

Internal Endline Evaluation Report

ENI/2020/419-040 (ARED-LED)



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BACKGROUND

Between December 2020 to October 2025, WeWorld implemented the project, ARED: Promoting the local economy in North East Bekaa funded by the European Commission and implemented in a consortium with Fondazione Giovanni Paolo (JPPI) and Nawaya Network. The project was implemented in eight localities of Bekaa, namely, Aرسال, Laboue, Ain, Nabi Osmane, Bejjaje-Jabboule, Fakeha, Ras Baalbeck, and Qaa, with an estimated population of 82,104 Lebanese and 151,617 Syrian refugees.

The project contributes to stability in Lebanon by promoting local development, improving the socio-economic conditions and reducing levels of conflict in the North East Bekaa area. This is achieved through:

Outcome 1: Generated income and livelihood opportunities for the targeted population through environmentally sustainable and resilient value chains.

Outcome2: Local governance institutions promote regional economic development through participatory multi-stakeholder dialogue.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The internal endline evaluation, conducted by WeWorld MEAL Department, is a learning milestone for the ARED project as it aims to assess the progress against the project's objectives and outcomes, evaluate the application of the project's Theory of Change (ToC), identify challenges and mitigation measures; and provide evidence-based insights to guide strategic and operational adjustments.

The evaluation adopted the OECD-DAC criteria and relied on a mixed method approach including desk review of the project key documents including, project Indicator Tracking table, periodic reports, monitoring data and feedback and complains trackers, endline survey conducted with a sample of different key respondents (community members, farmers, coops members, Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs), and youth), key informant interviews (KIIs) conducted with a sample of environmental grants recipients and community grants, and end of project workshop with the project partners staff.

The endline evaluation findings indicate that the project achieved strong overall performance against the OECD-DAC criteria, with interventions closely aligned to priorities identified through the Local Development Plans (LDPs) and beneficiary needs. Coordination among consortium partners was complementary and contributed to consistent implementation across community, agricultural, youth, and MSME components.

The project achieved tangible results at multiple levels. Community-based interventions improved municipal service delivery, particularly in waste management, irrigation rehabilitation, lighting, and infrastructure. Environmental Grants strengthened irrigation efficiency and promoted renewable energy solutions. Support to farmers, youth, and MSMEs enhanced agricultural practices, employability skills, and business capacities, with notable revenue and market access improvements among MSMEs. However, income gains among farmers remained moderate and were influenced by structural challenges such as water scarcity and economic instability.

Sustainability prospects are generally positive, particularly where renewable energy systems and improved business practices were adopted, though long-term continuity remains influenced by structural challenges including water scarcity, limited municipal budgets, and socioeconomic instability.

Cross-cutting themes were integrated throughout the project cycle, including gender and youth inclusion, environmental sustainability, and accountability mechanisms. While feedback systems were functional, awareness of complaint mechanisms requires further strengthening, alongside improved inclusion of persons with disabilities.

Key recommendations focus on consolidating climate-resilient agricultural support through continued investment in renewable energy and water-efficient technologies; reinforcing youth employability pathways by strengthening coaching, career guidance, and private sector linkages; enhancing accountability by improving outreach and accessibility of feedback mechanisms while ensuring greater inclusion of persons with disabilities in targeting approaches; and strengthening learning and knowledge management by capitalizing on the project's best practices, particularly the LDP methodology, to inform replication and future programming.

METHODOLOGY

1. Purpose

The purpose of this internal endline evaluation is to assess the overall performance and achievements of the ARED project at its completion, in relation to its intended outcomes and objectives. The evaluation further aimed to capture lessons learned, good practices, and areas for improvement to inform future programming and strategic decision-making within WeWorld and its partners.

2. Framework

The Endline evaluation will cover the entire duration of the project and adopt the OECD DAC evaluation criteria, namely relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, as well as sustainability and impact as a framework of the evaluation. In addition to the five main evaluation criteria, the evaluation will assess how effectively cross-cutting themes (gender equality & inclusion, decent work, protection & Do No Harm, environment, and accountability to affected population (AAP), have been mainstreamed into the project design and implementation. Key evaluation questions will include, but are not limited to the following:

Criteria	Evaluation question
Relevance	To what extent are the project's objectives and intended results relevant to the target groups' needs and priorities?
	Has the project's activities and strategies adapted to emerging changes in a timely manner?
Coherence	How well did the project coordinate with other actors and interventions within the project's areas of intervention?
	How effectively did the three consortium partners coordinate to ensure efficiency and complementarity during project implementation?
Effectiveness	To what extent have planned activities been implemented in a timely and cost-effective manner? If not, what were the bottlenecks encountered?
	How effective are resources, including human, financial, and technological, allocated for the project?
Impact	To what extent has the intervention generated or expected to generate significant positive or negative, intended or unintended higher-level effects?
Sustainability	To what extent does the project design and planning consider external risks, such as a deteriorating security situation, that may affect the sustainability or continuity of results?
	What are the hindering factors for ensuring the sustainability of project outcomes beyond the project lifecycle? What are the possible sustainability prerequisites for each project component?
Gender equality & Inclusion	To what extent are gender equality and inclusion of vulnerable groups (Women, Youth, Persons with disabilities, refugees) integrated into the project's targeting approach including selection tools, MEAL framework?
Decent work	How are Decent Work principles and child labor prevention mainstreamed in the development of project strategies, tools, and early stakeholder engagement?
Environment	Has the project incorporated environmental sustainability considerations into the planning and design of livelihoods support and value chain interventions?
Accountability to Affected Population	Are feedback and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) mechanisms being developed in a way that ensures accessibility and responsiveness to diverse groups, particularly those at heightened risk of exclusion?

3. Data collection

The evaluation was carried out by the MEAL Department. In close cooperation with the project team, the MEAL team was responsible for the development of appropriate tools, including key informant interview guides. The following is the evaluation methodology:

- **Desk Review:** The evaluation included a review of the project key documents including project Indicator Tracking table, periodic reports, monitoring data and feedback and complains trackers.

- **Endline Survey:** An endline survey was administered in the 8 localities to measure key indicators, collect feedback, satisfaction, and generate recommendations. The survey was designed in a tailored approach to key respondents' profiles (community members, farmers, MSMEs, etc.)
- **Key informant interviews:** KIIs were conducted with a sample of recipients of environmental and community grants to measure the outcomes of the grants.
- **End of Project Workshop:** A final project workshop was held with the project partners and staff to discuss the project's achievements; lessons learnt and evaluate its outcomes.

4. Sample

The data sampling was conducted with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. A representative sample of 410 beneficiaries was selected to participate in the remote endline survey. The distribution of these respondents, according to their status and engagement within the project, is presented in the table below.

For the Environmental Grants component, a sample of 20% (22 farmers) was identified from the last 2 grant rounds. This includes both group and individuals' farmers who won the grants, and data were collected through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs).

Regarding the Community-Based Grants, a total of eight KIIs were conducted with the mayors of the eight villages targeted under WW's interventions.

Table 1: Distribution of Key Informant Interviews with Environmental Grant Recipients by Grant Type and Locality

KII Respondent	Responsible Partner	Jabouleh	Ras Baalbak	Laboueh	Nabi Othman	Total
Farmers (Group Environmental Grants)	WeWorld	3	2	2	4	11
Farmers (Individuals Environmental Grants)	WeWorld	2	5	1	3	11
Total		5	7	3	7	22

Table 2: Endline Survey Sample by Beneficiary Category, Partner, and Gender

Beneficiary category	Responsible Partner	Female	Male	Total
Community members	WeWorld	50	153	203
Farmers & Coops	JPII	4	46	50
MSMEs	Nawaya	95	26	121
Youth (Business Specialist)	Nawaya	27	9	36
Total	/	176	234	410

5. Key consideration

Compliance with ethical standards and "Do no harm": The evaluation was conducted in adherence to established ethical standards, ensuring the protection, dignity, and rights of all respondents. Participation was strictly voluntary, with informed consent obtained from all interviewees prior to data collection.

Data management: All data collected during the evaluation was handled securely and confidentially. Access to data was limited to authorized staff only. The evaluation followed WeWorld's data protection policies.

6. Limitations

Delayed implementation and assessment timeline: The community-based activities were initially planned for the previous year but were postponed due to the escalation of conflict that significantly affected the targeted villages. Implementation resumed and was completed between September and October 2025, with the project officially

ending on 10 October 2025. The remote endline survey had to be finalized before this date due to the project’s budget closure, limiting the available time for data collection. Similarly, the last round of Environmental Grants (EG) was also delayed, which affected the timing of follow-up and endline activities.

Limited timeframe to assess outcomes: The short period between the completion of activities and the endline assessment restricted the evaluation’s ability to fully assess sustainability and impact, as long-term behavioral and livelihood changes could not yet be observed.

Contextual constraints: Several external factors may have influenced respondents’ perceptions and the overall project impact. These include security instability, socioeconomic challenges, urbanization pressures, local water management practices, and cultural norms related to irrigation, water use, and conservation.

Respondent accessibility: As the endline was conducted remotely, some targeted respondents, particularly JPll farmers, could not be reached due to non-responsiveness or poor network connectivity. These accessibility challenges may have slightly reduced the representativeness of the final sample.

Climate-related factors: Reduced rainfall, unpredictable precipitation, and water scarcity during the evaluation period may have influenced respondents’ perceptions of irrigation and productivity, affecting how project outcomes were observed and interpreted.

FINDINGS

I. Relevance

Despite all the challenges encountered, including political changes, unstable economic conditions, and hostilities escalation, the ARED-LED project interventions demonstrated a high level of relevance to the needs and priorities of targeted communities and stakeholders in Baalbak-Hermel.

Community-Based Projects

Evidence from the eight Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with municipal mayors and the endline survey with 203 community members consistently demonstrates that the community-based projects implemented under WeWorld were highly relevant to local priorities and community needs. Both data sources confirm that the interventions were derived from the 2023–2024 Local Development Plans (LDPs), which were developed through participatory workshops.

Findings from the endline survey, shown in Figure 1, further confirm this strong relevance, with 94% of respondents (n=203) expressing satisfaction with the projects, 34% were very satisfied, and 59% satisfied. This indicates that beneficiaries viewed the interventions as directly addressing the most pressing community needs and priorities identified during 2023–2024. Only 2% reported feeling neutral and 4% dissatisfied. These perceptions are fully consistent with the mayors’ feedback, highlighting that We World’s interventions were well aligned with locally identified priorities and contributed to visible improvements in public services, cleanliness, safety, and infrastructure functionality across the targeted municipalities.

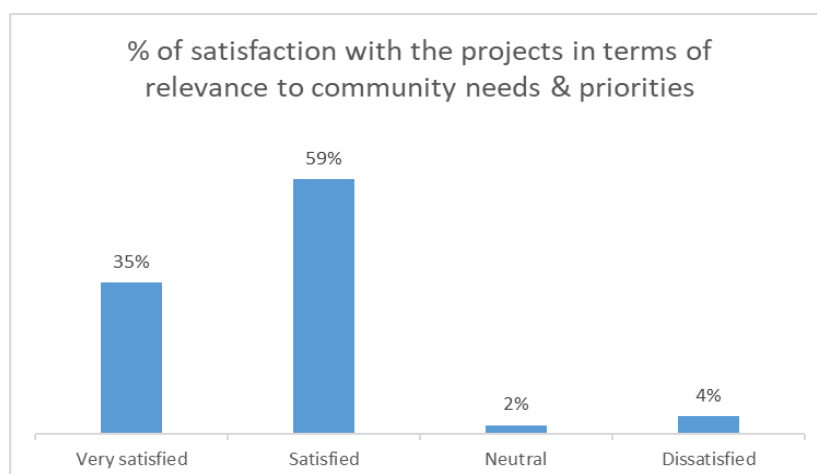


Figure 1: WW- Community-Based Projects: Satisfaction with project relevance (n=203)

Environmental Grants Projects

Findings from the 22 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) with environmental grant recipients indicate that the assistance provided by WeWorld was appropriately designed to address farmers' most pressing needs. Respondents consistently emphasized that the support directly responded to challenges related to irrigation access, water scarcity, and fuel costs. The provision of solar-powered systems, irrigation networks, and water storage units was described as timely and well aligned with the agricultural and environmental conditions in their areas.

Some individual farmers noted that they were only eligible to apply for irrigation systems, whereas solar systems were reserved for only group applicants. They expressed that access to solar energy would have been more relevant to their needs. Additionally, it was mentioned that land improvement was not presented with the same emphasis as other options, such as solar or irrigation systems, during the information sessions. This may have unintentionally influenced farmers' choices and led some to overlook this eligible intervention when preparing their applications.

Farmers & Coops

Endline survey results indicate that most surveyed farmers and cooperative members perceived both the trainings and inputs provided by JPPII as highly relevant to their agricultural needs, and tailored to farmers' priorities, and local agricultural conditions. The component was reported by the project team as highly relevant to each of the 8 localities as interventions were adapted based on the contextual considerations and needs of each of the targeted localities.

As shown in Figure 2, 66% of respondents (n=50) reported being satisfied and 32% were very satisfied with the training sessions they received, while only 2% were neutral. As shown in Figure 3, among those satisfied, participants most frequently highlighted that the training was practical (20%), relevant to their specific needs (19%), and clearly explained by the trainer (19%). Others appreciated the improvement in their knowledge (18%), the introduction of new technologies and practices (13%), and the appropriate duration and timing of sessions (10%).

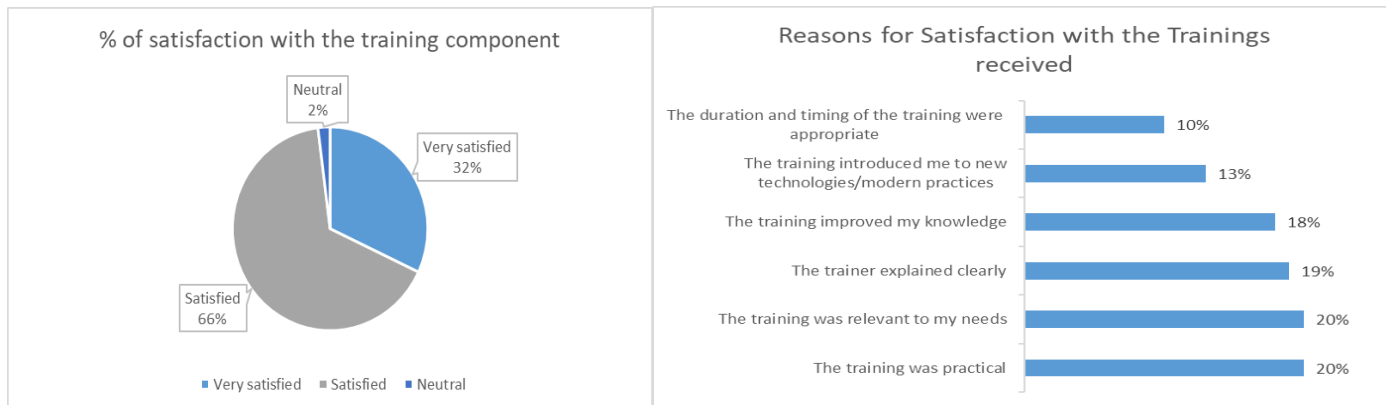


Figure 2: JPPII, farmers & coops: Training component Satisfaction (n=50) Figure 3: JPPII, farmers & coops: Training: Reasons for Satisfaction (n=50)

Regarding the agricultural inputs, 74% of respondents were satisfied and 14% very satisfied, with 12% neutral (see Figure 3). As illustrated in Figure 4, those who expressed satisfaction noted that the inputs were of good quality (31%), relevant to their production needs (28%), easy to apply (14.5%), and adequate in quantity (11%), while others valued their timeliness (10%) and contribution to productivity and income (5.5%).

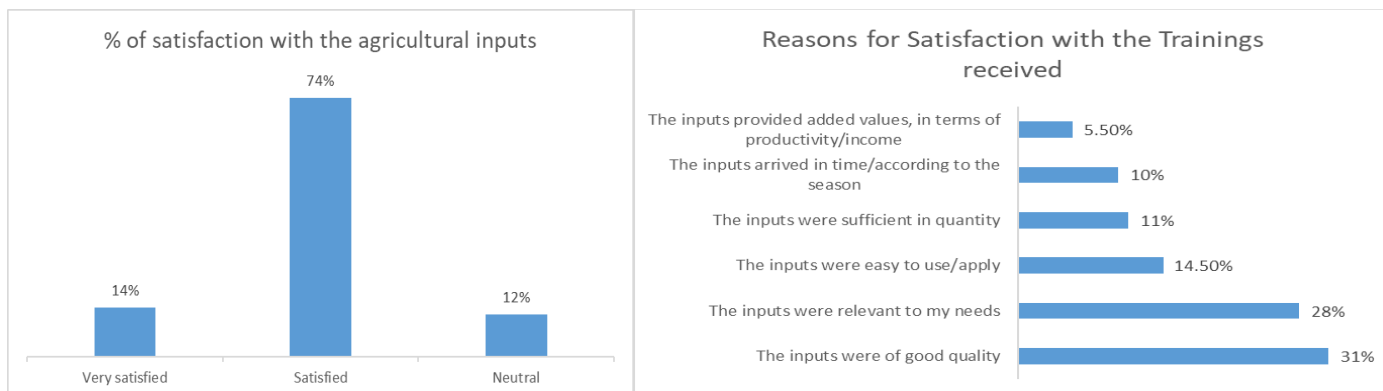


Figure 3: JP/II, farmers & coops: Agricultural input Satisfaction (n=50) Figure 4: JP/II, farmers & coops: Inputs: Reasons for Satisfaction (n=50)

Youth- Business Support Specialist (BSS)

Endline survey findings confirm that Nawaya’s youth training component was highly relevant to participants’ needs and aspirations.

As shown in Figure 5, 97% of respondents (n=36) reported being very satisfied, while only 3% were neutral, indicating a strong alignment between the training content and youth expectations. As indicated in Figure 6, among those satisfied, participants most frequently mentioned that the training was relevant to their needs (21%), delivered by knowledgeable and supportive coaches (20%), and included useful materials and resources (20%). Others highlighted that it improved their knowledge and business skills (17%), introduced new opportunities and knowledge (15%), and that the coaching was personalized and practical (8%).



Figure 5: Nawaya, youth BSS: Training Satisfaction (n=36) Figure 6: Nawaya, youth BSS: Training; Reasons for Satisfaction (n=36)

MSMEs

The MSME component under Nawaya was likewise perceived as highly relevant and responsive to local business needs growth challenges, by strengthening local enterprises and contributing to more resilient and sustainable small business development.

Regarding the training activities, 72% of respondents (n=121) reported being very satisfied and 27% satisfied, while only 1% were neutral, underscoring a high level of perceived relevance (Figure 7). As shown in Figure 8, among those satisfied, respondents most frequently emphasized that the training improved their knowledge (24%), was relevant to their business needs (24%), practical and clear (22%), and introduced new technologies and modern practices (18%), while 12% appreciated the appropriate duration and timing.

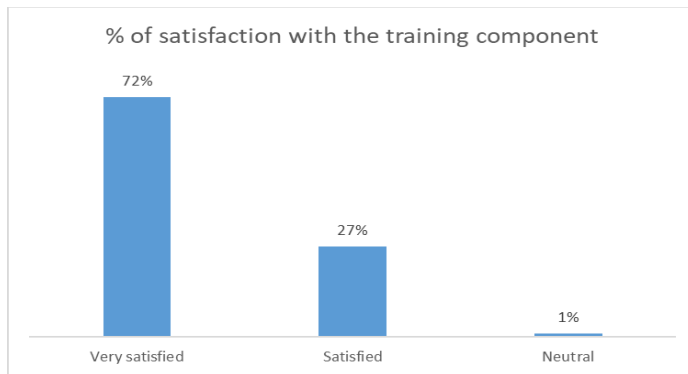


Figure 7: Nawaya, MSMEs: Training Satisfaction (n=121)



Figure 8: Nawaya, MSMEs: Training; Reasons for Satisfaction (n=121)

Concerning the MSMEs' grants, 64% of respondents (n=121) reported being very satisfied and 33% satisfied with the support received, with only 2% being neutral and 1% being dissatisfied (See Figure 9). Moreover, as illustrated in Figure 10, respondents highlighted that the grants arrived on time (29%), enabled business growth and expansion (26%), were adequate in size (25%), and helped access tools and technologies (20%). Overall, these findings confirm that Nawaya's MSME support, through both training and grants, was well designed to address operational and growth challenges, strengthening local enterprises and contributing to more resilient and sustainable small business development. This was further endorsed by the project team reporting high participation, which was an indication of high relevancy.

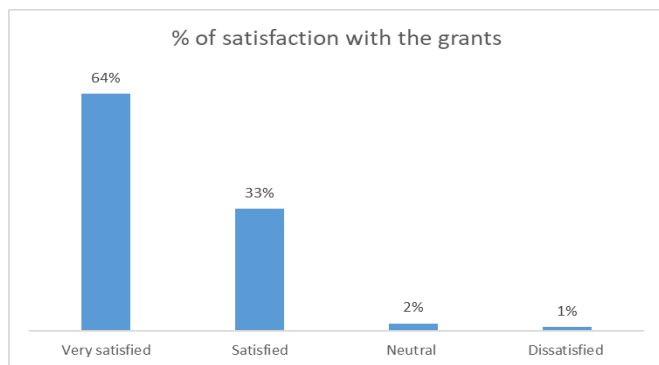


Figure 9: Nawaya, MSMEs: Grants Satisfaction (n=121)

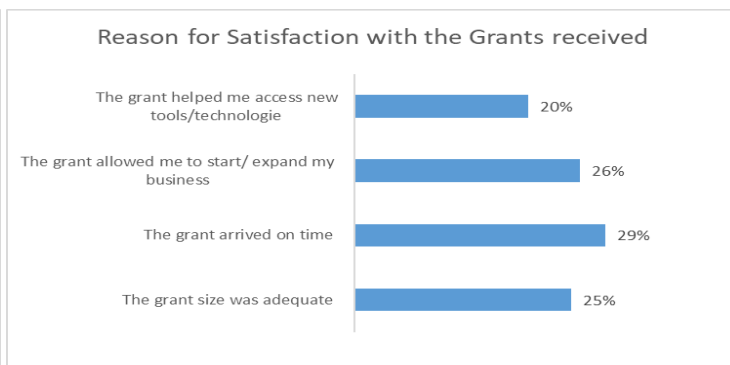


Figure 10: Nawaya, MSMEs: Grants; Reasons for Satisfaction (n=121)

II. Coherence

The ARED-LED project interventions remained coherent across partners and components. The activities were complementary rather than duplicative, well-coordinated among stakeholders, and consistently aligned with the project's overarching objectives of promoting sustainable local economic development in Baalbek-Hermel. High coordination and complementarity were also reported among the consortium partners as each partner was leading on one of the components, however still contributing to the overall goal of the project. The partners also ensured regular coordination with other actors in the targeted localities, which were not many since many of the organizations, including the UN agencies, were addressing humanitarian and urgent needs yet the ARED project was focusing on addressing long term and sustainable livelihood interventions.

Community-Based Projects

Across the eight KIIs with mayors, coherence between project design, implementation, and municipal priorities was generally strong. Municipalities consistently confirmed that the inputs received were well aligned with their local development plans and addressed pressing community needs. The projects were implemented as planned, and most of the delivered infrastructure and equipment met acceptable technical standards.

Feedback from the eight KIIs with municipal mayors confirmed that the participatory approach adopted throughout the process strengthened overall coherence and alignment between planning and implementation. Although the

degree of participation varied across municipalities due to leadership turnover and staff changes, the overall process was viewed as transparent, inclusive, and conducive to stronger alignment between design and implementation.

However, some quality and operational challenges were reported, particularly in Laboueh, Nabi Othman, and Fekeha, where used or malfunctioning vehicles and incomplete canal work affected efficiency. In certain cases, such as Qaa village, drought, and seasonal water shortages temporarily limited functionality but did not undermine overall alignment between design and purpose.

The endline survey results, shown in Figure 11, highlight a **high level of community awareness**, with **85% of respondents** reporting awareness of the community-based projects implemented under the ARED-LED initiative. Only 15% stated they were not aware. This reflects strong visibility and outreach efforts by WeWorld and municipalities, indicating that project activities were well-communicated and recognizable within target communities.

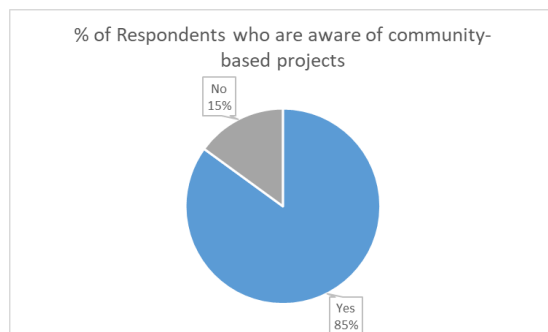


Figure 11: WeWorld, Community members: Awareness of community-based projects (n=203)

Environmental Grants Projects

Across the 22 KILs, the Environmental Grant (EG) component demonstrated a **high degree of coherence** between the project objectives, project inputs, and farmers' actual and practical needs in the targeted localities. Inputs were provided as planned, of good technical quality, and well-integrated into farmers' existing irrigation and/or energy systems, enhancing both efficiency and productivity. The alignment between design and field implementation reflected strong coordination within WeWorld's teams, timely delivery, and responsiveness to the agricultural calendar. While minor procurement delays and limited flexibility in input types were noted, these did not significantly affect overall coherence.

Farmers & Coops

The coherence of JPIL's component was demonstrated through the strong complementarity between the training provided to farmers and cooperative members and the agricultural inputs distributed. Both interventions were consistent with the project's objectives of improving sustainable agricultural practices and improving farmers' productivity and resource management.

As reflected in Figures 2 to 4, the training and inputs were well integrated and perceived by respondents. Training sessions were scheduled according to the agricultural calendar. Farmers' feedback confirming that the training sessions were practical, clearly explained, and relevant to their needs and that the inputs were of good quality, easy to apply, and seasonally appropriate.

Youth- Business Support Specialist (BSS)

The Business Skills and Coaching training sessions implemented by Nawaya demonstrated strong coherence with the project's objectives and the capacity-building needs of participating youth.

As shown in Figures 5 and 6, participants emphasized that the training sessions were relevant to their needs, clearly explained, and delivered by qualified and supportive coaches, while also improving their business and soft skills.

MSMEs

The Business Skills and Coaching sessions delivered to MSME grantees under Nawaya's component demonstrated a strong degree of coherence with both the project's objectives and the practical business needs of participating entrepreneurs. The training and coaching, covering topics such as business development, marketing, design thinking, and financial literacy, were **complementary to the grants received**, by equipping grantees with the knowledge and managerial skills needed to effectively plan, manage, and sustain their businesses.

III. Effectiveness

Community-Based Projects

Across the eight KIIs with municipal mayors, the community-based projects and the LDPs were widely recognized as effective in addressing pressing priorities and supporting municipal service delivery. However, effectiveness was occasionally constrained by limited financial resources, recurrent drought, and maintenance challenges related to second-hand machinery, which operated with limited capacity and reduced efficiency. The project team also noted that the component was very effective since the community now knows about their needs and gaps, further follow-up is needed, especially now with the election to ensure that the LDPs are being used by the new officials at the municipality.

The LDPs were considered a practical planning tool that helped municipalities identify and prioritize development needs in a structured and evidence-based manner. Furthermore, the projects implemented by WeWorld achieved their intended objectives, responding to urgent community needs such as solid waste management, irrigation rehabilitation, and public lighting. Nevertheless, mayors consistently emphasized that the interventions enhanced municipal capacities to deliver essential services.

The endline survey findings indicate a high level of satisfaction among community members regarding both the timeliness and quality of community-based project implementation in their villages. As shown in Figure 12, 61% of respondents reported being very satisfied with the timeliness of project implementation, 32% were satisfied, while only 3.5% were neutral and another 3.5% expressed dissatisfaction. Similarly, as illustrated in Figure 13, perceptions of project quality were highly positive, with 58% of respondents reporting satisfaction and 33.5% very satisfied. Only 5% expressed dissatisfaction and 3.5% remained neutral. Overall, the results demonstrate effective implementation and strong community endorsement of the community-based project's outcomes.

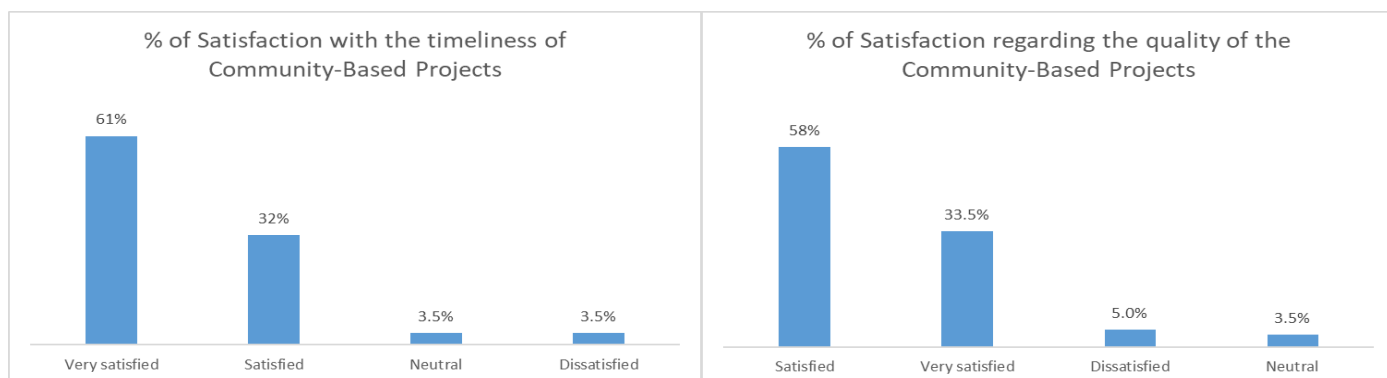


Figure 12: satisfaction with the timeliness of the projects' implementation (n=203) Figure 13: satisfaction with the quality of the projects' implementation (n=203)

Environmental Grants Projects

Across the 22 KIIs conducted with Environmental Grant (EG) recipients, respondents confirmed that the project effectively achieved its main objective of improving sustainable access to and management of natural resources. Most beneficiaries reported major improvements in water access, irrigation efficiency, and production outcomes, directly linked to the installation of solar systems, irrigation canals, and/or water storage units. Few EG recipients however reported that while the component was effective, if to be replicated, the selection criteria must be revised to include vulnerability-based selection and more small-scale farmers, to ensure inclusion of those in most need.

Farmers & Coops

Endline survey findings reveal mixed perceptions regarding income change among supported farmers and cooperatives. As shown in Figure 14, **34%** of respondents reported an increase in revenue because of the project, while **54%** did not observe a change, and **12%** were uncertain or unable to assess the impact. Among those who reported an increase, the average annual revenue increase was approximately USD 940.

This data indicates that, although farmers and cooperative members expressed high satisfaction with the training sessions received and the quality of agricultural inputs provided, the economic benefits in terms of revenue expansion remain moderate.

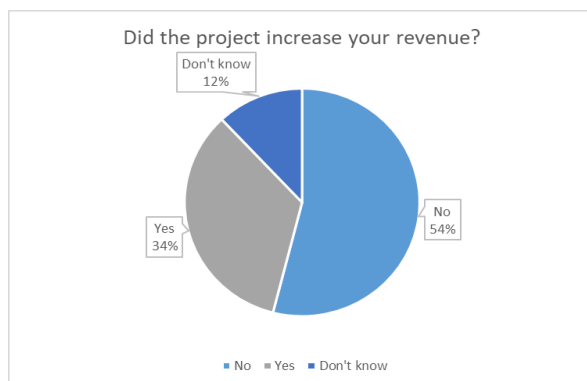


Figure 14: JP11, farmers & coops: Perceived Revenue Increase (n=50)

As shown in Figure 15, **70%** of respondents reported that the project did **not** expand their access to markets, while **18%** indicated that it did, and **12%** were unsure. This distribution suggests that, despite the project's success in improving agricultural practices and input quality, **market access remains a key constraint** for most beneficiaries.

Among those who reported improved access, farmers most frequently attributed this progress to increased production capacity and enhanced product quality, which enabled them to reach new buyers and expand distribution. Others highlighted better marketing practices and cooperative participation, which facilitated collective sales and visibility in local markets.

However, those who did not report any market expansion explained that their production remained small-scale or limited to household use. Others pointed to high agricultural costs, water scarcity, and the effects of the war, which reduced their ability to sell or transport products. Some noted that the support received was not enough to increase production levels, while a few noted that their trees are still young or that they lack the time and connections needed to access new markets.

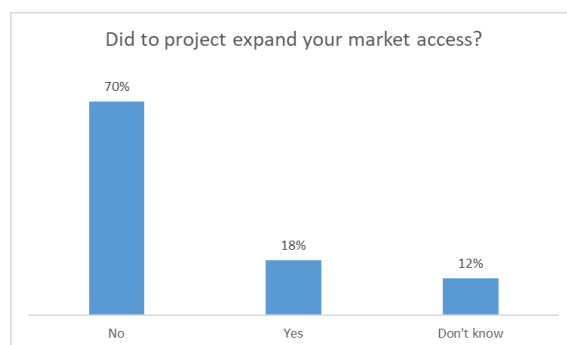


Figure 15: JP11, farmers & coops: Perceived market expansion (n=50)

Project team also reported the effectiveness of the approach adopted as the focus was on the level of practice's adoption rather than conducting many trainings, more of an on the job the approach in the field, it was not just a capacity building, but an outcome and practice-oriented approach.

Youth- Business Support Specialist (BSS)

As shown in Figure 16, **75%** of respondents reported that the training and coaching they received enhanced their ability to search for and apply for jobs, while **25%** stated that it did not.

This result indicates that the Business Support Specialist (BSS) training successfully strengthened the employability skills of most youth participants.

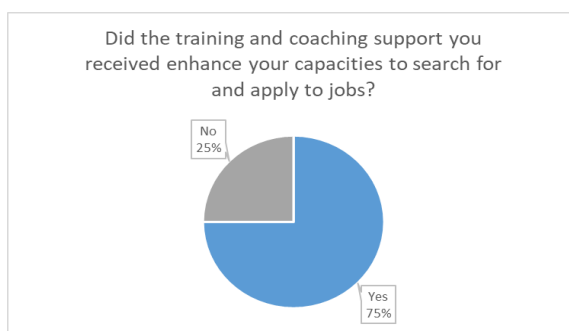


Figure 16: Nawaya, youth BSS: Perceived improvement in ability to search for and apply to jobs (n=36)

MSMEs

The MSME component under Nawaya proved effective in strengthening the operational performance and growth potential of supported enterprises.

As illustrated in Figure 17, a large majority of MSME respondents (83.5%) reported that the project contributed to an increase in their business revenue, while 16.5% indicated no increase. Among those who reported an increase, the average annual growth in revenue was approximately USD 1,704.

Moreover, 84% of respondents stated that the project expanded their access to markets, while 16% indicated no expansion.

As shown in Figure 18, MSMEs that reported market expansion mainly attributed this expansion to several business strategies, particularly increased production and selling capacity (21%), reaching new markets beyond their local area (18%), and diversifying products or services (12%).

Among those who did not experience market expansion, some explained that they were still waiting for the second grant to complete or expand their businesses. Others noted that their activities remained small-scale or home-based, limiting their ability to reach new markets. Additional reasons included high production and energy costs, weak demand, and personal or external challenges such as illness, and economic instability.

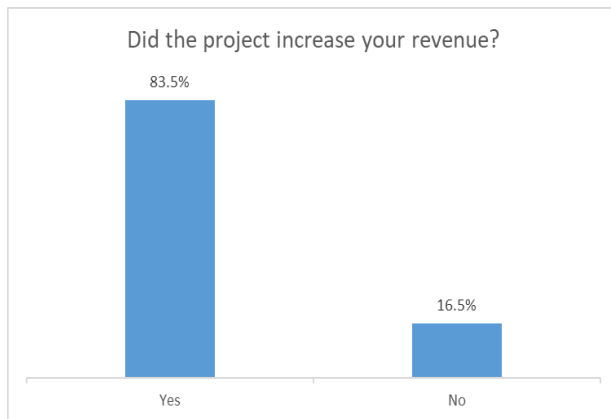


Figure 17: Nawaya, MSMEs: Perceived Revenue Increase (n=121)

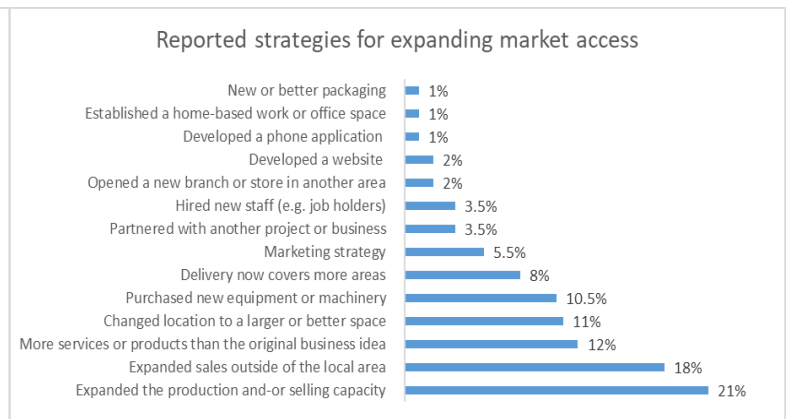


Figure 18: Nawaya, MSMEs: Reported Strategies for Expanding Market Access (n=121)

IV. Impact

Community-Based Projects

Findings from the KIIs with municipal mayors indicate that the community-based projects generated visible improvements in public services and local living conditions. The most reported changes included **better cleanliness** and **solid waste management**, **improved irrigation and agricultural productivity**, and **enhanced safety and mobility** through road and lighting works.

The interventions also strengthened **cooperation and trust between municipalities and local communities**. Improved services and visible results enhanced municipal credibility and helped reduce social tension within communities. While minor issues were noted in some cases, such as limited coverage of provided services.

Positive results were mainly attributed to effective coordination between WeWorld, partners, and municipalities, continuous municipal follow-up during implementation, and adherence to acceptable quality standards. Moreover, findings from the endline survey with community members indicate that the community-based projects implemented by WeWorld have generated visible and positive changes across the targeted villages.

The most frequently reported change was a **significant improvement in cleanliness and waste management**, cited by the majority of respondents. This is largely due to the distribution of waste bins and the regular waste collection now carried out using the garbage trucks provided by WeWorld. Another commonly reported improvement was **increased access to irrigation water**, particularly in villages where irrigation canals were rehabilitated by WW. Community members also highlighted **improved street lighting and greater safety**, noting that newly installed or repaired solar-powered lights enhanced security during evening hours. Other respondents mentioned **easier transportation and road access**, which facilitated movement and access to essential services, particularly due to the road rehabilitation implemented in one of the targeted villages.

Environmental Grants Projects

Findings from the 22 KIIs with Environmental Grant recipients show that the project generated **direct and visible improvements in beneficiaries' agricultural activities and living conditions**.

At the household level, almost all interviewed farmers reported that the grants enabled them to resume or improve cultivation after previously facing difficulties due to high fuel costs and limited water access. The installed solar systems, irrigation networks, and/or water storage units allow for more reliable irrigation, reduced expenses on fuel, and improved productivity and crop quality.

At the community level, several respondents noted that the intervention indirectly benefited surrounding farmers by reviving agricultural activity and encouraged more farmers to cultivate their land again. However, these effects remained more visible at the individual and group levels than at the broader community level.

At the environmental level, respondents consistently emphasized the positive contribution of solar energy in reducing fuel pollution and supporting cleaner, more sustainable farming. Improved water management was also reported, as modern irrigation systems minimized water loss and supported better use of available resources.

Additionally, farmers identified several factors contributing to positive results, including the good quality of purchased equipment and input, through the grants, the complementarity between solar energy and irrigation equipment. Some respondents also attributed their success to continuous follow-up and timely maintenance of the installed equipment.

Farmers & Coops

As shown in Figure 19, 66% of respondents reported that the project did not increase their access to water, while 20% indicated that it did, and 14% were unsure. These findings indicated that, although the project supported farmers with relevant training and agricultural inputs, its impact on water access remained limited.

Among those who stated that access to water had not improved, the most common reasons were the **continued scarcity of water resources**, and **limited rainfall**. Several farmers mentioned that the water projects were implemented far from their lands or that no new irrigation structures were established in their area.

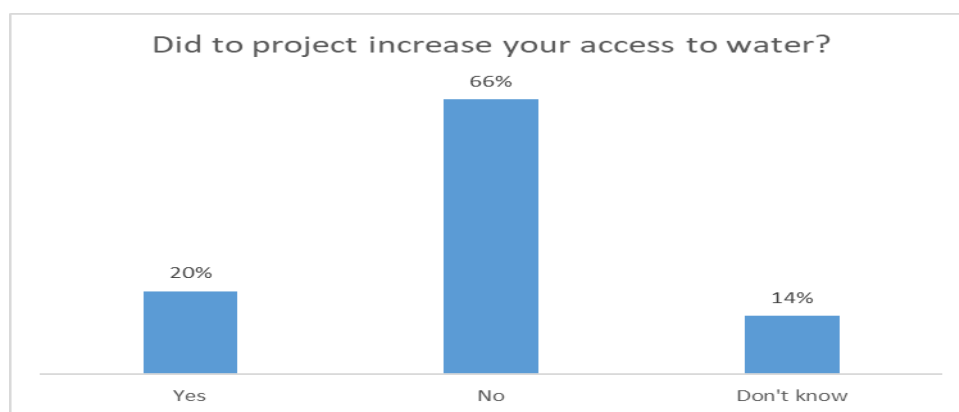


Figure 19: JPII, farmers & coops: Perceived water access increase (n=50)

Youth- Business Support Specialist (BSS)

Training and coaching sessions strengthened their ability to identify job opportunities, prepare professional CVs and cover letters, improve interview performance, and use online platforms such as LinkedIn effectively. These improvements demonstrate a positive contribution to the program's intended objective of **improving youth employability skills**.

MSMEs

As highlighted in the previous sections, many MSMEs emphasized that the training improved their knowledge and introduced them to new technologies and modern business practices, which enhanced their ability to manage and expand their enterprises. In addition, several reported increased revenues and expanded market access. This integrated intervention resulted in **stronger business management and improved operational performance**.

V. Sustainability

Community-Based Projects

The eight KIIs' findings indicate that municipalities generally perceive the community-based projects as sustainable, especially the improvements made in cleanliness, solid waste management, irrigation access, lighting, and road rehabilitation.

As reported by some respondents, ensuring the longevity of these outcomes requires allocating municipal local budgets for securing spare parts, fuel, and conducting periodic follow-ups and repairs, particularly for machinery. When reflecting on future projects, some recommended increasing the allocated budget for such interventions to expand coverage, while others emphasized the importance of allowing more time for technical assessments before implementation, and ensuring that municipal staff are more involved in planning and oversight, to maximize its efficiency. Other municipalities emphasized the importance of purchasing higher-quality equipment and brand-new machinery.

However, several challenges were raised by municipalities that may compromise the sustainability of these projects. Limited municipal budgets reduce their capacity to cover essential operational costs such as fuel, spare parts, and routine maintenance. In agricultural areas, drought and water scarcity continue to limit the expected long-term benefits. Some municipalities also reported mechanical breakdowns and the gradual deterioration of metal containers, trucks, and other equipment, as ongoing burdens. In some villages, population growth, including the arrival of newly displaced families, poses additional pressure on municipal services, particularly solid waste management. Additionally, intensive road use in certain areas requires more frequent maintenance efforts by the municipality.

Overall, municipalities stressed that continuous external support, along with strengthened internal capacity, would help sustain the project's positive results.

Environmental Grants Projects

Findings from the 22 KIIs with environmental grants' recipients indicate that the results of the grants were overall perceived as **sustainable**.

This perception was strongest among farmers who purchased solar systems through the grant, as they noted reduced fuel costs, reliable access to sustainable energy, and more regular irrigation. These improvements were seen as essential for sustaining and strengthening agricultural activities in the coming years.

However, when asked about challenges to sustain the grants' results, **persistent water scarcity, low precipitation, limited well capacity, and expensive cost of agricultural inputs** were frequently noted. The challenges may limit the long-term sustainability of the gains achieved, even when the installed systems remain functional.

Respondents highlighted that sustaining the outcomes of the grants would require additional and consistent financial and technical support from WW and other organizations. Moreover, many noted that agricultural inputs are costly and need to be purchased regularly, making in-kind support crucial.

Farmers & Coops

Findings from the endline survey indicate that farmers had mixed perceptions regarding the sustainability of improved access to and management of natural resources. As illustrated in Figure 20, half of the respondents (**50%**) reported that the project contributed to more sustainable practices, while **44%** said it did not, and 6% were unsure.

Among those who perceived improvements, the most frequently mentioned change was better soil management and fertility practices (30.65%). Others highlighted the adoption of environmentally friendly techniques (19.35%), improved irrigation access (16.13%), better waste management practices (14.52%), improved land management (11.29%), and some noted better access to renewable energy (8.06%). However, among those who didn't report any improvement, a recurrent cause was linked to water scarcity. Others noted that they did not benefit from any intervention related to water or natural resources.

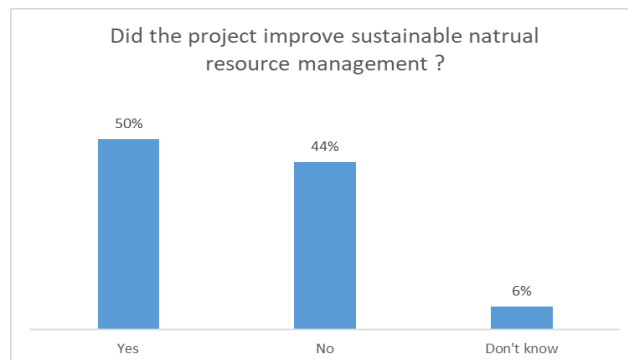


Figure 20: JPII, farmers & coops: Perceived sustainability of natural resource management (n=50)

Youth- Business Support Specialist (BSS)

As highlighted in previous sections, youth supported under Nawaya consistently reported that the training improved their knowledge, strengthened their business and employability skills, and introduced new practical tools and opportunities. Most also indicated that the support enhanced their ability to search for and apply for jobs. These outcomes may generally continue to benefit participants and support their employment pathways beyond the project period.

MSMEs

As indicated in previous sections, the majority of MSMEs supported under Nawaya reported solid improvements in their knowledge, business management practices, and operational capacity, combined with revenue increases and market access expansion. These results indicate strong potential for sustainability and are likely to support the growth of their activities beyond the project period.

VI. Cross-cutting themes

Gender & Inclusion

Inclusion and gender equality were mainstreamed throughout the project cycle, starting from the socio-economic studies conducted to develop the Local Development Plans (LDPs) in each of the eight targeted localities. During this phase, women active in sectors such as education, health, and agriculture were engaged through interviews and group discussions, ensuring their perspectives informed the identification of community priorities across several sectors. Moreover, during the LDP validation workshops, female stakeholders from diverse backgrounds were invited and participated actively in discussions. Participation was also inclusive across age groups, with youth, adults, and older people contributing to both the studies and the validation processes.

Gender-sensitive considerations were further reinforced during implementation. Under the EG, MSME, farmers, youth support components, women were prioritized through clearly defined selection criteria. However, the project team reported that the project should have ensured further focus on the inclusion of people with disability, this could be done through adding it as a clear selection criteria benchmark and diversification of outreach modalities if the project is to be replicated.

In the evaluation phase, inclusion was also reflected in the design of endline survey sampling and EG Key Informant Interviews (KIIs). Women, individuals of different nationalities, and respondents across diverse age groups were intentionally represented in the sample, ensuring that the assessment captured a wide range of perspectives and experiences.

Decent work

The project aimed at increasing access and conditions to decent work through capacity building, sensitization and awareness raising and working with businesses and stakeholders to include decent work in their statute. Consortium partners defined decent work, as per ILO's definition, "productive work for women and men in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity". This was translated into a guideline where partners counted work as decent when it abides by 1. It pays a fair income; 2. It guarantees a secure form of employment and safe working conditions; 3. It ensures

opportunities and treatment for all; 4. It includes social protection for the workers and their families; 5. Workers are free to express their concerns and to organize and 6. It offers prospects for personal development and encourages social integration. Partners monitored decent work throughout the implementation of the program through pre-defined checklists and indicators. Partners also conducted various sensitization and capacity building sessions on Decent work principles to the project team, supporting business and farmers and community members overachieving the project target of persons targeted by the project having access to decent work by more than double by the end of the project. Also, because of the project, 6 farmers and producers' institutions included decent work and gender equality measures in their statutes, and almost 60 local actors were trained and sensitized on decent work.

Environment

Environmental considerations were clearly embedded throughout the project cycle.

During the project design, environmental sustainability considerations were integrated into the JPIL component. Training modules included Integrated Pest Management (IPM), proper fertilization, irrigation management, and Good Agricultural Practices. Furthermore, under the Environmental Grants (EG) component, environmental considerations were directly reflected into the selection criteria by prioritizing interventions that reduce fuel dependency, improve water efficiency, and promote climate-friendly practices.

During the project implementation, WeWorld encouraged municipalities to select interventions that address local environmental pressures, such as solid waste accumulation, inefficient energy use, and water scarcity.

By guiding project beneficiaries toward climate-friendly and resource-efficient options, partners ensured that project implementation contributed to a cleaner environment, reduced pollution, and more sustainable use of natural resources.

Accountability to Affected Population

Findings from the endline survey indicate that most beneficiaries (81%) perceived the humanitarian assistance delivered through all partner interventions as accessible, accountable, and participatory. However, awareness on how to provide feedback or lodge a complaint remains limited. 71% of respondents reported that they don't know how to do so; while 28% stated they do know. Among those who were aware of the mechanism, almost all expressed satisfaction with the Feedback and Complaint Response Mechanism (FCRM) made available by the project.

This indicates that, although the mechanism is effective for those who are aware of it, wider communication, outreach, and visibility are needed to ensure that more community members are informed and able to use FCRM.

CONCLUSION

Across the interventions implemented by WeWorld, JPIL, and Nawaya, the ARED-LED project demonstrated strong overall performance against the OECD-DAC evaluation criteria.

Relevance was consistently high across all components. Community-based projects were aligned with the priorities identified through the Local Development Plans and validation workshops. Environmental Grants addressed farmers' needs. JPIL's support to farmers and cooperatives proved well-aligned with local agricultural needs, reflecting farmers' priorities and the practical realities of production in the targeted areas, while Nawaya's youth and MSME support addressed skill gaps, business needs, and market challenges identified by beneficiaries.

The project also showed solid **coherence** among the three consortium partners. were overall complementary: WW strengthened community services and infrastructure, JPIL improved agricultural practices and inputs, and Nawaya expanded economic and business capacities. This complementarity reinforced results across the targeted localities.

In terms of **effectiveness**, the project achieved the majority of its intended objectives and contributed to meaningful improvements for targeted groups. Community-based projects strengthened municipal service delivery and improved living conditions. Environmental Grants introduced practical, cost-saving solutions that improved irrigation reliability. Support to farmers and cooperatives enhanced agricultural practices, while Nawaya's components strengthened employability, business skills, and enterprise resilience.

The project overall generated a significant impact on multiple levels. Community-based interventions improved living conditions and strengthened trust between citizens and municipalities. Environmental grants improved productivity and reduced operational burdens. JPII's agricultural support contributed to the adoption of more sustainable techniques, while Nawaya's interventions supported business growth, and strengthened youth employability skills.

Sustainability is generally perceived but influenced by external challenges. Solar-based systems, irrigation networks, capacity-building efforts, and improved business practices are expected to continue benefiting beyond the project period. However, long-term continuity depends on several factors such as drought, water scarcity, municipal budget constraints, and the high cost of agricultural inputs.

Cross-cutting themes were significantly integrated throughout the project cycle. Gender and inclusion were embedded in targeting, beneficiary selection, and evaluation samples. Environmental considerations shaped both design and implementation, while accountability mechanisms were in place and satisfactory for those aware of them, though visibility and awareness remain areas for improvement.

Overall, the ARED project delivered relevant, coherent, effective, sustainable interventions across partners. Despite several challenges, the progress achieved through the project offers a strong foundation for continued development and provides valuable insights to guide future interventions in the region.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Consolidate Climate-Resilient Agricultural Support by continuing to prioritize solar energy, efficient irrigation technologies, and water storage solutions. Future programming should integrate additional water-saving measures in water-stressed areas and adopt flexibility in grant options, so beneficiaries can select the most appropriate intervention for their agricultural needs.

Reinforce Youth Employability Pathways by expanding coaching, career guidance, and job search support, and by strengthening linkages with local employers. This will help young participants translate their skills into better access to employment and sustain the progress achieved after project closure.

Promote accountability to affected population by increasing outreach and awareness, so more community members understand how to submit feedback or complaints. Strengthen accessibility of the Feedback and Accountability Mechanisms across all targeted groups to ensure inclusive and effective community engagement. In addition, future programming should strengthen the inclusion of persons with disabilities in beneficiary outreach and selection by applying clearer vulnerability-based criteria and tailored outreach approaches

Strengthen Learning and Knowledge Management by capitalizing on the project's best practices, particularly the LDP methodology, and ensuring structured documentation and dissemination to support replication and future programming.