

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

Overall response to the evaluation

In this section, Project Management presents its overall views on the evaluation, the report and its conclusions.

Response by recommendation

In this section, Project Management should address each recommendation that is addressed to UNCTAD, discussing them in the order presented in the evaluation report. This should be done in the format of the Management Response matrix below (see Box 1) and include:

- a. The recommendation number and text copied from the evaluation report;
- b. Indication of whether the recommendation is accepted fully, partially, or rejected;
- c. Description of the actions to be taken, with comments as required on the conditions to be met during implementation, or on reasons leading to a partial acceptance or rejection of a recommendation;
- d. The responsible party for implementing the action/s;
- e. The time-frame for implementation and/or an implementation schedule, if required;
- f. Indication if and what resources are required for implementing the recommendation.

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) Accepted , partially accepted or rejected	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>Recommendation 1:</p> <p><i>(i) 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> <p>UNCTAD, DESA and the Regional Commissions could build on the project to map their areas of intervention in</p>	Accepted	<p>ECLAC recognizes the importance of the Entrepreneurship Policy Framework as a useful instrument in the efforts to support MSMEs.</p> <p>Under the ECLAC programme of work, support to the MSMEs sector will be provided through work on digitalization, support to cluster initiatives and other associative approaches. While this work is unlikely to result in specific contributions to the EPF, ECLAC, through its Division of Production, Productivity and Management, will continue to look for opportunities to share relevant</p>	ECLAC Division of Production, Productivity and Management	ongoing	N

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

<p>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 human rights-based approach, gender responsiveness and</p>		<p>initiatives in Latin America and the Caribbean with UNCTAD and DESA.</p>			
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inclusion of other vulnerable groups (LNOB) should be ensured.					
<p>Recommendation 2:</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>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</p>		<p>Within the activities of the Division of Production, Productivity and Management, ECLAC will look for opportunities to generate spaces for coordination and share best practices, particularly in circular economy, innovation policies and MSMEs formalization. Such discussions and activities could take place for example under a project with GIZ on circular economy, and within the framework of the Conference on Science, Innovation and Information and Communications Technologies</p>	<p>ECLAC Division of Production, Productivity and Management</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>from the experiences with the 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.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p><i>The DA-PMT should develop a clear framework for assessing the costs and benefits of implementing a global or inter-regional project versus regional projects.</i></p> <p>As a global crisis can affect regions and countries differently, global or joint projects should be developed only when there are clear benefits of joint implementation. Thus, a global or inter-regional vs. regional response would not be a priori decision, but a</p>	<p>Not applicable</p>				

<p>result of a clear assessment. A specific guideline or framework should be developed for this. Some of the assessment criteria could include the need or demand from member States for an integrated response; the range of common versus entity-specific activities and added value of complementary interventions (i.e. in terms of geographical coverage, reach of the target population, capacity, and/or coverage of multiple reinforcing technical areas, or networks and partnerships); capability to execute joint interventions (e.g. in terms of time, resources, logistics, and flexibility to pivot interventions without bureaucratic procedures); coordination costs (which increase with the number of participating UN entities); project inception modalities and governance and knowledge management requirements to facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing; scaling and sustainability plans; expected results of spreading resources versus concentrating on fewer countries; and so forth. The time taken to conduct such assessments will increase project coherence and effectiveness and</p>					
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<p>facilitate the identification of the financial and human resources needed for project implementation. The network of DA Focal Points is a key existing asset for this assessment.</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>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 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</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>ECLAC will continue to follow guidelines from DA-PMT for the preparation of DA project documents including result framework. In the case of joint project, responsibility for the submission of the project document lies with the lead entity.</p>	<p>Programme Planning and Evaluation Unit</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>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</p>					
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<p>pivoting activities should be clearly explained to the wider team.</p>					
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p><i>Implementing UN entities should ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to project coordination, technical collaboration, and partnership building.</i></p> <p>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 organisations 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</p>	<p>Partially accepted</p>	<p>ECLAC will continue to follow DA regulations and DA-PMT guidelines for the preparation of DA project budgets. In the case of joint project, responsibility for the submission of the project document, including budget, lies with the lead entity.</p>	<p>Programme Planning and Evaluation Unit</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>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 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.</p>					
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