Because of COVID-19 travel restrictions, the consultant was unable to conduct physical visits to sites in the governorate, a critical step in developing a feasible economic strategy, until October of 2020. The Minister of Local Development submitted a memorandum to the Prime Minister on economic development studies conducted in Upper Egypt with a particular emphasis on Beni Suef. The memo included a briefing for the Prime Minister on the WISE-
developed sector strategies for Beni Suef as well as the general economic strategy that was, at the time, under development. The memo also included a request to the Prime Minister to provide funding for projects recommended by the Beni Suef economic studies. The Prime Minister’s office responded with a request for a summary of the general economic strategy in order to coordinate with relevant entities for the implementation of recommended projects. The response also noted that the economic development program of Beni Suef should be disseminated to all the other governorates in Egypt. The general economic strategy was so well received that the Prime Minister’s office requested that the Minister present the strategy during the next Council of Governors meeting.

The economic development strategy was finalized and presented at the EPC national conference in December 2020, as highlighted in Section C.3.4 below.

**ACTIVITY C.3.4 ASSIST EPC IN SHARING INFORMATION WITH THE SECRETARIAT AND THE EEU**

During the two-day workshop held in Beni Suef in February 2020 with the new Governor and EPC board (reported under section C.3.3 above), the EEU and two ENCC staff conducted a session to optimize communication between the EPC, the EEAG, and the EEU. The workshop included the following:

- The EEU and ENCC representatives presented the national-level challenges to labor market efficiency encompassed in the three position papers developed by WISE and ENCC: (1) encouraging female participation in the labor market, (2) minimizing the informal sector, and (3) institutionalizing the dual education system.

- The EEU explained their process, beginning with the selection of the three topics from the **WISE Labor Skills, Productivity, and Human Resources Management Study** through the development of the corresponding position papers.

- The EEU discussed how national-level challenges should be incorporated into economic development planning in Beni Suef.

**Labor Market Challenges.** As a result of this workshop, the EPC began discussing labor market challenges in its meetings.Later in February, the EPC board and unit members noted the lack of an entrepreneurial culture in the governorate. In coordination with the Governor, they conducted an awareness campaign on entrepreneurship and its benefits. The Governor formed a Youth Advisory Council, consisting of young volunteers from various education backgrounds, to work with the EPC board in promoting the spirit of entrepreneurship among youth and, in return, gain experience in the subject matter. At the invitation of the Governor, three female members of the Youth Advisory Council participated in the workshop held in August 2020 with the EPC to present the SMEs/handicrafts strategy (referenced in C.3.3 above).

During the August workshop, the EPC discussed new challenges to labor market efficiency and identified the following:

- Lack of synergy between technical education and labor market needs.

- Predominance of the informal sector in Beni Suef (this challenge will be passed on to the EEU as it will be addressed on a national level).
• Inconvenience of working hours for women and the unavailability of transportation between villages in Beni Suef. EPC members volunteered to discuss this issue with their board colleague who is the local representative of the National Council of Women in Beni Suef as she was unable to participate in the August 2020 meeting. The committee will then propose potential solutions to the Governor.

On October 24, 2020, the Beni Suef EPC elevated two labor market challenges to the EEU for consideration at the national level:

• Low labor wages in the industrial and non-industrial sectors due to employment informality. The EEU will include this issue in its list of challenges for the EEAG to address.

• Inconvenient number of work hours for females. This issue will be addressed by EEAG’s planned intervention related to female participation in the labor market.

**EPC National Conference.** On December 10, 2020, WISE held a national conference to share the success of the EPC model it introduced in Beni Suef. In attendance were the Minister of Local Development, the Governors of Beni Suef and Fayoum, as well as the USAID Mission Director who participated virtually.

In his address, the Minister briefed the audience on the GOE’s plan to promote local development and capacity building in Upper Egypt, and recognized USAID’s achievements in Beni Suef through the WISE project. The Minister emphasized that these achievements align with GOE’s vision for Upper Egypt. The Governor of Beni Suef presented the Governorate’s macro-economic strategy, which was based on the general strategy developed by WISE. He also extended his appreciation for the fruitful cooperation with USAID through the WISE project and highly commended the WISE team for their performance in Beni Suef. The USAID Mission Director emphasized the importance and benefits of building public-private partnerships for economic development and labor market efficiency. The conference received wide coverage by the media including TV, digital, and print media.
III. CROSS-CUTTING ACTIVITIES

Sustainability and Sustainable Transformation

Throughout the course of the project, WISE was deliberate about integrating sustainability measures into project activities. The project focused on empowering local partner organizations while building the capacity of institutions and individuals to achieve long term and sustainable transformation.

Under Result A, WISE made use of existing capacities and practices in the education sector at the school, local government, and central and policy making levels to achieve sustainable outcomes. Partnerships with government entities were stimulated by a solid political will for education reform and a desire to implement reform strategies that were reflected in the project activities and outputs.

The UTE model was developed throughout the project’s lifetime. By the end of the project, WISE had successfully and sustainably transitioned its management to the 60 schools that are operating the five SUTE departments through a network of over 1,200 trained personnel in the SUTEs, LUTEs and CUTE offices. All UTEs are connected through a tailored online portal that was developed to cater to the communication and operational needs of the transition-to-employment units. The UTE model is in its most complete form when units operate with minimal external intervention, particularly from donors. MoETE is considering the roll-out and institutionalization of these units within the government structure as a main pillar in its reform strategy.

Within the UTEs, the career guidance and entrepreneurship curricula have been developed and rolled out in WISE-supported schools. Over the life of the project, the curricula have been embraced by the technical education system and shifted from elective options to mandatory requirements included in the study plans of the technical education system. Multipliers and LUTE members have been trained to provide supervision, guidance, and monitoring of both curricula across schools. During Year 5 and the COVID-19 outbreak, career guidance and entrepreneurship teachers led efforts in online learning and virtual communication with students. This was critical as most school activities shifted to online platforms and schools were not yet equipped or well versed in remote education and distance learning.

Additionally, WISE introduced OSH within the UTE model as a fifth department. This initiative was the first of its kind in Egypt and addressed a dire need for assessing and acting upon OSH hazards in schools and ensuring that schools meet Egyptian and international standards. WISE developed an OSH operational manual that details guidelines for managing health and safety in schools.

WISE developed competency-based curricula for three new sectors resulting in four new specializations that were rolled out in seven schools: three for logistics, three for renewable energy and one for agro-industries. The competency-based model has been endorsed by MoETE and the private sector, and

An evacuation drill being executed by OSH members in Beni Suef’s Decorative Technical Secondary School. Photo Credit: WISE
adopted in schools. MoETE supported the WISE-introduced specializations and rolled out the curricula in additional non-WISE-supported schools in Suez, Safaga and Cairo with minimal engagement from WISE. This proactive approach indicates the readiness and capacity of ministry personnel to implement positive interventions independently. It should also be noted that the private sector played a pivotal role in the design and implementation of the new specializations including, for example, WISE’s success in establishing the Benban Advisory Board, which is tasked with overseeing and sustaining efforts related to the renewable energy sector. The advisory board was a private sector initiative headed by the Governor of Aswan with participation of stakeholders active in the renewable energy sector.

In coordination with NAQAAE, MoETE, the private sector, and academia, WISE has developed internationally-benchmarked technical education quality standards to improve the quality of technical education schools. These standards are a cornerstone to reforming the quality of education and represent the first technical education quality standards in Egypt. The development of these quality standards laid the foundation for initiating operations in institutions being founded by the GOE in accordance with the technical education reform strategy, aligned with MoETE’s goals to institutionalize education quality for technical education.

WISE played an active role in MoETE’s technical education reform strategy TE 2.0 and took the lead in the following:

- Created a blueprint for operational best practices in technical schools. MTS manuals were developed and are now used by MoETE to initiate school-based reform efforts within technical schools. The manuals covered all aspects of school operation such as governance and management; finance and fundraising; quality assurance; infrastructure and information technology; competency-based education; and admission and career development centers. Manuals were tailored to the Egyptian context of technical education and integrated best practices for school-based reform.
- Set up and institutionalized TVETA, a framework for MoETE for capacity building and training and certification of technical education teachers.
- Designed reform efforts for commercial technical schools that transformed these schools into market-relevant and demand driven schools.
- Assessed and developed 5-year schools with a focus on students’ career paths towards higher education or the labor market.
- Set up and institutionalized education quality offices within the MoETE such as CEQAT for building the capacity of and supporting schools as they transitioned towards quality management, or outside the Ministry but still within the GOE such as ETQAAN for external audits and accreditation.
- Designed and advocated for the establishment of a sector skills council, an independent private sector led body that sets qualifications and skills standards in vocational education to ensure relevance of education and market needs.

WISE also played a critical role in the design and setup of MoETE’s technical office, the main role of which is to monitor the execution and operationalization of the technical education reform strategy.

WISE has also implemented sustainability measures under Result B; Ebdaa Rehletak is one example of sustainability where the program was piloted in a number of organizations and was implemented
through various models of operation, based on context. The extent of the program’s sustainability was a direct result of each organization’s commitment to employment as a mandate and its reach in the private sector to secure employment. This was demonstrated at SEKEM, where the association had a core commitment to provide employment opportunities to its surrounding community. WISE’s programming resulted in an institutionalized methodology that provided an organized stream of employment opportunities within SEKEM’s 19 private sector industrial and agricultural facilities.

Additionally, MoSS’s interest in creating an empowered and employed population was a driving force in the Ministry’s execution and sustainable institutionalization of the *Ebdaa Rehletak* initiative within itself. This was demonstrated through the Ministry’s rapid adoption of the model within pilot governorates. By the end of the project, WISE had designed a strategic plan for implementing *Ebdaa Rehletak* within MOSS and empowered a central unit that is currently rolling out the program.

Another example of sustainability efforts under Result B are the 3R and PIP initiatives. Both programs have resulted in over 20 trained experts who implemented the programs successfully in more than 30 companies. FEI’s BDSC inherited both programs and has been acting as the main focal point for their operations and delivery during the last two years of implementation. FEI has successfully generated revenue for both programs; PIP generated a total of EGP 56,000 and the 3R program generated EGP 50,000 over two years, despite COVID-19 restrictions and challenges during the second year. The PIP was also institutionalized at TCF where TCF experts were empowered to deliver the training course and implement the program at member factories.

Under Result C, the EPC model has been successfully implemented in Beni Suef where the EPC, in coordination with WISE, formed an economic development strategy for the governorate and focused on designing economic development action plans for a number of sectors. The model’s success encouraged the government to roll the model out to other governorates, as mandated through a decree issued by the Prime Minister’s office. Consequently, MoLD is currently responsible for replicating the model in other governorates and is drawing on EPC members’ successes and lessons learned as a basis for replicating the model.

**Gender Integration**

Over the course of the project, WISE promoted awareness of gender inclusion issues among school administrators, teachers, students, and private sector representatives. WISE prepared a three-hour gender inclusion module that was tailored to and conducted for various participants including teachers, private sector representatives, and ERU members. Once the module was developed, it was delivered by 11 trainers who had been trained to tailor and facilitate gender modules according to their target audience. During the project’s five years of operation, over 5,000 men and women participated in 200 training programs that offered WISE’s gender module as part of their curriculum. Participants expressed particular interest in topics on preventing and navigating harassment in schools, equipping schools with social and psychological specialists to manage harassment cases, and raising awareness on gender issues in public schools.

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<th>TOP INDUSTRIES WITH WOMEN EMPLOYED AS A RESULT OF WISE PROGRAMS</th>
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<td>• RGM with 6,504 females employed in companies including Swiss company for RMG, Baby Coca in Alexandria and Naga.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Food Processing with 1,492 females employed in companies including Americana and Givrex.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Complementary Industries with 375 females employed in companies including SE Wiring Systems.</td>
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WISE also increased the participation rate of women in the workforce through a number of skill enhancement activities including teacher training in technical schools, on-the-job training in factories, and employability training for job seekers. In Year 5, more than 22,000 female technical school teachers, students, school principals, job seekers, and firm employees were trained under WISE (representing 46 percent of the total number of individuals trained). Of these figures, female students who received in-company training accounted for 52 percent of all student trainees (1,256 students out of 2,428). In addition, more than 1,593 women were employed (including school graduates and job seekers), representing 27 percent of the total number employed. Overall, 34 percent of the number of participants in WISE programs designed to increase access to viable economic resources were female.

WISE’s focus on gender integration throughout the life of the project has led to an increase in female participation, which is reflected in the figures below.

1. 20 out of the 60 WISE-supported schools were female only schools. Another 18 of the schools were mixed gender. As such 63 percent of WISE schools served girls. Within WISE-supported schools, WISE served more than 100,000 students, 43 percent of whom were females.

2. More than 46 percent of the career guidance students and 48 percent of the entrepreneurship students were female; 62 percent of the students who became trained Peer Helpers were females; and 34 percent of the students enrolled in the four WISE-developed new specializations (logistics, renewable energy, animal/poultry production, and agriculture/irrigation technology) were females.

3. Out of the 33,128 graduates who have been employed, 10,202 are females (31 percent). Out of the 19,479 who have received in-company training, 10,105 are females (52 percent).

4. With 43 percent of the UTE staff and 31 percent of the new specializations teachers being women, female teachers make a significant contribution to WISE activities.

5. 55 percent of participants trained by WISE, including MoETE officials, school administrators, and principals were females.

6. Under Result B, 40 percent of job seekers who were trained by ERUs and employed by the private sector were women and 31 percent of the ERU members were women. During the job fair organized by WISE in cooperation with AASTMT in Alexandria, 25 percent of the 2,000 job seekers who registered and visited the fair were females.

7. Women have also contributed to activities related to improving the enabling environment for labor market efficiency—4 of the 23 EPC board members and 5 of the 11 EEAG members were women.
8. Out of the 44 participants who took part in a WISE overseas training program, 14 (32%) were women from education, policy making, and teaching backgrounds.

9. As part of its efforts to promote labor market efficiency, WISE drafted two position papers related to women’s participation in the labor market. Both position papers were discussed with the EEAG and relevant stakeholders, and subsequently recommendations in these areas were included in the national strategy.

Understanding the important influence of females on the labor market, WISE advocated for the active participation of women in its interventions. WISE emphasized gender-focused activities including awareness, support, and encouragement of local communities in mainstreaming gender in labor market dynamics. Below are key takeaways from WISE gender inclusion activities:

- There is a general lack of awareness and proper public education on issues related to gender inclusion, mainstreaming gender in policy making, and on female participation in the labor market. While implementing gender focused activities is vital, a lack of designated funding and focus on gender-based interventions result in the marginalization of gender activities in comparison with other programmatic activities.

- Traditional gender training topics are losing their relevance and becoming obsolete. There is a market demand for practical topics that address real issues within communities. WISE trainers and consultants assessed the need for trainings on topics such as bullying, abuse, and violence in schools. Schools need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills to face those issues and address them properly.

- Particular sectors or industries have tended to be unsafe for women due to sexual harassment in the work place. Women typically avoid working in places such as ready-made garments, textiles, and furniture factories and workshops. Students and teachers from WISE-supported schools have previously expressed concern regarding such industries indicating a strong need to engage the private sector in dialogue around these issues and to work with supervisors and human resource personnel to support the adoption of workplace measures to protect women from workplace harassment.

- Gender needs assessments should be conducted prior to the implementation of activities. Further, gender activities need to be taken into consideration during the design and work planning stages, and when developing tools for monitoring and evaluating impact.

**Environmental Protection**

Throughout the project, WISE was committed to the use of safe environmental practices in all its activities and implemented sustainable activities that do not have a negative impact on the environment. The WISE project’s Environmental Mitigation and Monitoring Plan (EMMP), which was updated periodically, confirmed that the majority of WISE activities were deemed to be very low risk. WISE included environmental awareness activities for its participants in both schools and the private sector. Although the project did not work directly with hazardous materials or in risky environments, environmental awareness activities extended to occupational safety and health as defined by international best practices and standards.
**Occupational health and safety in the technical schools.** Within the UTE model, WISE succeeded in establishing a department specifically for OSH that complemented the four other departments and provided students and teachers with a heightened awareness of safety and health issues in their schools. These OSH departments conducted hazard assessments, developed school evacuation plans, carried out fire drills in collaboration with local civil defense offices, and held regular OSH awareness workshops. This attention to best practices helped students to be better prepared for entering the workforce and to be safety-conscious workers.

OSH department members regularly participated in safety training sessions conducted by local and international experts. WISE also designed a safety handbook for every WISE-supported school that was based on actual school conditions and tailored accordingly.

**OSH & COVID-19.** The outbreak of COVID-19 presented a new environmental risk that WISE addressed in several ways. With the technical schools, WISE encouraged and supported the UTE/OSH department teams to raise awareness about the virus and promote safe and healthy behaviors. OSH members in LUTEs and SUTEs were instrumental in supporting their communities by sanitizing schools, conducting awareness sessions on how to curb the spread of the virus, hanging posters in schools highlighting preventive measures, distributing face masks and sanitizers at schools, and conducting temperature checks before allowing anyone into a school.

Peer Helping students also did their part and complemented the OSH committee’s work during the pandemic. Students volunteered to assist with sanitizing schools and helped their peers to become more aware of health and sanitation issues related to the spread of the virus and appropriate measures to take to remain safe.

WISE developed a guide for helping businesses remain operational during the COVID-19 outbreak. The guide covers a variety of topics and includes examples of safety measures adopted by respected organizations, the World Health Organization’s guide to COVID-19, and the Egyptian Ministry of Health’s mobile application that provides recommendations and responds to inquiries about the virus. The guide was distributed to a variety of companies and associations.

**OSH in the private sector.** Ebdaa Rehletak also contributed to promoting and advocating for proper safety standards. All Ebdaa Rehletak trainees, whether Ebdaa Rehletak Unit members or private sector mentors participated in a two-hour OSH training session; 102 mentors from the private sector supervisory workforce were trained on how to promote and ensure safety standards within the workplace.
WISE supported ABA’s VTEC in building its OSH capacity through formal and on-the-job training in addition to making OSH certifications a prerequisite for providing vocational training. Before the initiative was concluded, VTEC had received its internationally issued OSH certification.

**Environmentally sustainable activities.** Environmentally conscious practices were among the criteria used to shortlist projects for the *Fanni Mobtaker* competition. The theme of the third *Fanni Mobtaker* competition was “Fanni versus Corona” and focused on finding entrepreneurial and innovative solutions to ease the effect of the global pandemic. Students were encouraged to think in terms of sound and sustainable environmental practices when designing their projects for the competition.

The New and Renewable Energy Diploma program itself represents a significant element in sound and responsible environmental protection. This new specialization will help expand Egypt’s use of alternative energy sources through increased use of solar panels and wind turbines.

For each of the four new curricula developed by WISE, curricula designers ensured that health and safety competencies were integrated into the learning framework and mandatory for completion of the diploma. This established a precedent for any new curricula being developed by MoETE—health and safety frameworks must be integrated into all new curricula going forward. Moreover, the newly developed technical education quality standards described under Objective A.3, considered to be the baseline for introducing quality standards to technical education schools, ensure that OSH and environmental sustainability standards will be included and that schools will undertake minimal measures to promote and implement health and safety measures within their environment.

From start to finish, WISE had no significant adverse impact on the environment and it promoted proper safety standards among its partners and beneficiaries in both the government and the private sector.

**Project Management**

Throughout the project, WISE’s reporting remained on schedule and activities and deliverables were monitored against the approved work plan. WISE continually assessed its staffing needs against planned activities and adjusted as appropriate to efficiently accomplish activities included in its work plans. At the close of Year 4, LUTEs and SUTEs began to take on greater responsibility for implementation of the UTE model and WISE adjusted its field office staffing accordingly.

In mid-March 2020, when the pandemic was in full force, the majority of WISE staff transitioned to teleworking. As of July 2020, as conditions permitted, staggered schedules allowed staff to return to the office on certain days while continuing to telework on other days.
IV. SUCCESSFUL METHODOLOGIES AND APPROACHES

The WISE project team employed a diverse array of methodologies and approaches across all of the project’s result areas to achieve successful and sustainable results throughout the entire life of the project. The previous sections of this report focused on the project’s detailed activities and outcomes that were achieved through the use of these various methodologies and approaches. This section of the report summarizes those methodologies and discusses the rationale that inspired their application, and some of the results that emanated from their application.

**Competency-Based Training**

The WISE team was committed to implementing a competency-based approach to technical training from the very outset of the project. Competency-based training is widely seen as the global best practice for technical and vocational skills development, and offers a number of significant benefits over more traditional approaches to technical/vocational training. High among the list of benefits of competency-based training are its precise tailoring to industry demand, and flexibility to suit different learners. A competency-based approach focuses the students or trainees directly on mastering the skills demanded by the private sector, rather than on completing a curriculum laden with rote memorization and difficult to apply theory. Another benefit of a competency-based approach to technical training is that the approach allows students and trainees to move through the curricula at their own pace. Under this system, learners are able to spend more time on the skills that they find challenging, while accelerating through those skills that come to them more easily. This differs substantially from a traditional approach where all students spend the same amount of time on each area of the curricula, regardless of whether that allocation of time well suits their personal skill development process.

For these reasons, the WISE team, with concurrence from USAID and MoETE, determined the competency-based approach to be the ideal methodology upon which to design and implement new study programs for Egyptian technical secondary schools. WISE collaborated with curricula development experts, the MoETE, and private industry to develop curricula, teacher training materials, student resource materials, assessment materials, and guidebooks for each new study program. By the conclusion of the project, the WISE team had developed brand new competency-based training programs for four new specializations in three sectors that were rolled out across seven schools. Logistics was initiated by WISE in three schools; it is now offered in three additional schools. WISE initiated the renewable energy program in three schools and has since been expanded to nine additional schools. One school now offers the new program in agro-industries.

**Private Sector Engagement**

WISE leadership understood from the beginning of the project that private sector engagement was critical to both the long-term success of the project and the long-term success of the Egyptian economy;
the private sector would ultimately employ most technical secondary school graduates, fuel economic growth, improve competitiveness, and facilitate an enhanced quality of life across the Egyptian labor force. Therefore, close collaboration with the local private sector in pursuit of mutually beneficial interventions was at the very core of the WISE project’s overall strategy. Under Result A, WISE collaborated extensively with private sector firms to develop new curricula and study programs, collect labor market information that was critical to skills training and job placement, provide on-the-job training for students and recent graduates, and operationalize an applied technology school model that paired leading firms with a technical school focused on the firms’ sector. Under Result B, WISE offered three separate programs to develop staff capacity, match firms with job seekers, improve human resource systems and processes, and enhance overall firm productivity. Under Result C, WISE worked to establish and empower leaders from the private sector in newly formed entities designed to promote a workforce enabling environment and improve overall economic competitiveness, locally and across Egypt. Across the totality of the project, WISE met with representatives from dozens of private sector firms, and engaged through MOUs and subcontracts with 75 companies to facilitate and amplify the success of the project. Through building these strong relationships between the public and private sectors, WISE established networks through which officials from each can communicate and collaborate effectively to address issues of mutual interest for years to come.

**Institutionalization of Initiatives and Interventions**

From the first year of the project, the WISE team worked to identify appropriate entities in which to ultimately institutionalize WISE initiatives and interventions before the project's closeout. By identifying the best possible partners, WISE was able to extend the lifetime of its successful interventions and dramatically expand the pool of organizations and individuals who will ultimately be able to benefit from them. After identifying ideal partner entities and formalizing agreements through multiple MOUs, WISE worked diligently to build those partners' institutional capacity and train their staff to ensure there was no drop-off in the quality of the initiatives and interventions after they were handed over.

WISE successfully embedded the UTE model within individual schools and the MoETE, training more than 1,200 professionals in the process. At the central level, WISE took the lead in laying the groundwork for establishing an independent entity, CEQAT, for accreditation and assessment in the technical education system. Early on, WISE worked with NAQAAE to develop technical education quality standards; WISE then trained a cadre of assessors who will be available to MoETE’s CEQAT to support schools and build their capacity as they continue to refine their approaches to quality management.
Under Result B, WISE succeeded in institutionalizing the *Ebdaa Rehletak* program within MoSS, while elements of the *Ebdaa Rehletak* methodology were also embedded within leading private sector entities like SEKEM. The PIP initiative has been institutionalized in multiple entities, including the TCF, which now offers the training and program interventions to member factories. The PIP and 3R programs were each institutionalized within FEI’s BDSC with two years left in the WISE project, ensuring a smooth handover and the availability of advice and support where needed in the period that followed. Since, FEI has made impressive progress towards making the initiatives self-sustaining by charging businesses for training sessions and interventions. Under Result C, WISE developed the EPC in Beni Suef as a model for other governorates to replicate under MoLD guidance, while the EEAG and EEU are both fully operational and able to actively continue independently beyond the life of WISE.

**Public-Private Partnerships**

Formal public-private partnerships (PPPs) are a relatively new structure in Egypt. The WISE project design was built on the understanding that developing these partnerships and promoting their use could be an immense benefit, both to the project and to the Egyptian labor market and economy more broadly. Through the use of PPPs, government officials gain access to the subject matter expertise and cutting edge tools of the private sector, while private sector representatives gain legitimacy and opportunity, meanwhile, risks are balanced between the public and private sectors, thereby decreasing deterrents for both. More broadly speaking, these arrangements also improve the flow of information and increase trust between government and private businesses, empowering smart investment strategies for the future for all parties involved. In pursuit of benefits like these, WISE established and supported a number of PPPs across the breadth of the project. In Aswan governorate, the governor formally decreed the establishment of the Benban School Board of Trustees, the first PPP board in the entire Egyptian technical education system. WISE also brought together MoETE, the Academy of Scientific Research and Technology, and the NGO Eitesal to form the first PPP (including NGOs) in Egypt that was designed specifically to support student-driven innovation programs. The Salhia Applied Technology School in Sharquia, the first of its kind in the agro-industry sector, was also established with WISE support and through a PPP consisting of Salhia Investment and Development Company, MoETE, and WISE. This was the first applied technology school to adopt and implement a competency-based training approach.

In Year 5, WISE brought together MoSS ECRU and SEKEM ERU members and private sector mentors for an experience-sharing event at SEKEM. The mentors explained the mentorship program and the process of selecting and training job seekers through on-the-job training programs. Photo Credit: WISE
Ultimately, PPPs like these will stand as examples of effective collaboration and partnership that can be replicated or refined by other interested parties across Egypt for years to come, providing value and increasing the legacy of the WISE project long beyond its official completion date.

Localized Plans and Approaches

WISE staff committed themselves to tailoring project interventions that best suited the governorates in which they were to be applied. This method was elected over the simpler and more convenient process of deploying a generic and uniform approach across each of the eleven governorates where the project was active. While sometimes challenging, the benefits of the localized methodology were considerable, as the approach accounted for the substantial regional differences in the Egyptian economy and labor market. WISE’s commitment to localized approaches to project implementation can be observed in a number of areas, including the establishment of the EPC, a local economic council specifically designed to address local economic challenges and made up of local public and private sector representatives. WISE established the EPC in Beni Suef governorate to serve as a model for other governorates across Egypt. In the technical secondary school system, WISE implemented a system whereby SUTEs were coordinated at the governorate level through LUTEs, an intermediary between the SUTEs and the CUTE.

![SUTE Members honored by Mostafa Kamel Technical School management. April 24, 2017. Photo Credit: WISE](image)

Perhaps the project's best example of localized plans and approaches was the way WISE designed and deployed its newly developed technical secondary school study programs. In one instance, WISE collaborated with industry and subject matter experts to design a new degree program in logistics. In consultation with MoETE and USAID, WISE very deliberately launched the program in schools in Ismailia and Port Said where the new Suez Canal project ensures the sector will see consistent growth for years to come, amplifying the local long-term career prospects of program graduates. Similarly, WISE introduced its renewable energy program in schools proximate to the Benban Solar Park, one of the largest solar power plants in the world. By selecting schools in this area, both students and teachers were able to gain hands-on experience with the exact equipment used in the solar park, and graduates of the program emerged from school with a clear first step of their career path in sight.
Gender Equity

Since the inception of the project, the WISE team dedicated itself to promoting gender equity and inclusion across every result area, initiative, and intervention. WISE staff was driven in this pursuit for a number of reasons, including USAID policy, personal convictions, and the recognition that encouraging and facilitating increased female participation in the labor market would greatly benefit Egypt’s economy. As such, the WISE project worked to support gender equity from a number of different angles. Over the course of the project, WISE directly trained tens of thousands of women and girls in skill enhancement activities that ranged from students in schools, to out-of-school jobs seekers, to public and private sector professionals. WISE also developed a three-hour gender inclusion module that was ultimately delivered to over 5,000 male and female professionals through 200 training programs.

One-third of the WISE-supported schools consisted of girls’ schools, and nearly another third was mixed gender. Across initiatives, trainings, and activities, WISE consistently tracked female participation to monitor the accessibility of such events for females, and adapt to improve accessibility wherever appropriate. As part of WISE’s broader efforts to promote labor market efficiency, WISE experts collaborated to draft two position papers related to female participation in the labor market, both of which were ultimately discussed with influential national stakeholders and included in national economic strategy. By actively promoting the inclusion of women in the Egyptian labor market, WISE staff contributed towards the success and sustainability of the project’s initiatives, as well as the long-term success and competitiveness of the Egyptian economy as a whole.

Participatory/Interactive Training for Professionals

Implementing the WISE project required significant training initiatives for professionals across all three result areas. In the technical education system, WISE trained school administrators, teachers for SUTEs, and ministry professionals for LUTEs and the CUTE. Under Result B, WISE trained managers and human resources professionals in private sector companies, as well as professionals from other entities to institutionalize initiatives like 3R and the PIP. Under Result C, WISE trained members of the newly formed EEU and EPC to manage their new responsibilities. Across all of these activities, WISE trainers worked diligently to develop engaging and interactive training programs based on proven success that such training methods have had in achieving participant buy-in, keeping participants interested and learning new skills and concepts, and retaining this learning.

Ultimately, participatory training methods result in better program initiatives across the entire program. For teachers and trainers-of-trainers, experiencing interactive training themselves helps them to see the benefits of such an approach and how they can employ similar methods when teaching and training their students, fellow teachers, or co-workers.

Collaboration Between Stakeholders

Collaboration with stakeholders across the Egyptian workforce development landscape was a hallmark of the WISE project. Through collaboration with government ministries, other donor funded initiatives, institutions, and the private sector, WISE was able to coordinate interventions and leverage its efforts to create a level of impact that would not have been possible without working collaboratively.

Over the life of the project, WISE collaborated extensively with MoETE. This collaboration allowed the project to benefit from MoETE’s expertise and promote the sustainability of WISE interventions.
At other points during the project, WISE also collaborated with MoLD, MoSS, and MoTI. WISE also worked with other international donors to leverage expertise and impact, design complementary interventions, and promote efficiency by ensuring work was not duplicated. Successful examples of this coordination include WISE’s work with GIZ to create a career guidance curriculum for use across the technical education system, and additional work with GIZ, the ILO, TVET Egypt, and UNIDO to develop and rollout an entrepreneurship and innovation curriculum in Egyptian technical secondary schools. WISE also partnered with GIZ, the ILO, and TVET Egypt to support the NAWAH Social Entrepreneurship competition.

At other points in the project, WISE worked with federations and associations like TCF and FEI to connect with businesses and institutionalize interventions. In Alexandria, WISE collaborated with the ABA to facilitate private sector interventions and enhance private vocational training programs, systems, and process. WISE collaborated with the ENCC to produce and publish research and analysis, as well as to design and build institutions to promote a labor market enabling environment.

Additionally, over the life of the project, WISE collaborated directly with hundreds of leading private sector firms to develop new curricula, support technical education, compile critical labor market information, train and employ students and job seekers, and implement interventions to improve human resources practices and overall productivity across each firm. Through this level of collaboration, WISE was able to expand and enhance its impact, and promote the sustainability of the project’s benefits and interventions.
V. ANNEXES

FINAL REPORT: ANNEXES VOLUME (SEE SEPARATE VOLUMES)

Annex A: Wise Performance Work Statement
Annex B: WISE Training
Annex C: Year 5 Fanni Mobtaker Competition (Separate Annex)
Annex D: Letters of Appreciation, Certifications, and Decrees Related to WISE Efforts (Separate Annex)
Annex F: Digitization of Renewable Energy and Logistics Curricula
Annex G: TVETA Operational Plan
Annex H: WISE Monitoring and Reporting Framework
Annex I: WISE Media Coverage
Annex J: WISE Printed Materials
Annex K: Success Stories (Separate Annex)
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