

UN DESA Management response to the Independent Evaluation of: Global Initiative towards post-Covid-19 resurgence of the MSME sector (DA project 2023W)

Box 1. Management response matrix¹

Management response to the Independent Evaluation of Global Initiative towards post-Covid-19 resurgence of the MSME sector (DA project 2023W)					Date
Evaluation Recommendation (a)	Management response (b) <i>Accepted, partially accepted or rejected</i>	Management plan			
		Actions to be taken, and/or comments about partial acceptance or rejection (c)	Responsible unit (d)	Timeframe (e)	Resources required (Y or N) (f)
<p><i>Recommendation 1:</i></p> <p><i>(1.1.) UNCTAD should further leverage the experience gained through the project to map out how components of the Entrepreneurship Policy Framework relate to and can be best positioned to support MSMEs in their recovery from different types of crises and (ii) DESA and the Regional Commissions should add their analysis of how their work can contribute towards the objective.</i></p>	<i>Accepted</i>	<p><i>Together with Regional Commissions, DESA is in a position to add its analysis on the components of the Entrepreneurship Policy Framework relate to and can be best positioned to support MSMEs in their recovery from different types of crises.</i></p>	<p><i>NSCBB</i></p> <p><i>DSDG/DESA</i></p>	<p><i>December 2025 at the end of the project DA14T project on "Strengthened Resilience of MSMEs in Africa and Asia"</i></p>	<p><i>Technical expertise needed to conduct analyses together with UNCTAD and Regional Commissions</i></p>

¹ Each column is cross-referenced to the bullet letters above.

<p><i>(1.2.) UNCTAD, DESA and the Regional Commissions could build on the project to map their areas of intervention in support of the MSME sector, as well as capacities and knowledge on the implementation of the EPF components, including in a crisis context, and opportunities for broadening the uptake of EPF components at the regional level based on national needs. UNCTAD, DESA and the Regional Commissions could further consider identifying areas of joint interventions that would trigger complementarities and synergies between the agencies. This could involve collaborating on the development of capacities of all national and sub-national actors, i.e. Governments, MSMEs, other partners (e.g. Chamber of Commerce, Business Incubators, etc.) in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks (SDCF) in respective countries; strengthening or contributing to facilitate access to finance for the MSMEs (including seed money, grants, access to credit, etc.); improving the coordination of MSMEs related policies across ministries; increasing interventions at the local level, such as by supporting NGOs or MSMEs outside of the main cities. The application of a</i></p>		<p><i>DESA continuously engages with UNCTAD and Regional Commissions participating in various capacity building projects, including on MSMEs. When this Surge project came to an end, DESA has collaborated with UNCTAD and Empretec centres in The Gambia and Zimbabwe on MSME capacity building activities.</i></p>			
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<p><i>human rights-based approach, gender responsiveness and inclusion of other vulnerable groups (LNOB) should be ensured.</i></p>					
<p><i>Recommendation 2:</i></p> <p><i>UNCTAD should continue building on the momentum generated by the project to continue fostering knowledge exchanges and promoting the Entrepreneurship Policy Framework.</i></p> <p><i>UNCTAD, DESA and the Regional Commissions should identify means to more meaningfully continue to share good practices and lessons learned on the demand-driven support they provide to the MSME sector, including on areas such as green/circular economy; innovation policies and ecosystems; MSME formalization and strengthening MSME capacities for the empowerment and leadership of women, youth and groups in vulnerable situations. UNCTAD and the Regional Commissions could also propose organizing regional events and/or a global conference to promote entrepreneurship policy and further advance the goals and impact of the Surge project. Furthermore, learnings from the experiences with the</i></p>	<p><i>Accepted</i></p>	<p><i>DESA has been collaborating with Resident Coordinators Offices, United Nations Country Teams and Regional Commissions to exchange experiences and lessons learnt to strengthen MSME capacities and expand their contributions to accelerating SDG progress. DESA will also prepare a knowledge product on MSMEs and will be organizing two international workshops for nine countries participating in a UNPDF funded project on MSMEs to further share good practices and lessons learned.</i></p>	<p><i>NSCBB</i></p> <p><i>DSDG/DESA</i></p>	<p><i>December 2025 at the end of the DA14T project on "Strengthened Resilience of MSMEs in Africa and Asia".</i></p>	<p><i>Technical expertise and financial resources required to collaborate with Resident Coordinator Offices, formulate knowledge products and deliver international workshops</i></p>

<p><i>Surge about external partnerships should encourage UNCTAD to promote the EPF and entrepreneurship development to other UN agencies also engaged in this area (e.g. ILO, FAO, UN Women, etc.), to development banks, or to related initiatives such as the recent Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection. UNCTAD could also consider joining and supporting events that promote the achievement of SDG 8.3 as an avenue to further promote the EPF.</i></p>					
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p><i>Implementing UN entities should ensure that they have a comprehensive Results Framework for the entire project as well as an adequate monitoring plan, with indicators that are designed to support the ongoing monitoring.</i></p> <p><i>The results framework should have one objective and ideally have one outcome per cluster/workstream. The objective should state the intended goal of the project, describe the overall achievement targeted by the project, involving a process of change aimed at meeting the needs of identified beneficiaries, and reflect the overall funding available to the project. Each objective should</i></p>	<p><i>Accepted</i></p>	<p><i>DESA's contribution to this project is at the output level (output 2.2., 2.3 in phase two and output 2.3 in phase three). For its own outputs, DESA developed a monitoring plan to timely capture results and identify areas for improvement.</i></p> <p><i>DESA takes serious note on the recommendation relating to project monitoring and evaluation. Undertaking a project monitoring and evaluation will provide</i></p>	<p><i>NSCBB</i></p> <p><i>DSDG/DESA</i></p>	<p><i>December 2025 at the end of the DA14T project on "Strengthened Resilience of MSMEs in Africa and Asia".</i></p>	<p><i>Technical expertise needed to continuously undertake results monitoring and reporting</i></p>

<p><i>include reference to the project's beneficiaries and its substantive focus. The objective should not attempt to explain the ways in which the project intends to achieve the objective (i.e. it should not include the word 'through' or describe the internal work of the UN using verbs such as 'support', 'facilitate' or 'contribute'). The outcomes (OCs) should describe the changes that are expected to occur as a result of the completion of outputs. The OCs should be achievable within the project's timeframe and budget, and should be specific enough to be measured by the associated indicators of achievement. The indicators of achievement (IAs) should provide measures for monitoring progress towards achieving the OCs and reporting on them after completion of the project. Every indicator needs to provide clearly defined baselines, units of measurement and targets, detailing the quantity, quality and timing of expected results. The monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) system should also be designed to capture HRBA, gender and LNOB aspects. In phased interventions or during project execution, any changes in the logframe if/when pivoting activities</i></p>		<p><i>important lessons that will guide the implementation of future projects of a similar nature.</i></p>			
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<p><i>should be clearly explained to the wider team.</i></p>					
<p><i>Recommendation 5:</i></p> <p><i>Implementing UN entities should ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to project coordination, technical collaboration, and partnership building.</i></p> <p><i>The absorption capacity of implementing entities can be challenged by crisis response projects which add to the planned programme of work. This is further compounded by projects that come with an extensive UN partnership and a global scope. Sufficient resources should be dedicated to global coordination and to building global partnerships with strategic stakeholders (e.g., UN organizations engaged in supporting the MSME sector; development banks). Capacities should also be directed to supporting technical collaboration and the staff implementing interventions, including towards synergy or liaison with the UNCTs. When designing the project, implementing UN entities should consider featuring coordination and partnership-building in the Theory of Change or logframe of the project. Tools</i></p>	<p><i>Accepted</i></p>	<p><i>DESA's component has reached effective implementation by reaching 96 per cent delivery rate within a crisis context. It is worth noting staff costs, relating to project coordination, technical collaboration and partnership building, are leveraged from a parallel funding stream (United Nations' Peace and Development Fund)</i></p>	<p><i>NSCBB</i></p> <p><i>DSDG/DESA</i></p>	<p><i>December 2025 at the end of the DA14T project on "Strengthened Resilience of MSMEs in Africa and Asia".</i></p>	<p><i>Financial and technical resources required to engage staff for project coordination, provision of technical expertise and partnership building</i></p>

<p><i>to support continuous connections and knowledge exchange, and to ensure institutional memory should be part of the response package, such as a project website, SharePoint space for all team members, and a Yammer network or Teams channel. The integration of cross-cutting aspects (HRBA, gender responsiveness, LNOB) also requires expertise with sufficient and dedicated time and resources. Guidance could be development to project managers on how to do this.</i></p>					
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