

**Final Report**

**Final Evaluation of the Training and Credit Program  
for Children Working in the Quarry Sector and their  
Families, Minya – Egypt**

**Implemented by  
Wadi El Nil Association for the Protection of Quarry Workers**

**Funded by  
Alfanar**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

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This summary outlines the key findings, recommendations and proposed directions for program extension based on the final evaluation report for the Training and Credit Program for Children Working in the Quarry Sector and their Families, Minya – Egypt.

It is clear that this program has contributed positively to the well-being and empowerment of children who had worked in the quarries and their families. At the end of the first year of implementation, the program should be celebrated as a positive attempt at solving a very difficult and complicated problem. The hard work carried out in the first year of the program has helped identify the issues and challenges that need to be addressed in order to move towards greater effectiveness in the coming years.

The **micro-credit component** for women seems to be the most successful and problem-free component of the program. It seems that the loans are indeed used for projects, that the projects are profitable, and that the families observe the loan conditions by not sending their children to the quarries.

The delivery and content of the **awareness raising curriculum** for the women seemed appropriate and useful on the whole. However, there are significant issues with regard to the curriculum for children. Most importantly, the main goal and purpose of the curriculum as a whole is not clear. Therefore the curriculum for children- and to a lesser extent that for women- lacks strength, focus and coherence; and the usefulness and relevance of its topics is not always clear. The most positive aspects of the awareness raising component for children were the effective sessions on the dangers of quarry work and the general approach of the curriculum; involving the children in activities and arts, which is both useful as well as appealing to the children.

As for the **vocational training component**, despite the significant effort expended in the set up, management, monitoring and the actual training by program staff, trainers and children, careful study is needed before this component is implemented in the future. It seems clear that the training so far is not sufficient to prevent children from returning to the quarries, as it has not prepared most of them for engaging in gainful employment in the vocations in which they were trained.

The material and human **capabilities of WNA** and the training of the field coordinators seem suitable for the program. Program staff seemed proficient, experienced, capable, confident and interested. They seemed to know their target community well; and to be familiar with its issues and constraints, the conditions of the people and their ways of thinking. Program field coordinators seemed competent and confident enough to carry out their assigned duties. However, program reports do not display enough clarity, comprehensiveness, consistency or sufficient detail; the individual roles of members of staff working with the program are not always clear; and program reporting and documentation does not provide a strong conceptual grounding for the program's interventions. That is, reports do not explicitly discuss WNA's rationale for designing its interventions, its awareness of similar interventions in Egypt and lessons learned from

them, discussion of the advantages and risks of its chosen interventions and of the specific local conditions that inform its choices.

**Proposed Directions for the Future:** As it considers program extension, the five key tasks for WNA should be: 1) developing its analysis and plans for either: *expansion* into new sites and beneficiaries or *consolidation* of work with the same beneficiaries, 2) re-conceptualizing and strengthening its awareness curricula, 3) fully assessing the merit of the vocational training component, 4) developing a detailed conceptual framework to provide justification for its proposed interventions in the coming stage, and 5) analyzing whether and how it can work with children who have not left the quarries.

**Key Recommendations (additional specific recommendations are detailed throughout Part III of the report)**

1. Provide a detailed study of the appropriateness- for each component of the program- of *expansion* to other beneficiaries and sites versus *consolidation* and deepening impact by building on progress so far. If work is to be continued with the same beneficiaries, a careful conceptualization is needed for how to build on and enhance the gains made so far with this group through new and different interventions.
2. Produce a complete Conceptual Framework or Concept Paper expressing the program's approach and the rationale for each component of the program.
3. Provide an analysis (costs, benefits, advantages, risks) of whether and how the program can work with children who have not left the quarries, through providing life skills, opportunities for learning and growth and health and safety information.
4. Provide detailed re-conceptualization of content of children's "awareness raising" curriculum, differentiated by age group. This includes: clearly defining its goals, its topics and how they contribute to these goals.
5. Put in place and report on a system for monitoring the children's return to work in the quarries (through periodic self-administered anonymous questionnaires, as well as other methods).
6. Conduct a thorough assessment of the suitability of the loan scheme to children who complete vocational training (if that component is extended).
7. Provide a detailed analysis of whether the vocational training components should be removed, re-conceptualized or merged into the "awareness-raising" curriculum.
8. Reporting and documentation should be better organized, more rigorous, systematic, detailed, substantiated and include executive summaries, wherever possible.
9. Provide full details of the sessions and activities carried out based on a set format, e.g. name of trainer, date and time of session and list of attendees. If the trainer is external to WNA, background and CV should be documented and presented along with reports to Alfanar. Reports should also clearly identify roles of each of the WNA program staff and coordinators in all activities.
10. Identify the kinds of networking the program would benefit from, resources needed to carry them out and propose a plan for carrying them out.

This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the final evaluation conducted in June 2008 of the Training and Credit Program for Children Working in the Quarry Sector and their Families, implemented by the Wadi Nil Association for the Protection of Quarry Workers (henceforth WNA) and funded by Alfanar. The report is divided into four parts: Evaluation Framework, Methodology, Key Findings and Recommendations and a Conclusion. For consistency and comparability, this final evaluation follows the same basic methodology as the mid-term evaluation, and this report broadly adheres to the same format as the mid-term report. The report will refer to “The Training and Credit Program for Children Working in the Quarry Sector and their Families” as “the program”.

## **I. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK**

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### **Background and Purpose**

Over a period of 12 months, the program aimed at providing children with an alternative to quarry work through vocational training and access to credit, as well as small loans to their families so that they depend less on their children’s incomes. It was implemented in two villages, Sawada and Zaweyet Sultan, East of the Nile in Minya, where quarry work is considered the main source of income for many families.

WNA was established in 2000 with the primary objective of serving the interests of quarry workers in line with their social, economic and legal rights. Thus far, the Association has pursued its mission by carrying out a number of activities. It has managed to establish and register a union of quarry workers that advocates quarry workers’ rights; forge partnerships and a rapport with the Minya governorate, local councils, the labor office, and the Ministry of Social Affairs; produce a documentary film on the quarry sector; publish a book on the working conditions in the quarry sector work by documenting a number of case studies; and carried out a number of media-related activities to raise awareness nationwide of the issue and rally public opinion particularly against child labor.

The program under evaluation is considered to be unique for WNA as it targets both the children and their families – in particular the mothers - at the same time through a comprehensive approach that combines awareness building with vocational training and increased access to economic opportunities as an alternative to unsafe quarry work.

More specifically, over a period of 12 months, the program aimed to:

1. Enable 50 children to leave their work in the quarries by providing them with alternative skills and sources of income;

2. Provide 50 children with vocational skills training and small loans so that they can set up their own activities after they have received training, enabling them to buy tool kits and necessary equipment;
3. Provide 100 working children's families with small loans so that they depend less on their children's incomes and are therefore less compelled to send them to work in the quarries; and
4. Hold awareness raising workshops for children and their families on the hazards of quarry work, child rights, etc... as well as to teach them skills for small income-generating projects.

### **Evaluation Objectives**

This final evaluation is intended to fulfill the following three key objectives:

1. To understand the impact of the program on various aspects of the lives of beneficiaries: primarily the return to quarry work, as well as physical, material and emotional wellbeing.
2. To assess the effectiveness of WNA in undertaking the program: the design of its intervention, implementation, evaluation, and reporting.
3. To provide recommendations for improvements in program implementation and potential extension and/or expansion;

Two important points can be mentioned at the onset.

*One: This evaluation was entirely technical and was not tasked with assessing any financial (or strictly administrative) aspects of the program. The evaluator did not meet with the program accountant or secretary or review any financial data or reporting.*

*Two: As WNA has other programs which include advocacy and policy components, and because advocacy to stop child labor in Minya's quarries was not part of the goals of this program, this evaluation does not address this critical issue in its analysis or recommendations.*

### **Evaluation Levels**

In order to assess the program's performance to date from the perspective of all stakeholders involved, the evaluator met with the beneficiaries in each village (children and mothers separately), vocational training providers, community coordinators, and WNA program staff and explored together the program's positive and negative aspects as well as their recommendations for the coming period. This was done at three main levels:

1. ***Beneficiary level.*** Focus groups discussions were conducted with a sample of children and mothers in the sites where the program is being implemented. The purpose was to understand the beneficiaries' involvement and opinions of the program, and the impact of the program on their knowledge, skills, wellbeing and

impact on deterring the children from quarry work in a sustainable manner. Part of this was accomplished by directly asking beneficiaries what they thought of the program and ways of improving it. Other information and insights were drawn from responses to other questions and the evaluator's observations during focus groups.

2. ***Vocational Training Provider level.*** This level of the evaluation focused on the providers of vocational skills training and their perspectives on the training component within the program design and implementation. This was achieved through a focus group discussion with all the trainers who participated in the program.
3. ***WNA Organizational level*** This organizational-level assessment looks at the institutional capacity of the Association to carry out the program and to explore issues related to program sustainability. The evaluator therefore has met with the WNA staff responsible for program implementation and briefly with the Director of Trustees (who seems to have a governance role but was involved in developing the program proposal), as well as the coordinators in the two villages who are assisting WNA with program implementation and follow-up at the community level. Meeting with the WNA Executive Director was not possible, as she was on leave during the evaluation period.

## II. METHODOLOGY

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The evaluator combined document analysis with intensive participatory field work, consisting of meetings and focus group discussions with children, women, vocational training providers, field coordinators, WNA program staff and Alfanar staff. All program documentation provided by Alfanar and WNA was carefully reviewed by the evaluator. These included the Project Approval Document (PAD), Alfanar's reports to Kingdom Foundation, and the program's four quarterly reports. Second, she met with the Alfanar's Director in Cairo to clarify some issues that arose in the reports, fine-tune the evaluation framework and to discuss the design of the evaluation tools (see Annex I). This was followed by a range of field work activities that were carried out in Minya during the period of June 16-18, 2008. Meetings conducted for the evaluation are detailed in the following table:

Dates	Location	Methodology	Task
June 15, 2008	Cairo	Meeting	Alfanar Director to obtain clarifications about the program and discuss evaluation approach
June 16, 2008	Minya	Meeting	Meeting with program staff for introduction and status report on the program
June 16 in Sawada June 17 in Zawyet Sultan	Minya	Focus group with activities for the younger children	Meeting with a sample of targeted children in the two villages
June 16 in Sawada June 17 in Zawyet Sultan	Minya	Focus group discussion	Meeting with a sample of targeted mothers in the two villages
June 17, 2008 in Al-Shorafa	Minya	Focus group discussion	Meeting with vocational training providers
June 18, 2008	Minya	Meeting	Meeting with WNA program staff
June 18, 2008	Minya	Meeting	Meeting with WNA Field Coordinators
June 26, 2008	Cairo	Meeting	Meeting with WNA program staff and Alfanar staff to discuss reflections on all aspects of the program

In Minya, the evaluator met with a total of **seven groups** (two children groups, two women groups, vocational training providers, field coordinators, and twice with the WNA program team). The evaluator met for around two hours with each of the groups, and the number ranged from three to up to 20 persons per meeting. In a final lengthier meeting, the evaluator then discussed all key elements of evaluation with the program

staff and Alfanar Director to ensure a truly participatory endeavor. The analysis and recommendations of this report however are the opinion and responsibility of the evaluator alone.

Annex I details the questions used in these meetings, which were developed in order to explore the following key issues:

- Perceptions of program success and areas for improvement from each group's point of view;
- Extent to which each program component (awareness, credit, vocational training) was effective;
- Perceptions and understandings regarding key factors contributing to/hindering program performance;
- Specific issues that arose from discussions, reports or previous evaluation; and
- Lessons learned and recommendations for change and improvement

### **III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

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This part of the report outlines the key findings and recommendations of the evaluation and is subdivided into the following sub-sections:

- A. Awareness-Raising Component
- B. Microcredit Component
- C. Vocational Training Component
- D. Organizational Capacity and Performance

#### **A. Awareness-Raising Component**

The program held awareness-raising seminars for small groups of children twice a month; and for mothers once a month. The awareness curriculum used was previously developed under WNA's Participatory Development Program (PDP) funded by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). According to the latest figures obtained from program staff, a total of 120 seminars for the children and a total of 48 workshops for the mothers were delivered in the two villages. The awareness-raising seminars are held in each village separately and in groups of about 25 persons each.

The seminars tackled the hazards of quarry work, child rights, and values such as cooperation, tolerance, self-acceptance, in additions to sessions on decision-making and how to plan for the future. For the mothers, the workshops provided an opportunity to learn about home economics, parenting as well as skills for small income-generating projects.

#### **Findings**

The program should be commended on the style of delivery of the awareness-raising sessions, in terms of encouraging discussion and providing opportunities for artistic expression and group activities for children and skills, knowledge and networking of women. It seemed that children and mothers were well aware of the hazards of quarry work. The content of the awareness raising curriculum for the women seemed wholly appropriate and useful (albeit as a “livelihoods curriculum”, a point discussed below). However, there are significant issues with regard to the curriculum for children, as detailed below. “Awareness Raising” might be a good description of a few of the sessions provided under this component, but the topics for women and children include elements that could fall under: micro project management, household management, livelihood (mothers), or life skills (children). The curriculum needs to be re-conceptualized with this in mind.

## Women

It can be deduced from program quarterly progress reports that the topics of the awareness raising curriculum for women were (there was no consolidated list of topics, and they were not always listed in the same format or under the same heading):

1. Rights of the Child
2. Dangers of Quarry Work
3. The Convention on the Rights of the Child
4. The Family's Role in Child-Rearing
5. Technical Assistance for Starting a Small Project
6. The Household Budget
7. World Poverty Day
8. Women's Status in Society
9. The Child's Right to Health Care (included some nutritional information and teaching various recipes for home cooking and as potential micro project ideas)
10. Marketing

Most of the women in the focus groups agreed that they greatly enjoyed the seminars and the networking opportunity it provided. Women in Zawyet Sultan seemed to particularly appreciate the seminars about how to treat their (teenage) children. It was mentioned that this decreased tension in the family and contributed to better relations and trust with girls as well as boys. It was stated that the "awareness raising" had a considerable impact on their practical lives. They seemed conversant in the topics of the curriculum and were able to recall them all. They seemed to have enjoyed the experience-sharing among women in the seminars.

Some of the women expressed appreciation that there were people interested in helping them and improving their lives. They said that they had been "imprisoned" and never left home before the program and the sessions, and "did not know how to talk". It was mentioned that the "awareness raising" was the best thing the women liked about the program. There was a general agreement that all the topics in the curriculum were useful and none of them should be changed or removed. It was stated that they (the women) could not have enough of it all (*manishba'sh minha*). When asked about additional subjects they may want to learn about, the women mentioned: literacy, sewing, health awareness and home economics.

The coordinators mentioned the positive impact on the mothers of the "awareness raising" and their knowledge of the nature of the work in the quarries and the dangers involved and examples of accidents that happen in the quarries. According to program staff, women were interested in the dangers of quarry work and less interested in rights issues (rights of the child). In reference to the differences between the two program sites, it was explained that in Zawyet Sultan, there is more interest among the women in awareness seminars, while in Sawada there is more interest in loans.

## Children

Focus group discussions showed a consensus that the children enjoyed drawing and activities during the awareness-raising sessions. They specifically mentioned liking the arts components of the sessions. As the importance of structured play cannot be

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emphasized enough for enhancing the learning and growth of children, the program should be greatly commended for giving the children opportunities and space to grow and 'to be children' who can draw and play. The older children also discussed enjoying visiting new places, making new friendships, and carrying out activities such as drawing and glass painting. They stated that they liked the ways the sessions were organized in terms of the encouragement of discussion and opinion-sharing.

Some children were able to talk about their mothers' projects, in which some of them were involved. During focus group discussions, it emerged that some younger children were not regular in attending the sessions (reasons for this should be explored by WNA, but as reporting does not display records of attendees, it may be difficult to track attendance).

The most positive aspects of the awareness raising component for children are the effective sessions on the dangers of quarry work and the general approach of the curriculum; involving the children in activities and arts, which is both useful and appealing to the children.<sup>1</sup>

**What is the purpose of the curriculum and why should this purpose be supported and pursued by this program?** Especially for the children's curriculum, the relevance and purpose of each of the "awareness raising" sessions/ topics is not clear from available program documentation. The main goal and purpose of the program as a whole is also not clear, and the usefulness and relevance of some of the topics is not clear.

It can be deduced from program quarterly progress reports that the topics of the awareness raising curriculum for children were:

- 1- The Dangers of Quarry Work
- 2- Quarry Children and the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- 3- The Rights of the Child in Egyptian Law
- 4- The Child's Right to Protection from Labor
- 5- The Child's Right to Education
- 6- Quarry Children and the Right to Freedom of Expression
- 7- Quarry Children and Decision-Making
- 8- Quarry Children and Cooperation and Competition
- 9- Quarry Children and Self-Acceptance
- 10- Quarry Children and Ambition
- 11- Quarry Children and Defending their Rights
- 12- Quarry Children- Tolerance and Peace
- 13- Planning for the Future
- 14- Know Your Rights
- 15- Muppet Show: "Who can we tell and who would listen" (dangers of quarry work)
- 16- Developing Creativity and Innovation Skills of Quarry Children

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<sup>1</sup> In general, this researcher believes that the pedagogy (style of teaching) is as important as the content of what is being taught in terms of building student character and values. For example, consistently nurturing a participatory and respectful approach and environment is perhaps more important than explicitly teaching these values as part of the curriculum.

## 17- Child to Child Approach

It is not clear if the main purpose of the curriculum is to prevent children from returning to the quarries. If so, how does each topic contribute to this goal? The purpose could also be to give children a space to enjoy constructive play through art and games. It could be to provide children with life skills. It could be to encourage children to adopt certain values, such as self-acceptance and tolerance (values that may be very positive, but do not necessarily relate to preventing quarry work). It could be to improve the material livelihoods of children. It could be to educate children about Egyptian laws and international convention on the rights of children. The sessions include elements of all of these goals, but the focus is not clear and not clearly argued. The coherence of the program is therefore an area for improvement: how does each component relate to the others and contribute to an overall purpose?

Further, there is no indication from the reports that WNA is familiar with, and building on the experiences of, other work on child labor, out of school children or life skills programs in Egypt and internationally. These experiences should be critical for providing background and rationale for effective interventions with out of school and working children. For example, there are many different experiments in Egypt and in Minya relating to vocational training and many lessons can be learned from the many obstacles they have faced.

The Rights of the Child sections of the curriculum do not seem to be entirely suitable for the younger children, and are resisted by the older children who do not consider themselves ‘children’. This aspect of the curriculum could be removed or modified, for example by designing activities that teach some of the desired knowledge and values through games, art and group work, not through memorization of the rights of the child.

The younger children did memorize several of the rights of the child, but did not seem to understand many of them. They also seemed to relate most to some of the locally/culturally relevant aspects. For example, they mentioned: “the right to religion”, “the right to learn the Quran”. In terms of the subjects they wanted to learn about in the future, they mentioned religious subjects and arts/drawing.

In reference to whether or not their (negative) behaviors had changed as a result of the awareness (a point which was raised by the previous evaluation), most of the children said that no one really changed (for example, stopped cursing). This may be due to the duration of the program, its content and delivery, or the strength of prevailing social norms (or of course a particular mode of cultural performance: it may not have been acceptable for the children to admit to have changed this way).

With regards to the impact of awareness-raising topics on preventing their return to the quarries, the older children pointed to the value of information on the dangers of quarry work. In terms of how the curriculum could be developed, older children mentioned the importance of linking the awareness-raising with small projects and how to help families with projects. With regards to how to deal with the drop in income as a result of not going to the quarries, the children mentioned that health can be more important than

income; that the positive change in their health condition is an incentive not to go back to the quarry; and that they can also try to find other types of work. Younger children seemed more 'scared' of the quarries, more reluctant to go there and more relieved for not having to go anymore. According to program staff, the younger children have not been too tied to the quarries as they have not worked there for long, but older children say that they do not know how to do anything else.

For older and younger children, the aspects they mentioned disliking about the awareness-raising were lack of discipline and noise and commotion during the sessions. Among the older children, there was a complaint of some ridicule by other children. (It is clear that there is ridicule among younger children as well, which emerged in the focus group discussion). While various forms of bullying are common among children of all ages and cultures, whenever possible, facilitators can make sure that children know that this behavior is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in the sessions. Some older children remarked that the timing of the sessions was not always appropriate for them, but this did not seem to apply to everyone.

Field coordinators' recommendations for developing the awareness curriculum included: increasing the number of films (pointing out that visual and dramatic media were most effective with the women and children), increasing the practical aspects in seminars, introducing topics on reproductive health, home economics, how to deal with children, product marketing and marketing specifically for the kinds of projects undertaken by the women, how to choose a project, and how to discuss matters with children and its impact on changes in their behaviors and attitudes.

### **Recommendations for improvement include:**

#### **Overall**

1. Provide detailed information on full content of implemented awareness raising curriculum.
2. Provide full and systematic documentation of sessions: time, location, date, facilitator, content, activities, issues and reflections.
3. Report on attendance of sessions. What percentage of target group attends, what affects their attendance, any lessons learned about timing or content of sessions?
4. Enhance the visual, dramatic and interactive elements of curriculum delivery.
5. Provide a rationale for number of participants in each session, based on its purpose and contents.
6. Produce a film about the health and safety risks of quarry work or incorporate this into the existing documentary on child labor in the quarries, which could also be edited and strengthened.
7. Provide an analysis (costs, benefits, advantages, risks) of whether and how the program can work with children who have not left the quarries, through providing life skills, opportunities for learning and growth and health and safety information (see Sub-Section D).
8. Consider producing a film on protecting health and safety in the quarries for children who are still working there (see Sub-Section D).
9. Study the possibility of producing a film documenting the statements and experiences of the children and mothers after completing the program and the

- impact on their lives, their self perception, relations with children: financial, health, personal and social impacts. Such a film would be greatly instrumental in informing and attracting new beneficiaries, in the case of expansion into new sites or groups of beneficiaries.
10. Consider holding joint awareness-building sessions between Sawada and Zaweyet Sultan so that there is more sharing of experiences between the children as well as between the women from the various communities.
  11. Consider hiring or training additional facilitators so that the burden is not only on the program manager and coordinator to conduct all sessions (especially if numbers of sessions increase)

### **Children**

12. Outline and explain other work done with child labor in Egypt and internationally. See Sub-Section D on developing conceptual frameworks and background papers.
11. Provide detailed re-conceptualization of content of children's "awareness raising" curriculum, differentiated by age group. This includes: clearly defining its goals, its components and how they contribute to these goals.
12. Provide detailed study of the possibility of strengthening the life skills content of the program. This study should include a survey and analysis of existing programs in Egypt and elsewhere, assess and analyze appropriateness for the local context and each age group, duration, cost, benefits, risks and other critical aspects for initiation, implementation and evaluation of such content. (See Sub-Section D on developing Concept Papers).
13. Literacy (taught through interactive and visual methods such as Arabic Sesame Street) and general health information should be featured strongly if the life skills and livelihoods orientation of the curriculum are emphasized in the next stage.
14. Design activities that teach some of the desired rights and values through games, art and group work, not through memorization.
15. Consider increasing the number of seminars to one per week- if this is suitable to the curriculum, in order to keep the children engaged and increase their opportunities for learning.
16. Consider decreasing the number of attendees in each session to provide better learning opportunities and minimize problems of discipline and control.
17. Study the possibility and appropriateness of providing older children with micro project management skills or generally linking awareness-raising with helping family with its implemented project.
18. Study harmful patterns of behavior, such as smoking, that may be contributing to dependency on quarry work and poorer health, and whether there are (innovative) ways in which these could be tackled within the program (beyond an information session about the health risks of smoking).

### **Women**

19. Outline, explain and categorize the types of information/advice/guidance needed by mothers in order to accurately conceptualize the "awareness raising" component. If most types of training fall under 'livelihoods', then the goal of this component should be stated explicitly and the curriculum should be developed on those lines.

20. Explain the kinds of set up, management or marketing expertise that was sought by the program to assist with its training for micro-credit project management for women.

### **B. Microcredit Component**

Under a revolving loan fund scheme, the program is providing small loans to two types of groups: 1) the families of working children below the age of 14, enabling them to set up small income-generating projects which would, in turn, make them less dependent on their children for income; and 2) the children above the age of 14 benefiting from the vocational skills training, which would allow them to set up their own practice upon completion of training. The second type of loans is in the amount of L.E. 500 also to be repaid over a 12 month period with a 10% interest rate. There has been greater reluctance for children to take this up, but more recently fourteen children did express interest in the loans (the issuing of the loans is still under discussion).

By the end of the program, the program made credit available for 142 families under a group lending scheme (each group formed of 6 women). The actual beneficiaries exceeded the target by about 40%. The loan is repaid over a 12 month period with a 10% interest rate. According to the second quarterly report, the criteria for eligibility for a loan were: 1) that the family has a child working in the quarries; 2) that the family has the desire for the child to leave the quarry; 3) that the family is willing to undertake a small project as an alternative to the child's work; 4) that the family is of a good reputation; and 5) that the family is not receiving loans from any another entity at the same time. The latter criteria led to the elimination of around 50% of families, whose applications were postponed until they repaid their loans to other entities, but who were allowed to benefit from awareness raising for women and children. This was especially true for Sawada where many microcredit projects are working.

As of June 2008, a total of 142 loans were disbursed in the total amount of L.E. 98,000 as per the following schedule:

<b>Village</b>	<b>L.E. 500 Category</b>	<b>L.E. 750 Category</b>	<b>Total</b>
Zawayet Sultan	8	10	18
Sawada	26	98	124
<b>Total</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>142</b>

The loan repayment rate is 100% and most of the projects are related to raising poultry, rabbits, or goats followed by trade in vegetables and breakfast food (*ful* and *ta'miyya*), or groceries followed by sewing, selling of ready garments, accessories, beauty products, and cloth.

### **Findings**

This seems like the most successful and problem-free component of the program (along with awareness-raising for women). It seems from program staff monitoring and focus groups with women that the loans are indeed used for projects, that the projects are profitable, and that the families observe the loan conditions and do not send their child to the quarry. WNA program staff asserted that those children whose families receive loans are not expected to return to the quarries at all, as the families feel legally bound by the terms of the loan contract to not send them to the quarries.

In focus group discussions, the women seemed positive and enthusiastic about their projects, their potential and profits. It was even declared that all their products get sold and they do not have marketing problems. It seemed that some of the women felt solidarity and pride in each other's projects (complimenting each other) and generally displayed warm comradely feelings towards each other.

They all agreed that they wished for the loan sums to increase. From asking women in focus groups, it emerged that all of them had taken loans before and were augmenting existing projects. They appeared to be familiar with basic aspects of micro project management. For example, they spoke of the importance of 'thinking about your product and market', 'planning your spending, and keeping a salary for yourself'.

From an evaluator's perspective, this makes it very difficult to objectively assess whether the women's knowledge and skills were developed as a result of this program, previous microcredit programs, or a combination of both factors. Without additional information on the types of training and programs the women had previously benefitted from, it is difficult to confidently assert that observed competencies were the sole outcome of this program.

The women agreed that the greatest change they saw in their children as a result of the program was that they were healthier and more active, instead of coming home exhausted from work and the heat and unable to move or even eat. The mothers of the younger children also stated that the children preferred not to go to the quarries. Some women noted some change in the way the children treated their parents; being less cruel/abusive, perhaps as a result of being more rested, and removed from the harsh environment of the quarries.

The field coordinators emphasized how the loan system and its disbursement through checks that are cashed in the bank had a positive impact on the commitment of the women and also their exposure to greater life experiences outside the home.

It seems that this component is primarily assessed through repayment rate, although focus group discussions and some elements of program reporting reveal other areas of monitoring and assessment, for example, that loans are actually used for projects. This risks overlooking important aspects relating to the micro credit component such as benefit to the family (child quarry workers and the family as a whole), use of profit, sustainability, and involvement of the child in the project. If the program is already collecting different kinds of assessment-related data, it may do so more systematically, in order to more fully document the benefits of this component.

### **Recommendations for improvement include:**

1. Put in place and explain criteria for evaluation of success of the micro-credit component and the ways of verifying them and reporting them, such as benefit to the family, use of profit, sustainability, and involvement of the child in the project.
2. Study the benefits and risks of attempting to reach beneficiaries who have never received loans.
3. Clarify how many women had taken loans before, how many are augmenting existing projects and indicate the types of training they had received in previous microcredit programs.
4. Assess the appropriateness of adding other loan categories (e.g. L.E. 1000) for those who wish to apply for them, or to allow applicants to ask for specific amounts based on their needs and proposed projects
5. Conduct a thorough assessment of the suitability of the loan scheme to children who complete vocational training (if that component is extended)

### **C. Vocational Training Component**

In an attempt to create alternatives to quarry work and ensure sustainability, the Program provides training opportunities for 50 children above the age of 14 in various vocations on a grant basis.

There was little interest in vocational training in the program's targeted villages (the reasons for this is not clear from program documentation), so the project opted to target a new group: school dropouts who are at greater risk to go work at the quarries than their school-going peers. According to the mid-term evaluation, the program targeted the nearby village of Al-Shorafa and gathered 50 children interested in receiving vocational training as an alternative to quarry work. (The exact breakdown of trainees from each village is not clear from program documentation.)

WNA made agreements with two private workshops in the communities, one independent trainer, and two vocational training centers: the Work Force Training Center in the Industrial City of Minya, and the Caritas Center in Minya.

After the completion of training in January 2008, all the children were examined and many passed with good grades. A graduation ceremony was held for them on June 17, 2008 where they received certificates and toolkits for their respective vocations.

The training period ranged from as little as 12 days for phone cell repair to almost 5 months in the case of Car Electric Repair, with an average of 3 months of training per vocation. The total cost of vocational training provided to 50 children amounted to L.E. 40,896 with an average cost per child of L.E. 818.

### **Findings**

Despite the significant cost (on average 818 LE/child, according to program reports) and effort expended in the set up, management, monitoring and actual training by staff trainers and children, careful study is needed before this component is implemented in future programs, as there seems to be a consensus that it will not, as it stands, be sufficient to prevent children from returning to the quarries, as it has not equipped them for engaging in gainful employment. Although the appropriate duration of the training had been discussed with the trainers beforehand, the consensus remains that the duration was short and that the training given is not sufficient- in most, but not all cases- to enable the child to practice the vocation. This finding was not surprising to the evaluator, as vocational training and apprenticeship is a very long process and most vocational training qualifications in Egypt and around the world extend for several years (e.g. Mubarak-Kohl technical education program, technical education programs in secondary schools and in colleges). There is no indication however that the program had drawn upon these experiences as it embarked on designing this component.

### Children

In focus group discussion, the children said that they liked the idea of vocational training and knowing a trade. Children seemed impressed and satisfied with the trainers and their training experience. They commented on the brotherly way the trainers treated them. Some emphasized the importance of trainers being strict, but that patience was also very important for learning. They seemed proud of their participation in the training. They mentioned that the level of the training was appropriate, but that the duration was short and they need more advanced training to deepen their knowledge. The women seemed happy with the vocational training their children were receiving (which offered a daily allowance, learning a profession and not going to the quarry). Some women remarked that their children had changed and become more patient. There were comments that the training made the children more optimistic (*nifsu etfatahit*), learned to be patient and persevering. At least two examples were mentioned by trainers and mothers of children who were able to fix things around the house or for neighbors using their newly acquired vocational skills.

In response to a question on whether they would go back to the quarries after the training is over, they agreed that if there is no job opportunity available, they would go to the quarries. With regard to the loans available to them, they felt they needed guarantees for the continuity of the program, that they needed considerable technical support, and that they were not able to market and manage projects. Some expressed that they appreciated leaving the quarry and its dangers. In terms of what they wanted in the future, they said they would like more trips outside their village. They also mentioned that sometimes the transport to the training was late.

A survey conducted by the program at the request of Alfanar, indicated that 40% of the children declared that they are still frequenting the quarries. It was argued that this percentage may decrease now that toolkits that would allow each child to practice what he learned were distributed, in June 2008. Discussion with WNA program staff implied that the survey was conducted with vocational trainees only; that is, the older children from Shorafa whose families do not receive loans. Further analysis of such surveys

should be undertaken and the surveys and results should be well documented in future program reporting.

### Trainers

In focus group discussions with trainers, they agreed that it would be difficult for the children to work independently after this training. Most agreed that the children need further training to be competent in the professions, although this may not apply to every single profession (such as mobile phone repair). They were satisfied and impressed with monitoring by the program even though it was intensive. They pointed out that illiteracy affects the success of the children and their ability to learn. Some trainers argued that improving their own facilities- with the help of the program- would allow for better outcome of the training. It was stated that the work done with the children should not be wasted and should be built on.

In terms of lessons learnt for the future, one of the most important points the trainers raised was the necessity of planning for what happens after the training. Continuity between the stages is important as well, for example children should receive their toolkits right after they complete their training. Some trainers suggested that it could be useful to attempt to set up partnerships between the children to implement a project in the occupation they trained on. It was mentioned that the age of the child should be an important consideration in deciding about vocational training and that there should be an initial discussion of each child's desires and abilities perhaps through a small exam; and that the trainer's perspective is very important for determining this. It was suggested that a certificate of appreciation could be given to the trainers, perhaps in a celebration where local officials are present. In this regard, it was stated that it could be useful to have a rotation of the children to the different vocations to verify their abilities and inclination for particular vocations. Another suggestion was that protocols could be developed to attach the children to workshops so that they can learn and work through experience. It was also clarified during discussions that the evaluation given in the final examination was, for most trainers, an assessment of their readiness for practicing their vocations independently not an assessment of the knowledge they acquired during training. In several cases, (perhaps naturally) the knowledge acquired during training was not the whole of the knowledge needed to practice the vocation, so some trainers gave the students medium or low scores as a rating of their ability to practice independently, not as a rating of their learning during the training. This is an issue that needs to be clarified in the future.

Field coordinators voiced the same opinion that the duration of the training for some of the vocations was not sufficient to equip the children to become proficient in their vocations. They remarked that the training period was *very* short. It was stated that once the child began to learn something, the training was over! One coordinator highlighted that in one case, there was an early change in the location of training and trainer when there was a complaint by the children of bad treatment. It was suggested that children could be tied to particular vocations based on available job opportunities, not only their inclination for a particular vocation. It was mentioned that choosing older children for training has a great impact on the success of the training and the extent of learning of the children.

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On the part of field coordinators, they noted positive changes in the behavior of children and their commitment to attending the training. It is possible that the training had a clearer positive impact on the children's behavior and morale. This could be a consequence of the educational style of the trainers, or because training was conducted in small groups and each child's learning was individually monitored, or because the children were convinced and proud of the training, or due to their age and maturity, or because the training had clear educational goals, commitment and monitoring during an intensified training period, or because they had the benefit of both training and awareness raising. In any case, it would be useful for WNA to explore whether the training indeed had clearer positive effects and if so how this can inform the design of future interventions.

In sum, most opinions and recommendations suggest that training without the existence of job opportunities may lead to frustration for the children and their return to quarry work; that is, the program's impact is not sustainable. Consequently, it would represent a waste of the time and resources expended in it, which could be otherwise utilized.

**Recommendations for improvement include:**

1. Careful study of costs and benefits is needed before this component is implemented in the future. Are there benefits to the basic level vocational training *even if* children do not get job placements and go back to the quarries again? Such benefits may include for example, simple household maintenance skills, discipline, work ethic, communication skills, sense of accomplishment, confidence, transferable skills, work skills, life skills, and enhanced employability. If so, how can the training component be re-conceptualized to better deliver these benefits? Can aspects of the vocational training be merged into the "awareness-raising" curriculum?
2. Development of this component should be done in consultation with the trainers as they are a valuable resource on this matter.
3. Further training for a limited number of children (with careful planning for post-training progress) could be considered, as a pilot project to help assess the complete costs and duration of fuller training and the eventual outcome of the training in terms of securing employment and prevention from quarry work. This would also ensure that not all the work done with the children is wasted.
4. If this component is maintained, the introduction of new vocations, such as plumbing, upholstery, painting should be considered.
5. If this component is maintained, the purpose of the final vocational examination should be clarified: testing material learned Vs. testing ability to practice the vocation independently.
6. If this component is maintained, age of the child, literacy and vocation aptitude should be carefully assessed in consultation with trainers before commencing training.
7. If this component is maintained, certificates of appreciation should be given to the trainers in recognition of their efforts.

#### **D. Organizational Capacity and Performance**

The program team includes: the head of the program, a program coordinator, an accountant and a secretary. There are other WNA interventions with children working in the quarries. These are focused on education, awareness, vocational training and child clubs (mainly funded through PDP). It was explained that their interventions have the same types of beneficiaries and age groups, but are carried out in different sites, not in Sawada and Zawyet Sultan.

WNA seems to be deeply rooted in the beneficiary communities, as well as in others where it works. This is mainly due to its strong ties with its more established sister organization, Better Life Association for Comprehensive Development (BLACD), an experienced cadre of staff, and a network of well-trained volunteers from within the communities.

Under this program, the WNA program staff not only manage and oversee the program activities but also plan for and deliver the awareness-raising sessions themselves. This has possibly contributed to stronger ties between them and the beneficiaries. The two WNA staff members responsible for the program are further assisted by four community leaders/volunteers (two in each village), all of them females.

#### **Findings**

Organizational capacity is analyzed on four main areas: reporting and documentation, volunteer field coordinators, program staff and sustainability and expansion.

##### **Reporting and Documentation**

The program should be commended on several aspects of its reporting and documentation. This includes for example, providing data tables on training, loans and vocational training examination results, maintaining a detailed database of participants, setting up and maintaining a loan tracking system and the documentation of the program through pictures and quotes from participants. It also seems there has been some progress in the professionalism of the reporting from one report to the next. However, reporting in general could be strengthened. It sometimes seems that there is significant implicit knowledge and assumptions behind the program's approach, but these are not clearly articulated in program documentation. In many parts, program reports do not display enough clarity, comprehensiveness, consistency or sufficient detail. The individual roles of members of staff working on the program are not always clear.

Further, reporting does not provide a strong conceptual grounding for the program's interventions. The rationale, basis and analysis behind interventions are usually not made explicit. WNA does not illustrate its awareness of other similar interventions nor demonstrate how it has learned from them in developing its own interventions. The program should demonstrate that it is not 'reinventing the wheel' and that it is aware of other programs and their interventions, and hopefully their successes and failures, which would inform program interventions by providing pointers about which activities may be

effective and which ones may prove to be a waste of resources. Alfanar may be able to assist in this regard by devoting a portion of the program budget for this purpose, or by directly hiring one or more consultants who can work with WNA to perform the background research and develop the conceptual framework on each area of its interventions (general expertise may be sought, or if needed, specific expertise on vocational training, microcredit, life skills and child labor could be employed). Alfanar's Information and Research Centre may also be a critical resource in this regard. Needless to say, any resources expended on this endeavor should lead to savings in terms of better conceptualized interventions and prevention of resource wastage.

There is little scope for a detailed analysis of the reporting weaknesses in this evaluation, but a few examples can be mentioned. On page 22 of the fourth quarterly report, it is stated that: "many families set up other projects in addition to the first project, which is an indicator of the success of the projects and their ability to perform their goals". There is no more information, tracking or documentation of this pattern. It is not clear how many families this statement applies to and what kinds of projects were performed. Further, focus group discussions indicate that most women were in fact augmenting existing projects, not starting new ones. This important point is not at all clear from the reports. Again, such information is critical and impacts the evaluation and its ability to make solid conclusions about the program. The second quarterly report (no page number) states that there was a "study of the program's target communities and identification of the vocations demanded by the market, in order to direct children towards these vocations to guarantee job opportunities for them, after the training period". However this study is not provided along with the report and it is not clear who conducted it, the methodology followed or a summary of findings. Further, it seems that these studies were conducted in Sawada and Zawyet Sultan as the program target communities, and not in Shorafa, from which the trainees were drawn. It seems from program reports that the training itself was also conducted in the target communities, not in Shorafa. It is not clear as well whether the vocational trainees from Shorafa received their awareness raising sessions in the target communities or in Shorafa itself. Such issues, in fact the very need to search for beneficiaries outside the target communities, should be clearly explained in program reports. In general, beneficiary selection should be well documented and detailed in program reporting; and details of all activities undertaken should be clearly explained. Annexes should be used to provide full details on specific aspects. Finally, program reports do not provide lists of the awareness raising or vocational training topics and the organization of the reports and their level of detail and comprehensiveness varies from one report to the other.

*In sum, reporting and documentation should be better organized, more rigorous, transparent, systematic, detailed, substantiated and include executive summaries, wherever possible.*

#### Field-Coordination

Field coordinators seem to be competent and confident enough to carry out their assigned duties. In focus group discussions, they seemed conversant and knowledgeable about the program and its components and were able to provide opinions and recommendations for future work (referred to throughout the report).

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As a group, the field coordinators described that they had received training in: volunteering, documentation, group work, planning, community needs identification, the child to child approach, communication, the rights-based approach, the art of home visits, advocacy, and reproductive health.

The coordinators described their roles throughout the program. They explained their roles in gathering information about children working in the quarries, assisting with filling out data forms, making maps of the communities, surveying the local workshops, identify community leaders, identifying need and interest in loans or vocational training, scrutinizing the loan applicants to verify seriousness in project implementation and loan repayment, helping set times for seminars, monitoring the execution of the microcredit projects, conducting monitoring visits and administering follow-up forms.

The coordinators commented on the positive changes they felt in themselves, such as increased confidence, how to deal with different kinds of people, how to absorb someone's anger, to be resolute but also be liked in the community, building relationships with local leaders, persuasiveness and having an impact on people. It was stated that they liked having information that they can share with people, the friendly team spirit in WNA, that there is no difference in treatment between Christians and Muslims, that they are given responsibilities and that their mistakes are pointed out gently (with respect).

The field coordinators discussed some of the issues and challenges in their involvement with the program from its inception. They discussed the fears in the communities in the beginning of the program, for example, fears of the large size of the interest on the loans, understanding the repayment system, and caution about the program and the association. There was a sense that there has been an increasing trust between the association and the communities.

The coordinators stated that the main challenges they faced in their work were the resistance in the community and the difficulty of changing their attitudes and convictions. The issue of pay was raised with hope of increasing it. It was also mentioned that there could be a male coordinator to talk with the workshop owners for example. In terms of their future training needs, the following were mentioned: gender, product marketing, political training- local councils, past training for newer coordinators.

#### WNA Program Staff

Program staff seemed proficient, experienced, capable, confident, interested and warm. They seemed to know their target community very well; and to be familiar with its issues and constraints, the conditions of the people and their ways of thinking. They should be highly commended for their monitoring activities which keep them very close to the community and display their involvement in the program. In fact, program documentation should better highlight their efforts in this regard (by devoting a separate and constant section of the reports to them and documenting them in detail). Their management of the loans and vocational training components seems to have been very effective, and- again- program documentation should highlight this more clearly.

WNA Staff's strong ties with the community are a definite plus, even though this makes objective program evaluation more difficult. The full allegiance of the beneficiaries (the mothers in particular) seems to be to WNA. However, the mothers seemed genuinely satisfied with their experience and interested in its continuation. This is certainly a success in and of itself.

Program staff described aspects of their work on the program from its inception. Proposal writing for this program was carried out by the head of WNA and its founder and Director of Trustees, but not the rest of the staff. Monthly executive plans are set up by the program staff with the participation of the field coordinators. In the beginning of the program, data forms were collected and a database was built for the children covered by the program. With the participation of the other WNA members, a study of the program sites was conducted. Coordination with other lending agencies ensured that no family was receiving two loans at the same time. A strong sense of accountability was instilled along the chains of implementation, for example coordinators were made to feel accountable for verifying that beneficiaries have presented accurate information and that there are no irregularities in implementation. WNA program staff described the progress of their work on vocational training, and the development of their relationship with the trainers so that they came to accept their continuous monitoring.

Careful monitoring of training yielded greater commitment on the part of child and trainer as well as improved quality of training, including aspects such as working with trainers to simplify the material to make it more appropriate for the children (especially those with poor literacy skills).

It was argued that the material and human capabilities of WNA and the training of the field coordinators are suitable for the program, but there might be a need for purchasing a camera for documentation purposes. There was an agreement that the coordinators' pay should be increased to better match the prevailing local rate. One of the most recent challenges was a document issued by the Minya Governorate that attempts to limit all interest on microcredit to 5%, while the program charges 10%. The challenges mentioned by program staff included: the passivity of some children and families; the total dependence of families and children on WNA for everything; difficulties in dealing with official entities; the governorate's decision with regard to interest on microcredit; the difficulty of children receiving loans after completing their training due to their inexperience; and the inappropriateness of the field coordinator pay in relation to the roles they are expected to perform.

Program staff stated that they appreciated that Alfanar was very flexible with them, and gave them freedom to deal with issues because they were closer to the communities. This flexibility was also financial so that there was scope to move across budget items when the need arose. At the personal level, they also appreciated working with Alfanar Director. They expressed interest in networking with entities working in related fields, having a visit from Kingdom Foundation, and in networking with business people.

In terms of what Alfanar could offer in the coming period, the following was mentioned: assisting WNA in owning a vocational training centre, assisting WNA in networking with

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institutions and countries concerned with child labour, assisting WNA in connecting with business people and international organizations concerned with child labour.

In general, program staff felt that the program was effective for the children and mothers and had a significant impact on raising the children's self confidence and developing their skills and abilities. Positive aspects of the program mentioned by the staff included:

- the ability to effectively respond to needs of the communities,
- the commitment of the children and mothers,
- building a positive working relationship with the trainers and the different training bodies,
- covering greater numbers of beneficiaries than planned,
- gaining valuable experiences that have been transferred to the rest of the WNA team,
- the empowerment of women through managing their projects, cashing their checks at the bank, being exposed to more experiences outside the home,
- the empowerment of children by providing them with vocational skills, the participation of some children with mothers in projects, and
- Positive changes and growth in the characters of the program team.

### Sustainability and Expansion

In terms of the relative importance and impact of the different components of the program, there was an agreement that the program is coherent and integrated. Awareness-raising was the essential step, but loans made a real difference for the families. It offered financial liquidity and the women speak of how it changed their lives. It seems clear that in any plans for program extension, micro credit for women and the accompanying awareness raising curriculum for them should be key components.

On the other hand, significant questions could be raised about the sustainability of the vocational training component. Some frustration was expressed by WNA program staff at the inability to provide job opportunities for vocational trainees, but it was also stated that children now have another alternative and more confidence. Among the challenges mentioned was a sense of dependency and pressure from the communities on the program and an expectation that it will provide everything, especially job opportunities.

In discussions with field coordinators, it was stated that the children would go back to the quarries if there was no job opportunities and no program working with them and that continuity with them is important so that they do not return; that one year is not enough to accomplish this. It was stated that to avoid the children's return to quarry work, the program can search for alternative job opportunities for them, continue its work with them, encouraging them by presenting positive models from among their peers who no longer work in the quarries.

When asked about interventions that could prevent the children from returning to the quarries, the mothers mentioned the availability of job opportunities for them. It was suggested that tying the children to the projects carried out by mothers would help

convince them not to return to the quarries. Some women suggested that the program could attempt to make contracts or agreements with workshops and factories in the industrial city to link the children with these workshops after finishing their vocational training. Some women expressed the importance of expanding the number of beneficiaries to include more children and more families.

**Recommendations for improvement include:**

1. Provide a detailed study of the appropriateness- for each component of the program- of Expansion to other beneficiaries and sites versus Consolidation and deepening impact by building on progress so far. If work is to be continued with previous beneficiaries, a careful conceptualization is needed for how to build on and enhance the gains made so far with this group through new and different interventions.
2. Produce a complete Conceptual Framework or Concept Paper expressing the program's approach and its rationale covering the following suggested key areas: 1) mapping of similar interventions to those proposed by WNA in Minya, Egypt and other parts of the world if possible- in this case: interventions on child labor especially any that deal specifically with child labor in quarries; micro credit programs, and sizes of loans, conditionality, support, training, life skills and livelihoods programs, awareness raising programs accompanying microcredit programs, transformational vocational training programs (partnerships with the private sector); 2) identifying the advantages of its chosen approaches and situating WNA's proposed interventions within these wider interventions; 3) identifying the specific local (cultural, economic, social, educational) conditions in beneficiary communities which impact program goals and outcomes. WNA may rely on an external consultant to assist with the development of this paper (perhaps with the help of Alfanar's Information and Research Centre). This recommendation to produce a full conceptual framework and background paper should apply to any component or program proposed by WNA in the future.
3. Provide an analysis (including costs, benefits, advantages, risks) of whether and how the program can work with children who have not left the quarries, through providing life skills, opportunities for learning and growth and health and safety information.
4. Beneficiary selection should be well documented and detailed in program reporting; and details of all activities undertaken should be clearly explained. Annexes should be used to provide full details on specific aspects.
5. Outline and implement measures to increase transparency in reporting and provide examples and clarifications to substantiate statements and observations.
6. Follow-up meetings with Alfanar to assess progress on assigned goals should be conducted every two or three months (with submission of quarterly report).
7. Provide complete details of other WNA interventions with children working in the quarries: number of projects, duration, scope, nature, locations (and how they help inform and facilitate work on Alfanar's program).
8. Provide full details of the sessions and activities carried out based on a set format, e.g. name of trainer, date and time of session and list of attendees. If trainer is external to WNA, background and CV should be documented and presented along with reports to Alfanar.

9. Put in place report on a system for monitoring the children's return to work in the quarries (through periodic self-administered anonymous questionnaires, as well as other methods)
10. Consideration could be given to working more intensively with younger children not yet attached to quarry work and more likely to quit it.
11. Identify the kinds of networking WNA would benefit from and propose a plan for carrying them out.
12. Raise pay of community coordinators in line with local rates.
13. Clearly identify roles of each the WNA program staff and coordinators in all activities.
14. Provide an annex with the full details of the content of the awareness-raising curriculum, as well as providing a summary listing of its contents.
15. Provide a summary or list of the contents/topics in each vocational training subject
16. Provide a brief explanation of how the group lending system works.

## IV. CONCLUSION

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The Training and Credit Program for Children Working in the Quarry Sector and their Families has made a positive contribution to the lives of at least 150 children and families. As Alfano and WNA have expressed interest in extending the program, a number of issues should be addressed to help ensure successful program extension, based on the learning that has happened over the past year.

*As it considers program extension, the five key tasks for WNA should be: 1) developing its analysis and plans for either: expansion into new sites and beneficiaries or consolidation of work with the same beneficiaries, 2) re-conceptualizing and strengthening its awareness curricula, 3) fully assessing the merit of the vocational training component, 4) developing a detailed conceptual framework to provide justification for its proposed interventions in the coming stage, and 5) analyzing whether and how it can work with children who have not left the quarries.*

WNA has not yet presented its ideas on whether and how it proposes to continue working with the same beneficiaries or reach out to additional beneficiaries (whether in the same program sites/villages, or in new sites). To do this, it will need to assess the needs, conditions and opportunities in existing sites and in other possible sites. This is one of the most critical choices facing WNA at this stage.

Despite the limited number of children the program has been working with, relative to the estimated 3,000 children working in the quarries in Minya, WNA seems to have given little consideration to how it can assist children who are still working in the quarries, by providing health and safety information, life skills, as well as outlets and opportunities for learning, growth and play. Even in families that the program is working with, there are siblings who work in the quarries. WNA should carefully assess whether and how it can work with these children. When this point was raised with program staff, they expressed the sentiment that this may seem as an endorsement of child labor in the quarries. However, aiming to protect and empower children while encouraging and helping them to transition out of certain forms of child labor is not necessarily an endorsement of child labor, but rather a response and remedy to a reality that already exists. WNA and Alfano should reach their own agreement on this matter.

As discussed in Part III, WNA should also devote considerable time and resources to re-conceptualizing and developing the children's "awareness-raising" curriculum and organizing and formalizing the content and purpose of the women's curriculum. It should provide a detailed assessment of its options with regard to the vocational training component; the appropriateness of extending its duration, canceling it, incorporating it into awareness-raising; or continuing the training with a more limited and carefully selected number of children.

As discussed in Sub-Section D of Part III, program reporting does not provide a strong conceptual grounding for its interventions. The rationale, basis and analysis behind

interventions need to be made much more explicit. WNA must illustrate its awareness of similar interventions being carried out in Egypt and demonstrate how it has learned from them in developing its own interventions. Any intervention proposed by WNA should be accompanied by a well-developed conceptual framework and strong background analysis.

### **Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

It is clear that this program has contributed positively to the well-being and empowerment of children who had previously been working in the quarries and their families. At the end of the first year of implementation, the program should be celebrated as a positive attempt at solving a very difficult and complicated problem. The hard work carried out in the first year of the program has helped identify the issues and challenges that need to be addressed in order to move towards greater effectiveness in the coming years.

The **micro-credit component** for women seems to be the most successful and problem-free component of the program (along with its accompanying ‘awareness-raising’ curriculum for women). It seems that the loans are indeed used for projects, that the projects are profitable, and that the families observe the loan conditions by not sending their children to the quarries.

The delivery and content of the **awareness raising curriculum** for the women seemed appropriate and useful. However, there are significant issues with regard to the curriculum for children. Most importantly, the main goal and purpose of the curriculum as a whole is not clear. Therefore the curriculum lacks strength, focus and coherence; and the usefulness and relevance of its topics is not always clear. The most positive aspects of the awareness raising component for children were the effective sessions on the dangers of quarry work and the general approach of the curriculum; involving the children in activities and arts, which is both useful as well as appealing to the children.

As for the **vocational training component**, despite the significant effort expended in the set up, management, monitoring and the actual training by program staff, trainers and children, careful study is needed before this component is implemented in the future. It seems clear that the training so far will not be sufficient to prevent children from returning to the quarries, as it has not prepared most of them for engaging in gainful employment.

The material and human **capabilities of WNA** and the training of the field coordinators seem suitable for the program. Program field coordinators seemed competent and confident enough to carry out their assigned duties. Program staff seemed proficient, experienced, capable, confident and interested. They seemed to know their target community well; and to be familiar with its issues and constraints, the conditions of the people and their ways of thinking. However, program reports do not display enough clarity, comprehensiveness, consistency or sufficient detail; the individual roles of members of staff working with the program are not always clear; and program reporting and documentation does not provide a strong conceptual grounding for the program’s interventions.

**Key Recommendations (additional specific recommendations are detailed throughout Part III of the report)**

1. Provide a detailed study of the appropriateness- for each component of the program- of *expansion* (scale-up) to other beneficiaries and sites versus *consolidation* and deepening impact by building on progress so far. If work is to be continued with the same beneficiaries, a careful conceptualization is needed for how to build on and enhance the gains made so far with this group through new and different interventions.
2. Produce a complete Conceptual Framework or Concept Paper expressing the program's approach and the rationale for each component of the program.
3. Provide an analysis (costs, benefits, advantages, risks) of whether and how the program can work with children who have not left the quarries, through providing life skills, opportunities for learning and growth and health and safety information.
4. Provide detailed re-conceptualization of content of children's "awareness raising" curriculum, differentiated by age group. This includes: clearly defining its goals, its topics and how they contribute to these goals.
5. Put in place report on a system for monitoring the children's return to work in the quarries (through periodic self-administered anonymous questionnaires, as well as other methods).
6. Conduct a thorough assessment of the suitability of the loan scheme to children who complete vocational training (if that component is extended).
7. Provide a detailed analysis of whether the vocational training components should be removed, re-conceptualized or merged into the "awareness-raising" curriculum.
8. Reporting and documentation should be better organized, more rigorous, systematic, detailed, substantiated and include executive summaries, wherever possible.
9. Provide full details of the sessions and activities carried out based on a set format, e.g. name of trainer, date and time of session and list of attendees. If the trainer is external to WNA, background and CV should be documented and presented along with reports to Alfanar. Reports should also clearly identify roles of each the WNA program staff and coordinators in all activities.
10. Identify the kinds of networking the program would benefit from, resources needed to carry them out and propose a plan for carrying them out.

## ANNEX I

### Focus Group Questions

#### I. Focus Groups with Children

**Introduction:** Explaining the purpose of the discussion, inquiring who was present in the mid-term evaluation meeting, summarizing some of the points mentioned in previous evaluation, and understanding background of focus group participants: attendance of awareness raising, receives professional training, mother received loan.

1. What is the last activity you participated in with the project (training, attended awareness session)?
2. You all worked in the quarry. How many days/per week did most children work? Did they work in particular periods or all year?
3. Did some children go back to the quarries? Why or why not?
4. If children don't work in the quarries, what other things can they do (alternatives)?
5. **Awareness-Raising Component:**
  - a) What was the most important or interesting thing you learned from the awareness seminars?
  - b) Was this useful to you? How?
  - c) What were the other topics discussed in the seminars?
  - d) Were the seminars useful in general? Did they specifically contribute to children returning to the quarries?
  - e) If you were deciding on topics, what topics would you like to discuss, know more about?
6. **Training:**
  - a) Did the children enjoy the training?
  - b) Did they attend it regularly?
  - c) Was it useful?
  - d) Were the trainers good, or did this differ from one place to the other?
  - e) What can we change about the training to make it more useful?
7. **Impact**
  - a) We were told that some children changed in their attitude and behaviours. Do you feel this has happened? In what way? Do you think this increased, decreased or stayed the same since the mid-term evaluation?
  - b) Do you think most of the children will go back to the quarries?
8. The things you liked most about the project
9. Things we can improve, change, remove, introduce.

## **II. Focus Groups with Mothers**

**Introduction:** Explaining the purpose of the discussion, inquiring who was present in the mid-term evaluation meeting, summarizing some of the points mentioned in previous evaluation, and understanding background of focus group participants: attendance of awareness raising, received loan, son receives professional training.

1. What is the last activity you participated in with the project?
2. **Micro-Credit:**
  - a) Did all the women already know about taking loans, or did any of them receive a loan for the first time?
  - b) How did you choose the projects, what did you learn?
  - c) What do you think of the loans: the conditions and repayment system, the size of the loan?
  - d) Are you facing any problems? Any problems you succeeded in resolving?
  - e) Do you think the loans really made the children not go back to the quarries, or go less often than before?
  - f) Is there any information you learned that would have been useful to know in the beginning of the project?
3. **Awareness-Raising**
  - a) What was the most important or interesting thing you learned from the awareness seminars?
  - b) Was this useful to you? How?
  - c) What were the other topics discussed in the seminars?
  - d) Were the seminars useful in general? Did they specifically contribute to children returning to the quarries?
  - e) If you were deciding on topics, what topics would you like to discuss, know more about?
4. **Training:**
  - a) Did the children enjoy the training?
  - b) Did they attend it regularly?
  - c) Was it useful?
  - d) Were the trainers good, or did this differ from one place to the other?
  - e) What can we change about the training to make it more useful?
5. **Impact**
  - a) We were told that some children changed in their attitude and behaviours. Do you feel this has happened? In what way? Do you think this increased, decreased or stayed the same since the mid-term evaluation?
  - b) Do you think most of the children will go back to the quarries?
6. The things you liked most about the project
7. Things we can improve, change, remove, introduce.

### **III. Focus Group with Trainers**

**Introduction:** Explaining the purpose of the discussion, inquiring who was present in the mid-term evaluation meeting, summarizing some of the points mentioned in previous evaluation, and understanding role of focus group participants: subjects they trained and institutional affiliation.

1. How many children does each trainer train? In which subjects/professions?
2. Were the children enjoying the training? What made them most enthusiastic?
3. What are your reflections on the training: conceptualization, implementation, monitoring, results duration?
4. How can we help the children chose the professions appropriate to them?
5. What were the good things about the experiment? That were useful and could be replicated?
6. After a round of training, did this experiment change your impressions of the appropriate content/style/phasing of the training?
7. Do you think many of the children will go back to the quarries?

### **III. Focus Group with Field-Coordinators**

**Introduction:** Explaining the purpose of the discussion, inquiring who was present in the mid-term evaluation meeting, and summarizing some of the points mentioned in previous evaluation.

- 1- How did you think of working with the project and how long have you been working with WNA? In development?
- 2- What training have you received before?
- 3- What were your roles and what tasks did you carry out? Do you work in your villages of origin? Do you meet together often?
- 4- What do you like most about working with WNA?
- 5- What is the biggest obstacle you face in your work?
- 6- What is the most helpful/supportive thing?
- 7- What is the strongest component in the program for the mothers: awareness, lending, training? What has a greater impact on them, that they like or makes them enthusiastic?
- 8- What is the strongest component in the program for the children: awareness, lending, training? What has a greater impact on them, that they like or makes them enthusiastic?
- 9- With regards to awareness, what could be done to make it more effective?
- 10- With regards to loans and their organization and helping the mothers manage the projects, what could be done to make it more effective?
- 11- With regards to the training, what could be done to make it more effective?
- 12- What would make the children go back to the quarries?
- 13- Do you think most of them would return to the quarries after the project is over?

#### **IV. Focus Group with WNA Program Staff**

- 1- What are your roles and the duration of holding your positions?
- 2- Can you give an overview of the projects- in relation to other work WNA does/ has done with children working in the quarries?
- 3- What do you like most about the project?
- 4- What impacted each of you the most?
- 5- What is the greatest challenged each of you faced?
- 6- Which component affected the women most? Why?
- 7- Which component affected the children most? Why?
- 8- What are the difference between the two project sites with regard to
  - a) Loans
  - b) Awareness for the mothers
  - c) Awareness for the children
  - d) Training: explaining lack of interests in this and how it was dealt with, its impact on the children and its impact on the families
- 9- How do you view the appropriateness of the capabilities of WNA in the office and in the field: material resources, human recourses: training and hiring.
- 10- What are the problems that emerged in the past period: within WNA, in the office or the field, with other associations or authorities, with the communities?
- 11- What are the positive changes?
- 12- What can Alfamar do to help WNA better?
- 13- What is the best thing about working with Alfamar?
- 14- What are the areas that could be improved?