



NSCE Newsletter

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PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Recently NSCE has been declared as the successful bidder for the consultancy "Water Sanitation and Hygiene, Knowledge Attitude and Practices" (WASH - KAP) in Sudan. The overall objective of the study is to determine the existing knowledge, attitudes and practices relating to water, sanitation and hygiene of women, children (age) and men in WASH programme communities. The study will be implemented in 18 states in Sudan and it will rely on secondary data review and primary data collection using mixed research

NSCE PUTS POSITIVE UPFRONT AND STRIVES FOR FURTHER SUCCESS

North South Consultants Exchange has been passing through difficult challenges for the years of 2012-2013. During this phase, NSCE like any other company in Egypt has suffered from the political and economic instability after the 25th January revolution in 2011. Consequences were hard and many companies could not survive resulting in a decrease of their labor force by nearly the half. But NSCE applied a survival strategy. Efforts by the staff headed by Dr. Zohra Merabet, Executive Director, were mainly focused on diversifying the national assignments into international ones, swapping the risk of the Egyptian portfolio to other markets and learning from our lessons, which was the main reason behind our survival.

We have to start this issue by thanking and gratifying our Team for their extreme efforts, belief and trust. We would also like to express our gratitude to our clients and partners who have put all their faith in us. We would like to say **Thank You** to all of them!

NSCE has put its emphasis on four critical elements: the Customer, the Financial Obligations, the Internal Processes, Learning and Professional Development. As for the customers, NSCE has ensured the professional image of the company through a high quality level of the submitted documents to the contracting authorities, applied a clear, continuous and transparent communication strategy and developed relevant reports to fulfill the requirements of the different customers. On the financial obligation side, NSCE has planned to update NSCE's operational needs, with the

approaches combining quantitative and qualitative methods. NSCE has managed to conduct successfully a similar assignment in 2011 and it was a Programme Evaluation of UNICEF Assisted Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Programme, implemented in Sudan. **The report of the evaluation has been included as one of the best UNICEF worldwide evaluation reports for 2012 under "MENARO: Middle East and North Africa"**

http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/index_74272.html

aim to upgrade the IT necessities while keeping the financial stability of the company. For the internal processes, NSCE has focused mainly on achieving the highest quality with respect to its research of the chosen partners, and project staff, and its project execution processes, data collection, review and analysis. In addition, NSCE has worked on having new vivid connections with partners and internal up to date search on newly published tenders. The company has also continued with the development of NSCE staff and its monitoring and evaluation system as well as has improved its knowledge management mechanisms to ensure the availability of all the donors' guidelines and manuals.

Learning and professional development had more focus on increasing the capacity of the staff in the fieldwork, increasing the interns in relevant units, improving Human Resource Management practices and enhancing the skills of the staff.

Besides all these internal efforts, NSCE has been focusing on three emerging sectors: Climate Change, Ecotourism and Global Energy. These sectors were chosen as most of the issued tenders deal with these sectors. Accordingly, NSCE has diversified its pool of consultants and customers, and established new partnerships with consultants in the fields of Renewable Energy, Ecotourism and Environmental concerns to be able to meet the increased attention given to those fields.

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NSCE SARL (Société à Responsabilité Limitée)

A new office has been established in Marseille, France "NSCE Sarl" under the umbrella of NSCE Group. NSCE France is specialized in the field of sustainable development and works with various stakeholders; namely the state departments, local authorities, businesses, associations and social economy organizations with the ultimate objective of strengthening organizational and institutional capacity. The fields of intervention are as follows: economic and

social development, governance, and employment. The main areas of expertise of NSCE France focus on:

- Management Consulting / Organizational and Institutional Development / Human Resources Management
- Training in Management and Human Relations
- Evaluation

NSCE STRUCTURE, DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2013 - 2014

NSCE performance during 2013 - 2014 was pleasing. Through its eleven Units, NSCE was able to achieve satisfying results. The company's units are comprised of five Technical Units: The Business Development Unit (BDU), Project and Program Enhancement Unit (PPEU), Governance and Environment Management Unit (GEMU), Economic Development Unit (EDU) and Francophone African Project Unit (FAPU); and six Operational Support Units: Executive Unit, Financial Unit (FU), Contract Management Unit, Office Management Unit, Monitoring and Management Information Systems Unit (MMIS) and Accounting Unit.

Projects were implemented according to NSCE procedures, and a technical back stopper was available for quality assurance. EDU staff members became more knowledgeable about research, Microfinance (MF), Islamic MF, Agricultural Competitiveness; they became involved in projects as researchers. Capabilities of GEMU staff have been enhanced in project management, and some technical aspects such as field surveys management and implementation.

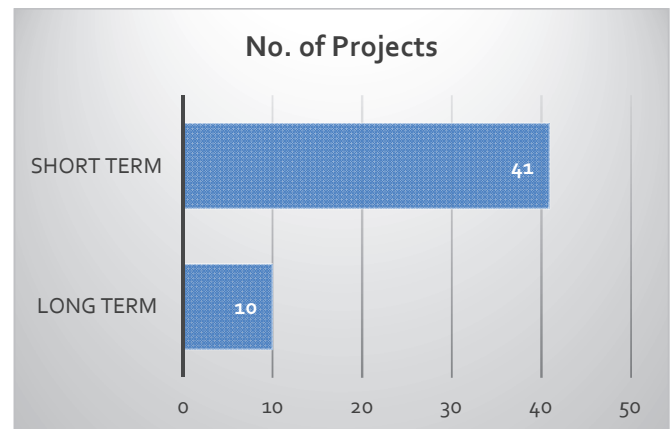
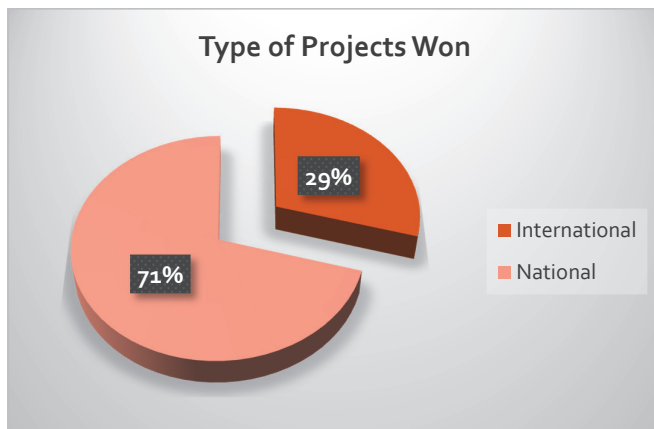
In addition, FAPU has managed to develop a francophone consultancy network and find a new attractive market besides adapting to the client needs as well as maintaining a good communication system with the clients.

In general, there were better contract and agreement negotiations with the clients and partners, more understanding of the clients' needs, clear responsibilities of the team works, enhanced understanding and analyzing of the job before starting its preparation, and increased importance of networking and regular communication with partners.

During 2014, NSCE managed to accomplish the following:

It won 17 new projects of which 71% were national projects and 29% were international projects.

It managed to work on 51 on-going projects during 2014 of which 10 were long-term projects and 41 were short-term ones.



THE VISION FOR 2015

- The aim for 2014 was planned to reach an annual income of US \$3 million per year. The long-term goal was to increase this income by 10% every year so by the year 2018 we will have reached around US \$5 million.
- NSCE is aiming in 2015 to enlarging its portfolio nationally and internationally, enhancing customer satisfaction, and developing Human Resources with a focus on "on the job training" as well as setting a development plan for the company staff. As far as internal processes are concerned, NSCE is planning to enforce project management procedures, monitoring, evaluating project planning and scheduling, as well as project operational budgets, enhancing business development besides exploring donors' strategies and adapting the unit's directions accordingly.

"WE WILL THINK BIG AND TAKE THE MEANS TO DO IT BIG"

NSCE has begun to enrich its pool of CVs with experts in the field of energy, as it is an evolving and promising sector. Moreover, through its FAPU, NSCE is planning to build relationships with partners, establish strong relations with clients in one or two francophone countries, reinforce work

with bilateral and multi-lateral organizations and build a strong database of francophone experts, especially in Finance, Micro Finance, Evaluation and Research.

OUR VALUED STAFF, "THE STARTING POINT OF ALL ACHIEVEMENT IS DESIRE"



NSCE always encourages its staff to develop their skills and capabilities, to prosper and grow. This year two of our staff members, Rana Medhat and Sameya Mohamed, received advanced degrees in their studies.

Sameya this year has received her Master Degree in Science from Cairo University. Her thesis was on "Synthesis and Equilibrium Studies of Mixed Ligand Metal Complexes of Methionine Methyl Ester of Biological Activity".



Rana this year has received her Research and Evaluation Diploma from Helwan University in collaboration with UNICEF, Egypt, under the umbrella of the Egyptian Research and Evaluation Network.

Nasser is one of NSCE's promising employees. He joined the company as a courier 10 years ago. At that time, he showed willingness to learn and develop his capabilities. Three years ago, he joined the High Institute for Agricultural Cooperation affiliated to Ain Shams University. Nasser managed to make sound equilibrium between his work and his study. In 2015, Nasser will get his BA in Agriculture with a major in "Project Management".



Several in-house trainings were provided by NSCE for its staff in 2012 and 2013 including Advanced Microsoft Desktop Applications, training on internal process manuals, project management manuals, and research manuals. In addition, several staff members have attended workshops on tax and insurance issues.

In 2015, NSCE is planning to provide in-house trainings for the following topics: Leadership for Management, Research and Process manuals besides its yearly IT refreshment courses.

SNAPSHOTS OF RECENT PROJECT ACTIVITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

IDB-MICROFINANCE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (IDB-MDP) STUDY FOR EGYPT AND TAJIKISTAN



The objective of the MDP initiative launched by IDB is to assess the existing micro finance sector in a number of its member countries in order to promote Islamic micro finance in these countries. NSCE won two projects within the programme in Tajikistan and in Egypt that aim at suggesting a suitable intervention model for IDB in line with the objectives of the Micro Finance Development Program MDP. The intervention model should include establishing/strengthening a microfinance institution and development of the related enabling environment, as needed, in order to promote and develop Islamic micro finance.

The scope of work will be to prepare a comprehensive feasibility study documenting the following areas:

- I. Study the existing micro finance sector (both conventional and Islamic) in Tajikistan and Egypt including, but not limited to, the following areas: legal and regulatory environment, market size



(current and potential), major micro finance providers (incl. market shares), institutional structures, products, pricing and delivery systems of micro finance providers, and key sector indicators (number of borrowers, age distribution of borrowers, range of loan sizes, average loan size, target economic sectors, etc.).

- II. For each of the above proposed strategy (or combination of strategies), compare and discuss the pros and cons of each with the view to maximize developmental impact.
- III. Identify major local sponsors as well as development financial institutions with whom IDB can effectively partner to implement the above recommended strategy(ies).

CONDUCTING FINANCING NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FOR MICRO FINANCE SUPPORT PROJECT IN JORDAN / DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYMENT FUND

Short Term Objective

Enhancing Islamic finance through the capacity building of DEF, national micro finance institutions, selected cooperatives, charitable voluntary organizations as well as institutions working in the Zakat and Waqf.

Specific Objective

Providing consulting services for the preparation of needs assessment studies for beneficiaries, definition of the micro finance best practices in terms of services, technologies and systems, training on Islamic micro finance practices along with the preparation of complete manuals of procedures, upgrading MIS and accounting system to absorb all various methods of Islamic micro finance.

The objective was achieved through the design and implementation of a market study using a sample that exceeded 1000 interviewees as well as undertaking a series of training courses related to the best practices in micro finance.



CASSANDRA – COMMON ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS OF RISK IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

The main objective of the project 'CASSANDRA' is to enable and facilitate the combination of existing information sources in supply chains

into new and better visibility that allows the assessment of risks by business and government.



CASSANDRA addresses the visibility needs of businesses and governments related to the international flow of containerized cargo to and from the EU by integrating existing information systems in a global supply chain. Supply chain visibility is consistently ranked as a top priority for supervision tasks on border-crossing goods flows. The project demonstrates how this integral data can be used to introduce a risk-based approach to supply chain management, and how it facilitates the development of a new method of sharing data between business and government for public supervision tasks. In this way, CASSANDRA will develop an information integration and data-sharing concept that will align the needs for logistics efficiency with the requirements for security.

This will set a new standard for global door-to-door goods flows to and from Europe: efficient & secure.

BUILDING RURAL ASSETS WITH VALUABLE OPPORTUNITIES – BRAVO

BRAVO - financed by Italian Debt for Development Swap aims at poverty-reduction of small producers, of excluded women from labour market, and unemployed youth by tackling the challenges hindering the full development of Fayoum Governorate in its three main economic sectors: tourism, handicraft, agriculture. The proposed strategy is based on the enhancement of the available assets and the creation of new opportunities in marketing goods and labor. The project will play a significant role towards the achievement of women's economic empowerment by targeting unemployed women and girls as beneficiaries of skills development and micro finance actions.

The project **specific objective** is promoting Fayoum as an eco-tourism destination through the creation of a comprehensive system where natural, archeological and cultural heritage are integrated and harmonized and typical productive activities are enhanced.



GOVERNANCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN URBAN AREAS IN GREATER CAIRO – GENDER STRATEGY

The Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (PDP) is an Egyptian-German development project that benefits from the

Cooperation between the Egyptian Ministry of Planning and the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. The PDP was launched as an Egyptian-German Cooperation Programme (01/2004). It focuses on the upgrading of informal areas in Greater Cairo Region by introducing and supporting the implementation of participatory methodologies for urban upgrading with public administration and civil society organizations to improve service provision and living conditions in an integrated manner to alleviate urban poverty.

NSCE has conducted the study that aims to mainstream gender perspective in the operational, planning, organizational structure, activities and measures of the Participatory Development Programme in Urban Areas (PDP) through developing a strategy that depends on gender analysis of the planning and operations of the project through different stages.



INTEGRATED SANITATION AND SEWERAGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT (ISSIP) FOR GHARBIYA, KAHR-EL-SHEIKH AND BEHEIRA – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING

The Integrated Sanitation and Sewerage Infrastructure Project (ISSIP) is funded by the Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF) and is administered by World Bank.

The project aims to contribute to the sustainable improvement in (i) sanitation and environmental conditions for the resident communities and (ii) water quality in the selected drainage basins within the two main canal command areas of Mahmoudeya and Mit Yazid as they run within the Governorates of Beheira, Garbeya and Kafr-el-Sheikh for the establishment of dictated Santoch system.

NSCE's role is to develop and promote the institutional capacity of local institutions and communities, capacity of key local stakeholders, and accountability mechanisms between local authorities and beneficiary communities, for a better service in the rural sanitation sector.



STUDY ON THE WATER-ENERGY-FOOD SECURITY NEXUS IN EGYPT – A CHALLENGE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



NSCE conducted the study to focus on assessing and describing key linkages between water, energy and agro-food sectors. It aims at an economic valuation of water and cropping patterns in the various regions of Egypt as well as a more sustainable development and improved water use efficiency. In addition, it aims at fostering regional trade and cooperation, and affects national GDP and regional stability.

NORTH AFRICA and SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA PROJECTS

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FINAL EVALUATION OF THE SOUTHERN OASIS PROGRAM (SOP) (MOROCCO)

The goal of this project is to preserve the oasis ecosystem in Southern Morocco and enhance the livelihoods of local communities by developing quality tourism. Programme support aims at developing quality tourism in the oases. Significant results were achieved including:

- Elaboration of a strategy to promote sustainable tourism in the oases of southern Morocco
- Establishment of working groups at the regional and national levels to support this initiative
- Design and opening of "Bed & Breakfast" facilities
- Launch of sightseeing itineraries in the oases
- Training of local stakeholders on the design and management of tourism activities

The specific objectives of the evaluation focused on the verification of the results in accordance to their effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, coherence, sustainability and impact on the SOP program.



EVALUATION OF THE INTEGRATED WATER RESSOURCES MANAGEMENT (IWRM) POLICY AND REVISION

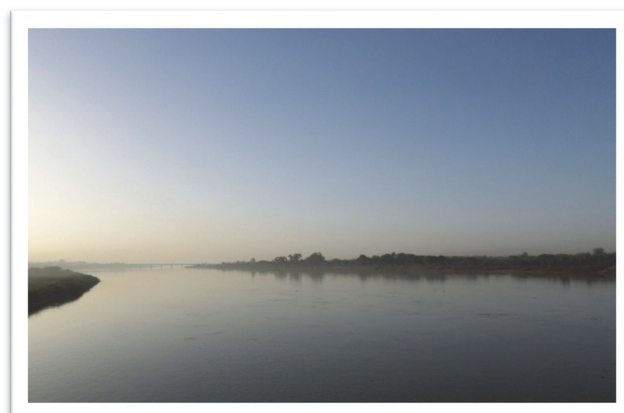
This research has two objectives:

- 1) It studies the concept of IWRM and its principles/practices within the AfDB and surrounding arena. It asks: how did it develop, what effects has it produced on the ground so far, what are limiting and enabling factors for its success;
- 2) It explores insights, new applications and solutions through various research methods by asking the questions how the Bank can better operationalize the policy and make it more relevant to its actions.

The proposed framework should guide the critical study of various interpretations and challenges of IWRM policy and practice at multiple political and geographical scales, from macro political settings to localize river basins and communities at micro level.

- A multi-sited ethnographic and comparative methodology has been proposed to map IWRM policy challenges and opportunities for the AfDB across the (inter)national and local levels.

Multi-sited ethnography is a method of data collection that follows a topic or social problem through different field sites geographically and/or socially. While many methods can be used on their own, multi-sited ethnography typically requires use of several combined methods like structured interviews, focus group discussions, or other methods of data collection.



BILINGUAL EDUCATION PROGRAM (BEP) PILOT PROJECTS IN NIGER AND CHAD

Islamic Development Bank (IDB) has launched the BEP program in order to improve the quality and the quantity of the bilingual education sector. The objectives of this project are to assess the performance of Bilingual Education Program in terms of its relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability, help generate knowledge and also identify options to improve the on-going projects and design future interventions under the BEP.

NSCE conducted a study in order to provide the results and lessons learned from the Bilingual Education Program (BEP) Pilot Projects in Niger and Chad. NSCE followed the following steps:

- 1) A comprehensive desk review:
- 2) A review of relevant project documents and reports
- 3) Field Survey:
 - Key Informant Interviews: design research tools, data collection through individual interviews, tabulation and analysis of the field based on the analysis framework
 - Focus Group Discussions: design focus discussion, data collection through focus group discussion, tabulation and analysis of FGD reports based on the analysis framework
 - Individual Case Studies: design in-depth interviews, data collection through interviews / individual case analysis and write-up of individuals' reports for each case
- 4) Data Analysis: Design of the analysis framework and the qualitative survey.
- 5) Reporting: Inception report, site visit reports, draft report and the finalization and submission of the final report.



POLICY AND PROGRAMS ENHANCEMENT

HUMAN SECURITY THROUGH INCLUSIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN UPPER EGYPT [HAYAT PROJECT] BASELINE SURVEY



In partnership with four UN Agencies, (UN Women, ILO, IOM and UN HABITAT), UNIDO launched the Human Security through Inclusive Socio-Economic Development in Upper Egypt Project in January 2013. It began its implementation in June 2013 with the overall objective of strengthening the economic security of vulnerable communities in five mother villages and selected satellite villages in the vulnerable districts of El Edwa and Maghagha, both in the Minya Governorate.

NSCE conducted the baseline study of the project, which aims at informing the project's stakeholders on the project's achievements after the project's completion, as well as provide an overview of the targeted population versus other non-target groups through combination of quantitative and qualitative surveys in form of 2500 questionnaires, focus group discussions and mapping exercise.

NSCE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND THE USE OF BALANCED SCORE CARDS (BSC)

In its annual strategic meeting session in 2014, NSCE applied new forms of planning using Balanced Score Cards (BSC). This form of strategic planning depends on four main components: Financial, Learning and Growth, Internal Processes and Customers. Considering these four components in the strategic planning will lead to an integrated approach to develop and improve the performance and the outputs of the organization.

The technical units of NSCE, Economic Development Unit (EDU), Governance and Environmental Management Unit (GEM), Project Planning and Enhancement Unit (PPEU) and French African Project Unit (FAPU) have prepared their own visions and initial planning for the concerned four components.

The same was produced by the supporting and other units, Business Development Unit (BDU), Monitoring and Management Information Systems (MMIS), Accounting Section (ACC) and the Office Management Unit (OMU).

The outputs of the different units were consolidated and integrated in one NSCE BSC plan which was introduced to the management team and then the unit managers re-visited their initial BSC to ensure that it is in-line with the company planning.

The final plans were developed and will be monitored by the end of 2014 to assess the achievement of each unit and the company in general.

NSCE AND UN GLOBAL COMPACT INITIATIVE MEMBERSHIP



NSCE has joined recently The United Nations Global Compact, which is the world's largest voluntary corporate citizenship initiative. Companies join the Global Compact because they share the conviction that business practices rooted in universal principles contribute to a more stable and inclusive global market and help build prosperous and thriving societies.

With more than 6,000 participating companies from 135 countries, as well as 2300 non-business participants (as of September 2010), the Global Compact has emerged as a truly global initiative with a strong presence in both North and South. The initiative also enjoys the backing of the United Nations' member states, as expressed in several General Assembly resolutions recognizing and encouraging the Global Compact's work.

Following are the principles of the initiative related to Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

Human Rights (Principles 1-2)

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

Principle 2: Businesses should ensure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

Labour (Principles 3-6)

Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

Principle 4: Businesses should uphold the elimination of forced or compulsory labor.

Principle 5: Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.

Principle 6: Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

Environment (Principles 7-9)

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

Principle 8: Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

Principle 9: Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally-friendly technologies.

Anti-Corruption (Principle 10)

Principle 10: Businesses should work against all forms of corruption, including extortion and bribery.

NSCE confirms its commitment to these principles and its participation in the UN GLOBALCOMPACT community in Egypt and its activities.

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