

# SUSTAINABILITY NEWS & TOPICS

Edition 3  
1 HY 2020

Photo by: Ahmed Ehab

تقاء لولا بان الخمر محمد

Egyptian calligrapher preaches  
message of optimism.



ALEXBANK

بنك الإسكندرية



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## **THIS EDITION OF SUSTAINABILITY NEWS & TOPICS: AN OVERVIEW**

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Dear Readers,

We are thrilled to be introducing edition three of our very own Sustainability News & Topics.

Despite the growing challenges that have risen as a direct result of COVID-19, we are happy to report the ALEXBANK community, just as Intesa Sanpaolo Group, is just as committed to establishing an inclusive financial industry, strengthening discourse surrounding the environmental matters that directly contribute our health as a global community and highlighting the valuable role Egyptian women play both in the handicrafts industry and society.

In the past six months, ALEXBANK has taken numerous measures to instigate social progress, celebrate employees and make women feel valued through the launch of “Ghalya”, an initiative that aims to equip and empower women to achieve success through art, capacity building and education. In fact, in the past three years alone, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office has supported over 10,000 women access the tools they need to take control of their future.

If this edition is indicative of anything, it is the incredible work being undertaken by our partners, staff and volunteers to establish a support system that can be sustained. As we remain aligned with our parent company Intesa Sanapolo, we continue to closely monitor the developments of the virus and transparently report on our initiatives in our upcoming 2019 Sustainability Report, we will continue assembling the cornerstones of shared value creation.

Sincerely,

Laila Hosny,

Head of CSR & Sustainable Development Office  
ALEXBANK



## INTRODUCING “GHALYA”: AN INITIATIVE BY WOMEN FOR WOMEN



In 2018, the [World Bank](#) Reported that nearly 15% of Egyptian households are female headed. Beyond households, the value of Egyptian women can be felt in the arts, academia, science and the economy. To celebrate Egyptian women, ALEXBANK's CSR & Sustainable Development Office launched “Ghalya” (which translates to “valuable”), set to support and empower Egyptian women across different fields reach their full potential.

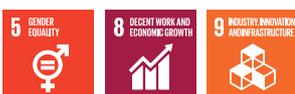
In celebration of International Women's Day and Egyptian Women's Day which take place on March 8<sup>th</sup> and March 16<sup>th</sup> respectively, ALEXBANK launched “Ghalya” at the 35<sup>th</sup> [Women Economic Forum](#) under the auspices of Present Abdelfattah El Sisi. Moreover, the [National Council for Women](#) and their national women empowerment initiative “Taa' Marbouta” were featured as the main supporter of the event and initiative alike.



Made by Baddara.

**The [Women Economic Forum](#) is a multinational forum dedicated to enabling women from diverse backgrounds to expand their business and networking opportunities, as well as strengthen discourse surrounding women in the workforce.**

To accompany the launch of the initiative, ALEXBANK provided bags, giveaways and lanyards to all guests created by women through the CSR & Sustainable Development Office's longstanding partnership with [Baddara](#), a female-led handicrafts business in New Valley and Dahshour, as well as [El Fayrouz](#) an enterprise run by the resilient women of Sinai.





*“For years ALEXBANK has been dedicating resources to support women and highlight their important role within the Egyptian community. Launching Ghalya at a such a monumental event sets this initiative apart and sets a benchmark for the future of women initiatives in the private sector.”* **Maya Morsy, President of the National Council for Women**

Through “Ghalya”, ALEXBANK is committing to provide Egyptian women from multiple industries with the necessary support to become leaders in their field. The initiative comes as a natural progression from its previous and ongoing efforts to empower marginalized women through projects and initiatives such as “Combatting Early Marriage” in Manial Shiha in collaboration with [Appropriate Communication Techniques](#), “Improving the Living Conditions of Children in Street Situations” in collaboration with the [Sawiris Foundation for Social Development](#) and [Banati Foundation](#), supporting and partnering with female led enterprises such as [Doodle Factory](#); a female-lead Egyptian brand that inclusively empowers children through utilizing their creativity to fund medical, educational and shelter needs of the children as well as [Tawasol Egypt NGO](#) seeking to support two community and educational development projects in Istabl Antar and Rommana for Development NGO Workshop for training and employment of more than 20 women in Mokattam area in greater Cairo.

At ALEXBANK, we are eager to move forward with the expansion of “Ghalya”, recognizing the crucial role women play in our institution and how valuable they are to society.



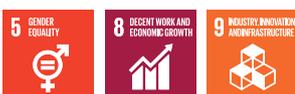
ALEXBANK CEO Dante Campioni attending the Women Economic Forum.



“Ghalya” at the Women Economic Forum.



*“We remain grateful to ALEXBANK for partnering with Annual WEF Egypt 2020 and for supporting the women artisans of Egypt with their “Ghalya” initiative, enabling economic and cultural enrichment for not just Egypt, but for bringing the best of Egyptian arts and crafts to the attention of the world. This inspired us to launch SHEconomy, a global e-marketplace for women entrepreneurs from across the world and notably Egypt.”* **Harbeen Arora, Founder of Women Economic Forum**



## CELEBRATING INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Promoting creativity in children.

[International Women's Day](#) is an annual event that takes place on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March to celebrate women and generate dialogue on gender equality. As an institution that values its female workforce and promotes female empowerment through its newly launched CSR & Sustainable Development Office initiative "Ghalya", ALEXBANK chose to celebrate the day with the women driving the Bank's successes.

In partnership with Egypt's female led social enterprise [The Doodle Factory](#), 2,400 female staff were presented with a "Ghalya" gift box. Each box included an espresso set, a notebook, coasters and a scarf or cardholder inspired by the doodles of at-risk children. Proceeds from the gift box have been redirected to support over 10,000 children with liver diseases through the purchasing of intensive care monitors for the [Yassin Abdel Gaafar Charity Center for Liver Diseases](#).

The "Ghalya" inspired gift is one of many ways in which the Bank highlights its appreciation to its female staff, who have been leading pioneers in the evolution of ALEXBANK. Through "Ghalya", ALEXBANK looks forward to enabling more women to realize their potential and achieve wider successes.



The "Ghalya" Women's Day kit.



ALEXBANK

In celebration of the launch ALEXBANK shared the Ghalya cause box with influencers of impact and media's most influential women. The influencers used their platforms to promote and celebrate Ghalya and the important value it offers.



Egyptian influencers celebrate the launch of "Ghalya".



*"I believe the Ghalya Initiative took corporate gifting to a whole new realm of corporate giving. We set the bar so high for everyone who wants to do some creative impact, believing in the fact that small choices can have a huge impact."*

**Yasmeen Khamis, Founder and CEO of the Doodle Factory**



## LAUNCHING “BAGAWEET” FOR RED SEA CRAFTS



Egyptian handcrafters are often regarded as historians, perfectly encapsulating the traditions of their ancestors into a handwoven piece. For many female artisans in Egypt, exploring the arts has been vital to both contributing to the heritage preservation of their communities, as well as their economic empowerment. As such, ALEXBANK is proud to have launched “Bagaweet”, a project created by women for women.





*“The project enhanced women’s creative skills and supported the branding and the marketing of the products under the brand “Red Sea Handicrafts” through the renovation of two handicrafts sales outlet and to ensure the sustainability of the project, we agreed with ALEXBANK’s Ebd3 men Masr to take over the initiative, including the two outlets and to continue the support to the women artisans, raising their technical skills, introducing new products and enhancing the marketing potential”.* **Eric Oechslin, Director of the International Labour Organization Decent Work Team for North Africa in Cairo**



Empowering young girls and women of all ages to embrace the arts.

The “Bagaweet” project holds great significance to ALEXBANK, as it becomes the first of many endeavours under the CSR & Sustainable Development Office’s newly launched flagship initiative “Ghalya” seeking to empower and support the Egyptian woman. The “Bagaweet” project, which aligns with ALEXBANK’s initiative “Ebd3 men Masr” to support Egypt’s handicrafters, is set to support women in Red Sea governorate in the cities of Hurghada, Al Qusair, Safaga and Shalateen. More importantly, the project is headed by the social entrepreneur and CEO of [Thaat](#) Egypt, Peri Abou Zeid, highlighting the Bank’s commitment to supporting female led social enterprises.

“Bagaweet” represents an upcoming phase of the [International Labour Organization’s](#) previous “Red Sea Crafts” project. To commemorate the partnership, on March 17th, ALEXBANK and the International Labour Organization signed a Memorandum of Understanding in attendance of Minister of Social Solidarity H.E Nivine El Qabbag, ALEXBANK’s CEO and Managing Director Dante Campioni, and Director of the North Africa Decent Work Team at the International Labor Organization Eric Oechslin.

“Bagaweet” is one of many projects being undertaken by ALEXBANK to both promote Egyptian handicrafts and empower the women producing them. With the launch of “Ghalya”, ALEXBANK will be extending an even greater framework of support to women and magnifying their successes across Egypt’s evolving landscape.



*“I commend the ILO on the phenomenal work it has done in reviving the beautiful crafts of the Red Sea and selecting ALEXBANK to oversee the new phase of the initiative, capitalizing on the success of its leading initiative “Ebd3 men Masr” and putting women at the center with its new initiative, “Ghalya”. The Bagaweet (formerly Red Sea Crafts) initiative is a pivotal initiative in supporting the handicrafts sector in the Red Sea governorate and we are proud to support it”.* **H.E. Nivine El Qabbaj, Minister of Social Solidarity**



# “EBDA3 MEN MASR” GOES DIGITAL IN RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Egyptian craftsmen have suffered great economic losses with an estimated 70% decline in sales as a direct result of escalating COVID-19 safety measures. With bazaars and marketplaces steadily shutting down, artisans are expected to face further decline in their primary income. In an effort to provide a holistic framework of support to Egyptian handcrafters and align with ALEXBANK’s efforts to promote digitalization, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office developed an assistance and capacity-building program under its flagship initiative “Ebda3 men Masr”, titled “**Ebda3 men Masr Goes Digital**”, which aims to provide its artisan network with a digital selling proposition and direct sales opportunities.

## LAUNCHING “EBDA3 MEN MASR’S” FIRST EXCLUSIVE ONLINE BRAND STORE ON JUMIA EGYPT IN COOPERATION WITH THE SAWIRIS FOUNDATION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



*ALEXBANK keeps staying solidly next to the valuable Egyptian handicrafts community in any circumstance, quickly responding to the challenges time by time may occur. This groundbreaking cooperation, with so qualified partners, allows promoting handcrafted products in a dedicated exclusive online store, displaying the recognized creativity of Egyptian artisans. In Jumia we have found an ideal partner that shares our ideals and our belief that true value comes through tangible marketing and sales initiatives. We strongly believe that with this initiative we can accelerate the recovery of handicrafts’ production and give the chance to many buyers to appreciate and purchase safely from their home truly Egyptian products to be proud of, often expression of century-old local traditions.”* **Dante Campioni, CEO & Managing Director**

As direct sales opportunities continue to decline nationally, ALEXBANK has partnered with its long-term strategic partner, [Sawiris Foundation for Social Development](#) and Egypt’s leading online commerce platform [Jumia Egypt](#) to introduce an exclusive “Ebda3 men Masr” online shopping experience. The store will serve more than 4,000 “Ebda3 men Masr” partners and artisans, 80% of women by revealing their products to a wider platform in order to stimulate Egypt’s creative economy.

Moreover, in alignment with ALEXBANK’s efforts to promote inclusivity across its initiatives, the store will feature the works of artisans living with disabilities, establishing a platform for equal opportunities in Egypt’s handicrafts industry. To capture the essence of Egypt’s handcrafters, all product packaging was designed by a local artist, [Wafaa Said](#) to provide as many artists with the support. ALEXBANK provided implementing partners [Fair Trade Egypt](#) and [Yadaweya](#) with an initial investment to source products from over 3,681 artisans that enabled the start of the production cycle. Revenues from online sales will be utilized by our implementing partners to purchase more products, with the purpose of donating remaining revenues toward the introduction of a digital commerce capacity training for artisans.



*“These are the most difficult times for the Egyptian artisans especially those marginalized. However, these are also times when consumers can make a big difference with conscious responsible buying. Through this initiative and having handicrafts available at Jumia, everyone has a chance to sustainably help the artisans through their purchases while buying a unique product.”* **Mona El Sayed, Implementing Partner At Fair Trade Egypt**



# SHOP EGYPTIAN TREASURES ON JUMIA'S "EBDA3 MEN MASR" SECTION.



During these times of crisis, Sawiris Foundation is strongly committed to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on the most marginalized communities in Egypt. We are immensely proud to take yet another step to support those most at risk, in particular the talented community of Egyptian artisans, which we have already been supporting through our programs and partnerships long before the crisis. Together with our strategic partner, ALEXBANK, who are a pioneer in the handicrafts sector, and Jumia, that shares our collective vision, we aim to showcase the skills of artisans from 22 Egyptian governorates through an innovative approach. Relying on Jumia's well established online platform, we will launch a section exclusively dedicated to the artisans' products and unique offerings, resulting in their economic empowerment." **Noura Selim, Executive Director of Sawiris Foundation for Social Development.**



The "Ebda3 men Masr" section on Jumia's website.



"Ebda3 men Masr" impact map.

Governorates	Number of Beneficiaries	Governorates	Number of Beneficiaries
1 Alexandria	10	13 Minya	25
2 Aswan	265	14 Monufia	42
3 Asyut	61	15 New Valley	120
4 Beheira	75	16 North Sinai	555
5 Beni Suef	5	17 Qalyubia	37
6 Cairo	860	18 Qena	165
7 Damietta	10	19 Red Sea	250
8 Faiyum	185	20 Sharqia	5
9 Giza	330	21 Sohag	338
10 Kafr El Sheikh	93	22 South Sinai	77
11 Luxor	120	<b>Total Number of beneficiaries</b>	
12 Matruh	72	<b>3700</b>	



"Jumia's support for 'Ebda3 Men Masr' initiative comes in line with Jumia's belief that the true growth drivers of economies are MSMEs. Therefore, Jumia works on encouraging handicrafts as well as local products to try to promote these products via our platform, where we work on expanding the beneficiaries' base of these products and open new markets through e-commerce platforms. Our unique ability to deliver products to the customer anytime and anywhere, while offering grants and benefits to encourage customers' electronic purchases. This collaboration with ALEXBANK and Sawiris Foundation for Social Development (SFSD) is the first of many pivotal platforms that we aim to partner on together in the coming months" **Hesham Safwat, CEO of Jumia Egypt**



# ALEXBANK AVAILING ITS FACEBOOK PAGE AS A PLATFORM TO SUPPORT THE CREATIVE ECONOMY



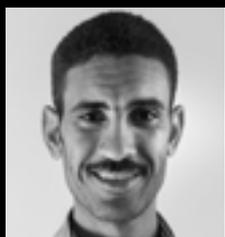
Photo by: Ahmed Hayman

Artisan at work.



*“To date this has been a fruitful initiative bringing hope and support to local talents amidst the troublesome times we are in. Showcasing their work on our Facebook page goes to show how sustainability is embedded within our business values and not just through our CSR initiatives”* **Alia El Bishry, Senior Marketing Executive**

[ALEXBANK’s Facebook page](#) boasts 3.6 million followers and remains one of the Bank’s strongest communication tools. To provide local artisans with a wider platform, ALEXBANK launched a weekly social media “Ebda3 men Masr” campaign on the Bank’s official Facebook page in April. The weekly campaign sheds light on different arts and artisans, providing direct links to their pages for direct online sales opportunities and to further promote Egypt’s diverse cultural heritage. Thus far, ALEXBANK’s Facebook page has hosted 12 artisans and will continue to use its platform to support more local businesses during this time.



*“What ALEXBANK is offering through its pioneering initiative, “Ebda3 men Masr”, be it through exhibitions, support, capacity building and marketing opportunities, is not just marketing or support, but a real empowerment for Egyptian craftsmen and craftswomen to sustain their work, as the key to our creative economy in Egypt”* **Usama Ghazali, Chairman of Yadaweya**



# FORSA BAZAAR GOES DIGITAL

Forsa is a monthly bazaar for employees that takes place in the Kasr El Nil branch to support local businesses and promote Egyptian artisans among employees. However, in response to the rise of COVID-19 and ALEXBANK's rigorous safety measures to flatten the curve, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office launched a digital version of the monthly event in Ramadan.

The Ramadan themed digital Forsa included six sellers [Tawasol Egypt](#), [Noqoush Masria](#), [Kenouz Embaby](#), [Nina Shawky](#), [Fatma Al Ali](#) and [Beity Bakes](#) who were able to showcase a diverse range of products including lanterns, fashion, baked goods and pottery. The online bazaar for ALEXBANK staff took place via a catalogue which featured all the products on sale, providing interested buyers with an opportunity to safely complete their Ramadan shopping needs.



**FORSA BAZAAR GOES DIGITAL!**  
بازار فرصة على الإنترنت!

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Code : A1 1200 LE	Code : A2 for Kafan 1800 LE Code : A3 for clutch 650 LE
Code : A4 1300 LE	Code : A5 1300 LE

ALEXBANK | بنك الإسكندرية

Code : B1 150 LE	Code : B2 150 LE
Code : B3 25 LE	Code : B4 30 LE
Code : B5 200 LE	Code : B6 25 LE

Introducing Forsa Bazaar's first online edition.



## THE “EBDA3 MEN MASR” CATALOGUE: A ONE-STOP SHOP

Restrictions on movement during the era of COVID-19 have contributed to a rise in online shopping in Egypt. To gain momentum, ALEXBANK is creating an electronic catalogue for “Ebda3 men Masr” artisans and their stories. The catalogue aims to connect craftsmen to their respective artistry, establishing a connection between their products and their past.

The Ebda3 men Masr online catalogue will serve as a one stop shop to explore the works of 100



artisans, with plans to grow to better reflect the diversity of Egypt’s creative economy. The online publication provides viewers with a diverse range of products that include home essentials, corporate gifts, stationery and fashion.

The catalogue will be available on our online platforms over the coming months.

To support the featured artisans, all seller contact information is available to facilitate for a smooth shopping experience.

ALEXBANK is committed to supporting its stakeholders during the era of COVID-19, and ensuring new measures are introduced to promote sustainable growth in the communities it operates in. The CSR & Sustainable Development Office has dedicated years of its work to empowering Egypt’s artisan network. During these times of uncertainty, the only unchanging feature in ALEXBANK’s evolving developmental strategy is our commitment to supporting the arts. As the Bank continues to move towards digitalization, we are also enhancing our framework of support to reflect our community needs.

The financial inclusion logic is embedded in our general business growth strategy, as we have a clear perception of the existing gap in Egypt versus other more mature markets where our Group is present. As such, and to bridge the financial inclusion gap, ALEXBANK works on better serving the underbanked segments (micro, small and medium enterprises especially) and financially including the unbanked population. Our strategy is aimed at advancing the development of our operations in these segments, looking not beyond the short-term and to the medium-term profitability as well. As part of our sustainability and responsible business principles, we strictly monitor the costs versus the expected benefits to all our stakeholders. How to implement our strategy will continue to depend also on the evolution of the regulatory framework, in particular what concerns the possible implementation of the “online KYC”, and the rules of agent’s potential engagement. This has been considered in our 4-year Business Plan (2018-2021) built in accordance with our Group’s directions.



## ALEXBANK JOINS THE “DOING GOOD CHALLENGE”

The rise of COVID-19 has brought about a series of disruptions that have had dire consequences on the economy. The most immediate challenge that many Egyptians are facing is job insecurity, which alongside the mass spread of the virus has contributed to the decline of community welfare.

In March 2020, to support Egypt’s daily laborers, ALEXBANK accepted [Nestle Egypt’s](#) challenge to contribute to Egypt’s Food Bank initiative and donate food boxes to 10,000 families. The Bank’s contribution is estimated to support an average of 40,000 individuals for one month. In turn, ALEXBANK has challenged [Kiri Egypt](#) and the [Sawiris Foundation for Social Development](#) to take part in the viral challenge, who have contributed to feeding 1,000 and 60,000 families respectively.



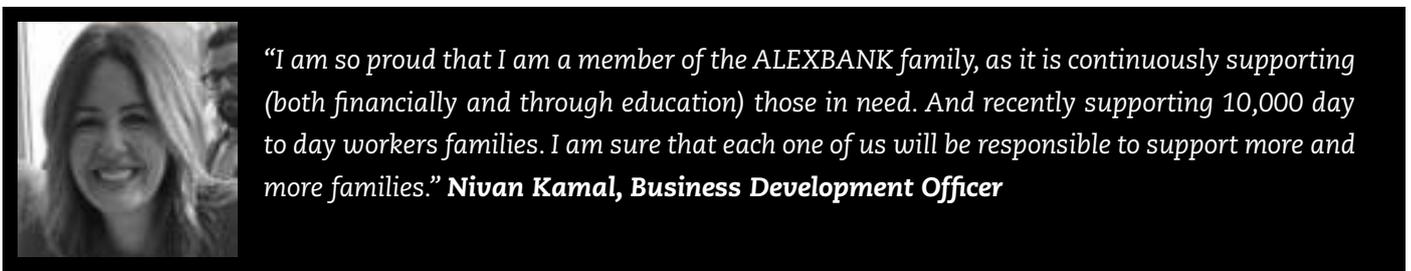
“ALEXBANK is no stranger to such endeavors, seeing as how the Bank has continuously, and over the years, supported the less fortunate through multiple initiatives, encouraged by our Chief Executive Officer and Top Management Team, and emanating from the belief that it is our duty to provide support the mechanisms of social and economic empowerment for better living conditions.” **Sherif Lokman, Head of Retail & SME Division**



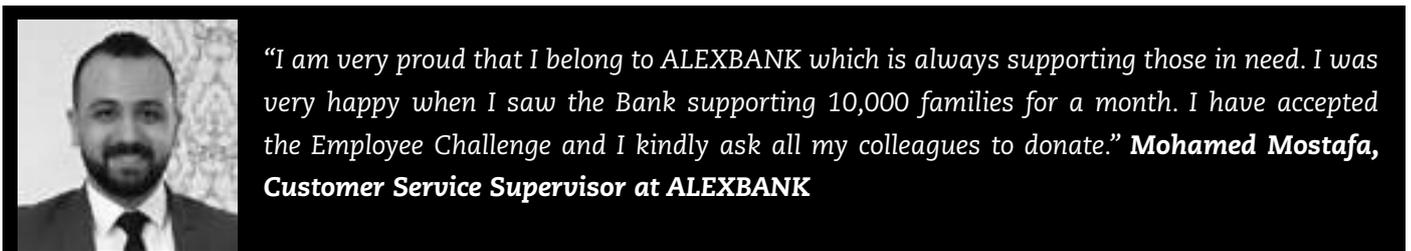
# THE “DOING GOOD CHALLENGE”: EMPLOYEE EDITION



Following the overwhelming success of the initiative, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office and Human Resources Department introduced an employee edition of the challenge “Ta7ady ElKheir” (“Doing Good Challenge”) in April 2020. The campaign, which is executed via daily announcements, enables all employees to safely contribute to the cause using ALEXBANK’s [Ma7fazty](#) and [online banking applications](#). Thus far, the employee campaign has supported 6,738 families, with 400 food boxes directly allocated to support the [Banati Foundation](#) empowering girls in Egypt’s informal communities.



ALEXBANK’s community remains committed to alleviating the challenges that have directly resulted from this global pandemic. In the coming months, we look forward to extending our support to a wider community and enabling the progression of the communities we operate in. If you would like to contribute yourself, you can safely do so from the comfort of your home via the [Egyptian Food Bank’s website](#).



## ALLEVIATING PRESSURE ON NATIONAL HOSPITALS: EQUIPPING THE “UMBERTO I” ITALIAN HOSPITAL INTENSIVE CARE UNIT



The Umberto I Italian Hospital.

As the global community proceeds to shift its efforts towards addressing COVID-19, ALEXBANK has been actively working to support Egypt’s healthcare providers and institutions. With the number of COVID-19 cases steadily increasing across the country, Egypt’s medical infrastructure, much like the rest of the world’s is overwhelmed.

In March 2020, to address the medical needs of Egyptians, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office collaborated with [Umberto I Italian Hospital](#) to further equip the institution with six Intensive Care Unit ventilators. Since its founding in 1903, the Umberto I Italian Hospital has been providing world class medical treatment to both Egyptians and foreigners living in Egypt. Moreover, the hospital’s history as an institution that was built by Italian immigrants represents Egypt’s strong ties to Italy and their mutual contribution to promoting access to safe healthcare services.

ALEXBANK’s donation is set to serve 200 individuals per month. Moreover, it aims to alleviate pressure off national hospitals by providing relief to Egyptians seeking health support particularly during a time when medical resources are scarce, with the purpose of working towards the containment of the disease on a national scale. To further meet the needs of the increasingly critical health crisis, the project may be complemented with an additional phase which will be designed to equip multi-function emergency rooms, alongside providing crisis management and technical training to all medical staff.

The health and wellbeing of all members of our community remains central to the CSR & Sustainable Development Office Strategy, particularly during these uncertain times. ALEXBANK would like to take this opportunity to thank all the medical professionals supporting those affected by this pandemic, as we continue to expand our support to healthcare providers over the coming months. If you would like to support health institutions and professionals, you can donate to the [Tahya Misr Fund](#), [Egyptian Cure Bank](#) or [the Ahl Masr Hospital](#).



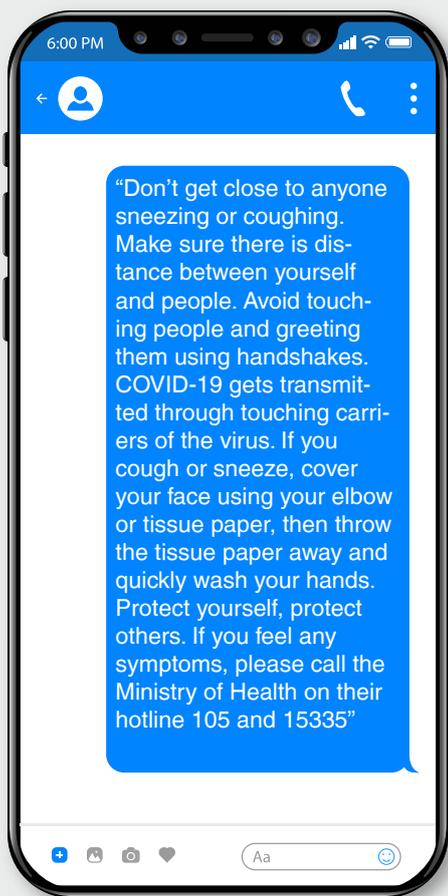
## OUR COMMUNITY

### SUPPORT VIA AWARENESS CREATION

Along with [CARE Egypt](#) and [Vodafone](#), ALEXBANK initiated a project that aims to reach our beneficiaries by proactively escalating our response and supporting them in a practical and useful way. Due to health and wellbeing risks induced by COVID-19, field activities of our Digital Saving Groups Project in partnership with CARE Egypt and Vodafone have paused. However, more than ever, it is during these challenging months that remaining in touch with our beneficiaries is crucial.

To provide them with adequate support, we created diverse messages, covering diverse topics including hygiene, social distancing and immunity boosting health tips. The messages are not only addressed to the groups of women of our Digital Saving Group project, but are also reaching almost 2,000 especially vulnerable beneficiaries affiliated to our partners [Banati Foundation](#), [Kheir Wa Baraka](#), and [Appropriate Communication Techniques for Development \(ACT\)](#), as well as indirectly raising the awareness of 86,000 individuals from various projects run by the CSR & Sustainable Development Office.

During these challenging times, ALEXBANK will continue utilizing its digital platforms to reach its diverse community and lend its support. As the developments of the virus continue to evolve, ALEXBANK will be evolving its online services to ensure the safety of its stakeholders is not compromised.



A sample of the COVID-19 SMS.

The Digital Savings Groups Project is a financial inclusion project that recognizes the extent to which women in marginalized rural communities lack access to extra pools of cash to support their household or to grow their microprojects, thus impacting their wellbeing and that of their families.

The ultimate goal of the Digital Savings Groups project is to financially integrate unbanked women in the disadvantaged communities of Beni Suief and Asyut through tailored and customized financial products and services; namely groups with savings and peer-to-peer lending mechanisms. The project also aims to avail a digital lend-

ing platform that will deliver inclusive and accessible financial products tailored to the women's needs, to further enhance their economic and social welfare. The project is set to benefit 10,000 Egyptian women.

The CSR & Sustainable Development Office's is consistently evolving its efforts to establish channels for inclusive finance that will economically empower, as well as enhance equality of opportunity to marginalized communities, especially women. Through the Digital Savings Groups Project, we look forward to introducing more tailored financial products and services catering for the needs of Egyptian women.



# A GUIDE TO FINANCING FOR THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES: MICROLOANS & BEYOND

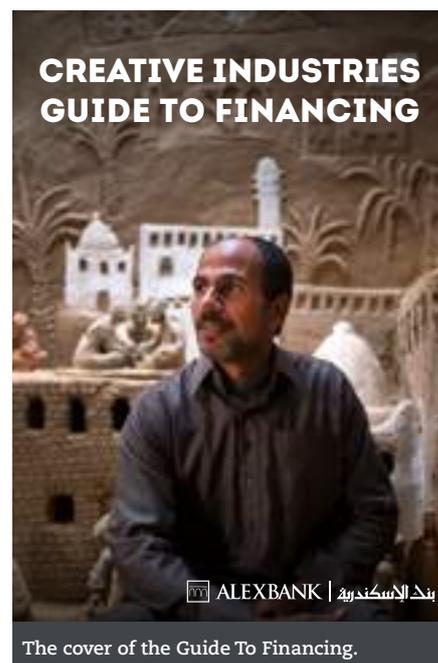
“Ebda3 men Masr” is ALEXBANK’s flagship social responsibility initiative and has evolved to become one of the main CSR platforms in the Egyptian banking sector since its launch in early 2016. The impact “Ebda3 men Masr” has on the creative industry is achieved through multiple collaborations and partnerships aiming at empowering traditional communities, as well as increasing entrepreneurial opportunities with the goal of further promoting the preservation of Egyptian crafts’ heritage and original artwork. Based on the concept of Creating Shared Value, ALEXBANK is a full-fledged partner of citizens and community blending the creation of social value with the growth of the economy.

Given the current circumstances, and the expectation for the lockdown to remain in place during the coming weeks/months, artisans and members of the “Ebda3 men Masr” network are expected to endure further substantial negative economic impacts. The peak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown coincided with Ramadan, the highest season for most of Egyptian craftsmen and women. Amplified by the ramifications of social distancing and the cancelation of bazaars and marketplaces traditionally linked with the ambience of the holy month, their sales revenues diminished significantly, incurring heavy and unforeseen losses.

To support the handicrafts sector that is disproportionately suffering because of COVID-19 and the associated liquidity crunch, we are raising awareness about all the financing options available for those working in the Egyptian creative industries. We designed the Creative Industries Guide to Financing, laying out financing options that are tailored for handicrafts businesses to help them mitigate cash flow problems and prevent the necessity of dismissing any employees.

The Creative Industries Guide to Financing has been designed to incorporate all the suitable financing schemes and loan products that ALEXBANK can offer to the craftsmen and women working in the creative industry sector. It introduces all relevant microfinance and Small Business products and financing schemes that are applicable to handicrafts businesses of these sizes.

Hoping to present relevant financing schemes, the Creative Industries Guide to Financing follows a simple narrative with the aim of directly supporting and reassuring craftsmen and women that the loan products offered can meet their business needs during these tough times. It is designed as such to contribute to financially cushioning the handicrafts sector, while further preserving Egyptian heritage and achieving the objective of shared value. The CSR & Sustainable Development remains committed



The cover of the Guide To Financing.

to providing Egypt’s craftsmen with the necessary tools to thrive and looks forward to introducing new services that cater to the preservation of Egypt’s rich heritage for years to come.

The financial inclusion logic is embedded in our general business growth strategy, as we have a clear perception of the existing gap in Egypt versus other more mature markets where our Group is present. As such, and to bridge the financial inclusion gap, ALEXBANK works on better serving the underbanked segments (micro, small and medium enterprises especially) and financially including the unbanked population. This has been considered in our 4-year Business Plan (2018-2021) built in accordance with our Group’s directions.



## THE LINE BETWEEN CORPORATE AND IMPACT WITH “KHOTOOT”



*“It was a pleasure working with ALEXBANK. We look forward to working on more projects that embrace local art and craftsmanship. Our Motto - Taste & Trust.”*

**Chris Mikaelian, Co-Owner of the Reader's Corner**

In the last five years, ALEXBANK has maintained a proud tradition of presenting its partners with a gift that symbolizes the multifaceted nature of our “Gifts with Impact” initiative. The “Gifts with Impact” initiative aims to promote and facilitate a sustainable procurement process that enables local enterprises and Egyptian entrepreneurs to gain exposure for their unique works.



Words of hope and optimism.

*“Thank you for the beautiful Arabic calligraphy painting you made. It’s a very thoughtful gift in these hard and unknown times we are all going through. “Hope for the best and you shall find it”, this message of hope we all need to remember. I absolutely love it!”* **Rosa Abdel Malek, Partnerships Director at Sawiris Foundation for Social Development.**

This year, 285 of ALEXBANK’s partner institutions and clients received an Arabic calligraphy art piece titled “Khotoot” (which literally translates to “lines” or “calligraphy”), preaching for optimism through the written words of “Hope for the best and you shall find it” (“تفاءلوا بالخير تجدوه”). Each piece is carefully written by Egyptian calligrapher [Khaled Mujahed](#), placed in wooden frames by [The Reader’s Corner Bookshop](#) and colored with sheets of gold. Designed and handcrafted to combine the beauty of Arabic calligraphy’s ancient tradition and the freshness of a modern frame design, the piece is reflective of the remnants of history that can be seen and felt in everyday Egypt.

The CSR & Sustainable Development Office’s flagship initiative “Ebda3 men Masr” has enabled the Bank to lend its support to Egyptian artisans, as well as Egypt’s rich historical landscape. As with everything we do, we aim to shed light on the diversity that has strengthened Egypt’s current artisan industry and will continue on our quest to created value that can be shared.



*The Khotoot project is considered one of the best by ALEXBANK and its initiative “Ebda3 men Masr” because it showcases the beauty and mastery of Calligraphy in a new and modernized look. Khotoot adds a sense of understanding that speaks clearly to the vision and the beauty of the phrase (Hope for the best and you shall find it).”* **Dr. Khaled Megahed, Project Calligrapher**



# MENDING BROKEN HEARTS

## ONE COOKIE AT A TIME

On Valentine’s Day, people around the world gather to celebrate love and all the things that make hearts grow two sizes too big. At ALEXBANK, the day holds equal stature in our institution and provides with it a unique opportunity for colleagues to engage with one another while creating shared value for all.



ALEXBANK employees enjoying Weirdough cookies on Valentine's Day.



*“It’s very heartwarming for us how ALEXBANK is always thinking of us and including our cause in their internal activities with employees. The Valentine’s Day contribution was another stepping stone in our alliance, which we value deeply. We’re grateful for their support of our mission to save lives.”* **The Magdi Yacoub Heart Foundation**

In collaboration between the CSR & Sustainable Development Office and the Human Resources Department, staff across ALEXBANK’s network of 175 branches were able to enjoy delicious cookies by Egyptian bakery [Weirdough](#) and handmade artisanal gifts made from lemon tree wood.

To extend the spirit of Valentine’s Day, and in the name of ALEXBANK’s staff, a portion of the cost of every gift was donated to long-time ALEXBANK partner in the healthcare sector, the [Magdi Yacoub Heart Foundation](#), in support of their efforts to provide safe and accessible medical services to Egyptians in need.



Proceeds from the gift went towards supporting the Magdi Yacoub Heart Foundation.

As with every gift the Bank presents staff, ALEXBANK is excited to engage all members of its community through creative means, as well as further its efforts to support Egypt’s healthcare system.



*“The unexpected gestures provided by ALEXBANK always remind us of our importance in the bank; and this little cookie sent us rays of love on Valentine’s Day. The cherry on top was added when we were told that all donations were made to Magdy Yaacoub Foundation; and that’s when the feeling of connecting hearts in all possible ways put a smile on our faces.”* **Haya Shoula, Liabilities Assistant Product Manager at ALEXBANK**



**ALEXBANK**

# THE “ASHRY” BEHIND ALEXBANK’S ANNUAL RAMADAN TRADITION

Over the years, ALEXBANK has created a unique Ramadan tradition among its employees by distributing a custom bag containing a quality selection of “yameesh” (dried fruits, nuts and ingredients that are custom during the holy month). The Ramadan Bag, among many annual giveaways, falls under our gifting with purpose rationale under our “Gifts with Impact” initiative, Thus far, the Ramadan Bags have benefited over 1,950 women from Sinai, Aswan, Cairo, Giza, Fayoum and Asyut.



“Ramadan Bags is a tradition that ALEXBANK employees wait for every year and this year it meant so much more to receive our beautiful Ashry bag with all that is happening.” **Omar El Khawas, Legal Affairs at ALEXBANK**



One of the many women who brought colour to our Ramadan tradition.



“For me, the Ramadan Bags project was a big challenge. However, I was very proud that I was working with a large entity like ALEXBANK. It was always my focus to produce the bags with high quality because the bag depends mainly on a high level of craftsmanship and skill, with many detail works. This is why I was keen to train women who worked in the bags, whether in the Nubian Villages or in the neighborhoods of Cairo.” **Essra Shouman, Founder of Alwaneta**

In partnership with ALEXBANK’s CSR & Sustainable Development Office and Human Resources Department, the Ramadan bags remain one of our most successful annual endeavors and is highly anticipated by employees across our diverse branch network. In 2019, employees enjoyed a custom Ramadan bag by [El Fayrouz](#), a female led organization celebrating the culture of Sinai through. This year, to accompany the launch of the CSR & Sustainable Development Office’s initiative Ghalya, which aims to empower and celebrate the Egyptian woman, employees were presented with the Ashry bag. Ashry, which translates to “beauty” in the Nubian language, is reflective of an extensive partnership and collaboration between the female artisans of [Baddara](#) in Dahshour and [Alwaneta](#), which together, have empowered over 500 resilient women in the creative economy from the villages of Aswan, Dahshour and Cairo. The 2020 Ramadan bag benefited over 500 women from Dar El Salam, Cairo, Dahshour Village, Giza, Gabal Shisha Village, Hakroub Village and Kom Ombo in Aswan.



Our Ramadan Bags Over the Years



“The story started when I joined “Ebda3 men Masr” initiative and how through the initiative we implemented many projects. Through the many projects we have worked on we were able to add value to our partners and accumulated experiences over the years. It all led to the Ramadan Bags Project, and as usual we did our best to produce a high-quality bag that is suitable for ALEXBANK’s employees and up to the quality standards of Baddara. Through this project we were able to train the women in Dahshour.” **Abeer Geddawy, Owner of Baddara**

شوموس

Shomous  
2017



450  
Women



Representing Giza and Fayoum from ElMoatamadeya and Studio Imbaba

روح

Rouh  
2018



650  
Women



Representing Assiut, Dahshour and Fayoum from MacrameRouh, Fair Trade, Yadaweya, and Baddara

سيناوية

Sinawy  
2019



350  
Women



Representing Sinai from El Fayrouz NGO

آشري

Ashry  
2020



500  
Female Beneficiaries



Representing Aswan, Cairo, and Dahshour from Alwaneta and Baddara

“Four years ago, I participated in my first exhibition with “Ebda3 men Masr” and I was happy to take part in this year Ramadan Bags project as the coordinator for the female artisans preparing the crochet bags in Aswan with Alwaneta.” **Laila Dahab, Coordinator Alwaneta**

Beyond enabling Egyptian women to explore their creative and artistic talents, the bags celebrate Egypt’s cultural and historical landscapes, preserving our heritage through a medium that touches our daily lives.

Despite current events, ALEXBANK was able to successfully distribute more than 6,400 Ramadan bags to all employees across its vast branch network, establishing itself as a unique Egyptian model for celebrating Ramadan with its community members.



“When ALEXBANK considers gifting its employees, they are also mindful of offering opportunities to unleash the creativity and empowerment of women from underprivileged areas, who are behind this wonderful bag.” **Nehal ElYamany, Loan Operations Officer at ALEXBANK**



**ALEXBANK**

# RAMADAN'S ONE-CLICK WISH



ALEXBANK employees have been granting the wishes of children for two consecutive Ramadans.

ALEXBANK’s annual “Make Their Wishes Come True” campaign remains one of our most successful initiatives under the Ramadan Lights campaign. The highly anticipated initiative is conducted via daily email announcements with instructions on how to grant a child’s wish, providing a unique employee experience through which to promote the welfare of Egyptian children.

In 2020, ALEXBANK’s CSR & Sustainable Development Office has partnered with the [MOVE Foundation](#) for children with Cerebral Palsy and [Gannat-Al-Kholoud](#) for underprivileged children in “Garbage City” (“El Zabaleen”) to compile a list of wishes from marginalized and children with disabilities for employees to grant.



**21**

working days  
of Ramadan



**42**

wishes



**2**

NGOs supported



**33**

employees  
who took part

For every working day, an announcement is sent with two handwritten wishes, reaching a total of 42 granted wishes during 21 working days of Ramadan, almost doubling the 23 wishes granted the year prior in aid of the students at Tawasol for Developing Istabl Antar’s NGO’s community school for child development. Furthermore, to accommodate the national changes that have taken place to contain the spread of COVID-19, the campaign has been adapted to ensure employees can still practice social distancing while supporting children from marginalized communities through online purchases only.

While we may have celebrated Ramadan differently this year, ALEXBANK made every attempt to ensure it remains as involved and invested in the wellbeing of Egypt’s future generation. Moreover, we are proud to report our community is as engaged as it was last year, and that in keeping with tradition, many wishes came true.



# ALEXBANK ATTENDS THE EGYPT NETWORK FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT'S FIRST "SUPPORTING WOMEN IN UPPER EGYPT" GALA



H.E. Minister of International Cooperation Rania Al Mashat speaking at ENID's first gala dinner.

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, ALEXBANK partnered with the [Egypt Network for Integrated Development \(ENID\) Foundation](#) to host its first "Supporting Women in Upper Egypt" themed gala dinner under the auspices of Egypt's Prime Minister Mostafa Madbouly in support of ENID's current sustainability projects seeking to provide socio-economic support to marginalized communities, particularly women and youth in Upper Egypt.

The Gala brought forth more than 300 notable figures in the field of development, including Chairwoman of the [Sawiris Foundation for Social Development](#) Yousriya Loza, who was honored for her continuous efforts to support marginalized Egyptians. Moreover, in attendance, Egypt's ministers and ALEXBANK strategic partners such as [Minister of Social Solidarity](#) H.E. Nivine El Kabbag as well as [Minister of International Cooperation](#) H.E. Rania Al Mashaat.

Over the years, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office has worked in close collaboration with ENID as partners in development in Egypt. We have partnered and actively worked together to promote handicrafts as a tool for development in Egypt through our "Cluster Formation for Handicrafts and Entrepreneurship Development in Upper Egypt" project, which provided 1,200 women with tailored crafts-based trainings. ALEXBANK is proud to have attended the Gala as a partner and looks forward to both contributing and witnessing the event's goals come to fruition.



# DIALOGUE ON PARTNERSHIPS IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR: ALEXBANK’S CEO AT THE “DECENT JOBS FOR EGYPTIAN PEOPLE” PROGRAM CLOSING CEREMONY



To reaffirm its commitment to generating stable employment opportunities, on February 25<sup>th</sup>, ALEXBANK proudly took part in the closing ceremony for the “Decent Jobs for Egyptian People” project, which was designed and implemented by the [International Labour Organization](#) and funded by the [Government of Canada](#) since 2011.

ALEXBANK’S CEO and Managing Director Dante Campioni participated in the panel titled “Decent Jobs for Egyptian People’s Successful Partnerships with the Private Sector” highlighting the valuable role of private institutions in leveraging their power to create shared value through partnerships. Moreover, he highlighted the role of CSR & Sustainable Development Office’s flagship initiative “Ebda3 men Masr” in supporting Egypt’s creative economy and leveraging its growing network to take over [the second phase of the “Red Sea Crafts” project in partnership with the International Labour Organization](#) under the new brand name of “Bagaweeet”.



Local communities benefit most when the institutions they place their trust in support sustainable development projects. ALEXBANK recognizes that access to safe and decent employment is the cornerstone to socioeconomic development that can be sustained. In fact, in July 2019, the Bank organized the first inclusive employment fair titled “[Azm](#)” to provide decent and equal employment opportunities to Egyptians living with disabilities. In alignment with our Code of Ethics, the CSR & Sustainable Development Strategy and the values that govern our institution, ALEXBANK looks forward to strengthening dialogue surrounding sustainable development practices as well as embarking on new partnerships to enhance its impact on the communities it operates in.



# WEAVING ASYUT'S CARPET INDUSTRY TOGETHER: THE ABU TEEG CLOSING CEREMONY



In 2018, ALEXBANK launched the [Abu Teeg project in Asyut](#) to promote the growth of its carpet making industry under its CSR & Sustainable Development Office flagship initiative “Ebda3 men Masr”. Following two successful years of capacity training workshops, ALEXBANK celebrated the closing of its project on February 17<sup>th</sup> in the governorate of Asyut.

The ceremony welcomed representatives from all partners involved including the [Sawiris Foundation for Social Development](#), the [Egyptian Chamber of Handicrafts](#), the [Egyptian Export Council of Handicrafts](#) and the [Ministry of Trade and Industry](#) through [Micro, Small and Medium and Small Enterprises Development Agency](#) to reflect on the project’s milestones and the role of capacity training in sustaining communities and revitalizing cities across Egypt.

The ceremony celebrated the graduation of 150 female carpet makers who took part in tailored carpet making trainings for six months, and are now equipped with the technical skills to directly contribute to improving the local carpet industry, with the prospect of employment in the facility.

Egypt’s handicrafts industry is bursting with innovation, talent and creativity. ALEXBANK is committed to lending its support to numerous crafts and looks forward to playing an active role in its growth.



# FORSA BAZAAR: THE CHANCE EVERYONE DESERVES

Forsa (which translates to “Chance”) is a bazaar that takes place every month at the Kasr El Nil branch. The bazaar, which aims to promote and support Egyptian enterprises and artisans provides ALEXBANK’s staff with an exceptional opportunity to shop for local treasures, while supporting a meaningful cause under the bazaar’s monthly revolving themes.

## LITTLE STEPS

In January, we enjoyed a “Little Steps” themed edition of Forsa Bazaar, signifying the small yet impactful progressions people make to achieve their resolutions for the new year. A female-led extravaganza, exhibitors such as [SEPIA](#), [Salma Shokry](#) and [Pink Lotus](#) were present to sell handmade jewelry inspired by Egyptian icons, handmade stationery, candles and beauty products. As with every edition of the bazaar, employees were granted the chance to embrace the theme further by supporting the paw steps of animals at the [Hope Rescue Shelter](#).



The January Forsa Bazaar announcement.

**Hope** is a no kill animal shelter that provides Egypt’s homeless animals with a safe sanctuary to thrive and rehabilitate.



*“Having witnessed the amazing work ALEXBANK did in Diarna I was happy to take part in the monthly Forsa Bazaar at ALEXBANK’s HQ. The Forsa Bazaar initiative is great because it allows the employees to witness the great work the CSR does with the handicrafts sector and I look forward to future opportunities to collaborate”* **Nada Talaat, Founder and CEO of Nada Talaat Designs**

## KEEP THE BEAT!

“Keep the Beat” was the February theme for our Forsa Bazaar. ALEXBANK’s longtime partner the [Magdi Yacoub Heart Foundation](#) were present and we were able to support the organization in their efforts to provide cardiovascular assistance to children. In attendance, artisan mecca [Yadaweya](#) offered handcrafted products, [Drylicious](#) showcased their collection of healthy dried fruits and [Black Lotus](#) offers a wide variety of all-natural sustainable beauty products.



The February Forsa Bazaar announcement.



## FORSA'S CENTRAL BANK OF EGYPT DEBUT

When Forsa Bazaar was first introduced in the summer of 2018, ALEXBANK's initial goal of launching a monthly bazaar for its body of staff was still under trial and opinions were yet to be formed. In under two years, Forsa has become a staple at our Kasr El Nil Branch. For that reason, ALEXBANK was thrilled to introduce a special edition of the bazaar at the [Central Bank of Egypt](#).

In alignment with the Egyptian government's efforts to promote gender equality and in celebration of the CSR & Sustainable Development Office's new flagship initiative "Ghalya" which aims to empower and celebrate Egyptian women, a Women's Forsa Bazaar was organized at the Central Bank of Egypt. The event, which would mark Forsa's first external debut, took place on March 2nd and March 11<sup>th</sup> at the ALEXBANK Gomhoureya Building and the Central Bank of Egypt Print House.

*"Engaging employees is important in embedding the culture of the workplace and having the first external Forsa Bazaar at our premises was an excellent opportunity to support local craftswomen and help them celebrate Women's Month. The bazaar was a huge success and we look forward to future editions of it."* **Heba AbouRabia, Sub Governor - Human Resources, Central Bank of Egypt**

This edition of Forsa provided Central Bank of Egypt staff with an opportunity to explore the diverse handcrafted products being produced by 20 female-led businesses, such as El [Nafeza](#), [Ellie Home Décor](#) and [Rania Hilal Designs](#). Beyond providing a platform for emerging Egyptian businesses, the bazaar enabled visitors to support the female artisans contributing to Egypt's growing handicrafts community by generating significant sales proceeds.

Since its inception, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office has been working to empower Egypt's handicrafts community through its "Ebda3 men Masr" initiative. Under "Ghalya", ALEXBANK will further strengthen its commitment to economically empowering women, among which are artisans, to create value that can be shared.



Egyptian products on display.



A splash of colour in every corner of Forsa.



*"ALEXBANK has been a partner with the Central Bank of Egypt for a very long time and we have seen the amazing work they continue to do to support the disadvantaged. To celebrate Women's Day it only made sense to partner with ALEXBANK to bring Forsa Bazaar to our premises. And due to the success, we hosted another one at our print house to offer our print house employees the opportunity to shop locally made products"* **Lamise Negm, CSR Advisor to the Governor, Central Bank of Egypt**



## THE “EBDA3 MEN MASR” MICROLOAN INITIATIVE: EGYPT’S FIRST HANDICRAFTS MICROLOAN IN ACTION



“Ebda3 men Masr” is the CSR & Sustainable Development Office’s flagship initiative tailored to support Egyptian artisans across the country. It paves the way to expand entrepreneurial opportunities within different sectors of the handicrafts community, where artisans -women and youth in particular- gain access to capacity building, vocational training, employability skills, and fair-trade certification opportunities. To date, [“Ebda3 men Masr”](#) has worked with 5,000 craftsmen across all governorates, 90% of which are women, resulting in over EGP 23 million generated direct sales.

In 2019, ALEXBANK’s “Ebda3 men Masr” proposition expanded to further extend its financial inclusion activities by designing a holistic proposition to “Ebda3 men Masr” handcrafters in order to further empower them. In addition to the financial package, a bouquet of customized non-financial services was designed to enhance their abilities and to further grow their businesses successfully. This will allow us to eventu-



ally achieve the objective of shared value, business for ALEXBANK and social value for the handicrafts, while further fostering Egyptian heritage.

In 2019, 15 microloans were disbursed and in 2020, five microloans were disbursed, amounting to a total of 20 disbursed microloans, to date. Furthermore, along with our partners and as part of the non-financial services component, ALEXBANK has implemented and conducted one marketing and digital services training session and one legal advisory services training session, with plans to conduct and implement direct sales opportunities and business skills training sessions to EMM microloan clients in the near future.

If you would like to know more about the package and features of the “Ebda3 men Masr” Microloan as well as the non-financial services, please refer to the previous edition (Edition 2) of [Sustainability News & Topics Edition](#).

#### AN “EBDA3 MEN MASR” SUCCESS STORY



**Reem is the owner of a company that produces and designs women’s clothing. She says, “the Ebda3 men Masr microloan helped me buy my materials in season and in bulk, therefore making it a lot cheaper while also giving me a platform to further invest in and grow my business. The cash surplus also helped my presence in the market, giving me the opportunity to produce new products, therefore allowing my name and brand to be seen and remembered”.**

The financial inclusion logic is embedded in our general business growth strategy, as we have a clear perception of the existing gap in Egypt versus other more mature markets where our Group is present. As such, and to bridge the financial inclusion gap, ALEXBANK works on better serving the underbanked segments (micro, small and medium enterprises especially) and financially including the unbanked population. Our strategy is aimed at advancing the development of our operations in these segments, looking not beyond the short-term and to the medium-term profitability as well. As part of our sustainability and responsible business principles, we strictly monitor the costs versus the expected benefits to all our stakeholders. How to implement our strategy will continue to depend also on the evolution of the regulatory framework, in particular what concerns the possible implementation of the “online KYC”, and the rules of agent’s potential engagement. This has been considered in our 4-year Business Plan (2018-2021) built in accordance with our Group’s directions.



# PROMOTING INCLUSIVITY IN EGYPT'S FINANCIAL SECTOR

In line with the Central Bank of Egypt's vision and our CSR & Sustainable Development Office (2018-2021), financial inclusion is a key priority for ALEXBANK. As such, our accessibility project in partnership with [Helm Consulting](#) aims to make ALEXBANK branches more accessible to People with Disabilities (PwDs).

In 2018, ALEXBANK made five branches accessible, another 15 branches in 2019 and three branches in 2020. Therefore, to date, ALEXBANK has made 23 branches accessible, with plans to further increase and expand our accessible branches network throughout 2020 and in the future. Our approach is to enable PwDs to access our branches as do other clients as well as the Bank's staff members and to provide PwDs an equal opportunity to actively engage and benefit from banking products and services.

This year, Helm Consulting conducted two Disability Equality Training (DET) sessions to 30 ALEXBANK front-liner employees. This training is a dynamic, focused, and interactive group work approach designed to change attitudes towards the greater inclusion of PwDs throughout mainstream employment and services. It is also designed to introduce participants to the real issues and discrimination facing all People with Disabilities, with the aim of changing their overall behaviors, policies and practices.



Disability equality training conducted by ALEXBANK and Helm Consulting



# ALEXBANK X ENACTUS: A PARTNERSHIP FOR FINANCIAL INCLUSION RESEARCH AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS



Students embrace their creativity to promote financial inclusion.

Financial inclusion is at the center of developmental agendas across the world. In Egypt, establishing a connection between marginalized communities and financial institutions is equally placed at the forefront of national discussions. In alignment with the Central Bank of Egypt, the CSR & Sustainable Development Office has been working towards promoting financial inclusion across the country and among youth in particular through various means.

In 2020, ALEXBANK embarked on a partnership with [ENACTUS Egypt](#), a nonprofit organization working to empower university students to realize their capabilities. Through this partnership, ALEXBANK is able to further develop its commitment to financial inclusion by providing a network of 5,000-7,000 Egyptian youth in 58 universities with support. Moreover, the partnership will enable university students to develop innovative solutions to financially include marginalized communities and contribute to society on a much greater scale, with an expected indirect impact of 100,000 – 130,000 marginalized Egyptians.

The partnership began with an orientation for participants, as well as a financial inclusion awareness session arranged by ALEXBANK. The orientation was managed by ENACTUS and has built strong foundations amongst the students for their common goal of finding innovative solutions to financial inclusion. In July 2020, 35 universities out of the 58 will be chosen to showcase their solutions through an online platform (due to COVID-19) presenting top innovation projects designed by the university students from 35 universities across Egypt. Alongside public recognition, ALEXBANK will make donations towards the realization of these recognized solutions.

ALEXBANK's partnership with ENACTUS is one of many steps being undertaken to promote financial inclusion in Egypt. More than ever, we are proud to share a platform with Egypt's rising entrepreneurs, philanthropists and creative minds as we work towards a collective goal of shared value creation.



## WORLD WATER DAY: WATER EFFICIENCY FOR WATER SECURITY

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Water efficiency is crucial to ensuring Egyptians are able to prevent COVID-19 and hygiene related diseases.

[World Water Day](#) is a global environmental event that takes place annually on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. This [United Nations](#) led event aims to shed light on the role of changing climates in triggering water insecurity, an issue that will have dire consequences for populations in North Africa, particularly Egypt.

In alignment with our efforts to promote resource management and World Water Day's agenda to promote water security, ALEXBANK has taken direct measures to promote water efficiency across its branches by further developing its existing operations and reduce excess water consumption.

The CSR & Sustainable Development Office partnered with ALEXBANK's Real Estate Department to introduce water efficient tap nozzles with the purpose of reducing water waste associated with daily usage. This project is currently being piloted in our New Almaza and Benha branches with plans to roll out the taps across our entire branch network over the coming year. The new tap nozzles are estimated to increase water efficiency by 20%. Upon piloting the first phase of the water efficiency project with new tap nozzles, we will continue to explore and further enhance procedures to promote responsible water consumption.

On World Water Day, ALEXBANK redirected its community members to the [Misr El Kheir Foundation](#) Water Efficiency Project on LinkedIn. Misr El Kheir is working towards ensuring water is accessible to all Egyptians, highlighting its role in staving hygiene related diseases as well as promoting lifesaving habits during the era of COVID-19.

Water is a scarce resource that remains integral to community development. At ALEXBANK we remain committed to enhancing our operations to reflect the growing needs of the communities we operate in as well as growing a sustainable business model.

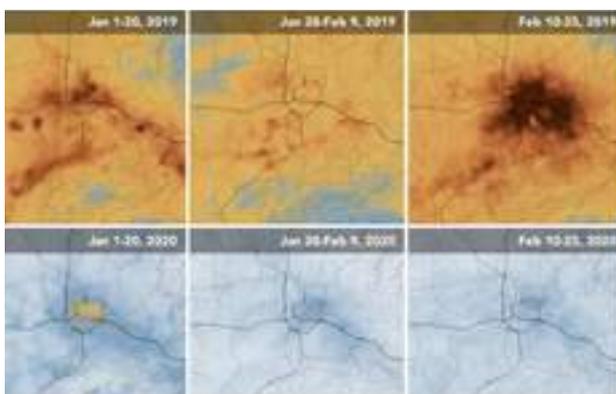


# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF EARTH DAY

On April 22<sup>nd</sup>, [Earth Day](#) celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> year as the world's largest environmental movement. Under the umbrella theme of "Climate Action", the Earth Day Network urged global communities to stay home and use their voices online to revive the conversation surrounding environmental activism.

In alignment with our parent company Intesa Sanpaolo Group as well as Egypt Vision 2030, ALEXBANK utilized its online platform LinkedIn to shed light on the historic decline in global carbon emissions as a result of humans reducing harmful activity over the course of one month of quarantining. While the main purpose behind the post was to highlight the role of environmental welfare in reducing the rise and spread of deadly diseases, it also aimed to empower and highlight the role of individuals to recognize their impact as part of a larger global movement.

While we may have celebrated Earth Day differently this year, we encourage all members of our community to embrace the power they yield in creating a healthy environment, and in turn, a healthier world. ALEXBANK will continue to seek enhancements to its own environmental policies to reduce its impact on the planet and in turn, limit its influence on environment related health hazards such as the coronavirus.



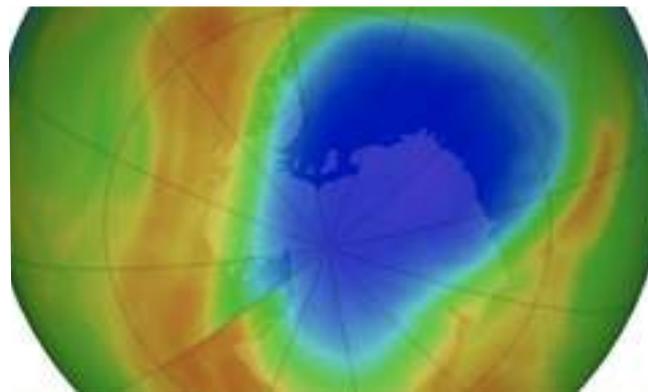
Reduced industrial activities have contributed to a 2% global decline in nitrogen dioxide emissions. (Stanford, 2020)



Rare migratory birds make their way back to the Red Sea Governorate in Egypt due to limited human disturbances associated with overcrowded beaches. (Ministry of Environment, 2020)



The "Sea Ice Anomaly" suggests that for the first time since 1981, sea ice levels are more concentrated than average during the spring which helps moderate global climate. (ECMWF, 2020)



A hole in the Ozone Layer is repairing itself at a rate that will prompt full atmospheric recovery by 2030, protecting us from harmful ultraviolet rays. (NASA, 2020)

In two short months, social distancing measures have prompted positive environmental change.



# ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL RISK TRAINING WITHIN ALEXBANK

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ALEXBANK’s Guidelines for the Implementation of Equator Principles in the Management of Environmental & Social Risks and/or Impacts When Granting Loans (“Guidelines”) were approved in 2019 to assess and manage E&S risks and impacts in respect to relevant financing operations.

The objective of the Guidelines is to ensure that ALEXBANK is adopting –where applicable– a set of principles and processes regarding the approval of and reporting on credit transactions falling under Equator Principles (“EPs”). The EPs are a risk management framework adopted by financial institutions for identifying, assessing and managing the environmental and social risks when financing large infrastructure and industrial projects. Such framework primarily aims at providing a minimum standard for the due diligence required as support for a responsible risk decision-making.

By the end of 2019, the Social Performance & Reporting Unit under the CSR & Sustainable Development Office had conducted two training sessions to introduce the “Guidelines” to credit analysts and relationship managers. The sessions also addressed industry specific Environmental & Social Risks. The attendees consisted of four Risk Analysts; seven Relationship Managers; and the Head of Loan Investigation Office and Head of Corporate and Medium Enterprises Documentation Unit, who would be responsible for cascading this training to their colleagues.

During the first half of 2020, further training sessions have been conducted to twenty-six Risk Analysts; three Loan Investigation Officers; and one Relationship Manager. These sessions are currently being conducted online due to COVID-19 and will continue until the end of the year. Furthermore, all analysts and relationship managers within the functions listed (Credit Administration, Credit Analysis & Underwriting, Enterprise Risk Management and Corporate Investment Banking) are expected to attend quarterly meetings for follow up and monitoring sessions.

The training material provides a detailed description of the “Guidelines”, the Equator Principles, as well as sector-specific environmental and social risks that are important within the ALEXBANK portfolio.

To know more about the Equator Principles, please visit <https://equator-principles.com/>



# RULES FOR DONATIONS IN ALEXBANK: AN ANCHORED APPROACH TOWARDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT



Community development represents a topic of high materiality to ALEXBANK in terms of business strategy and the communities it operates in. In this regard, ALEXBANK being a pioneer in the field of Corporate Social Responsibility in Egypt guided by the CSR & Sustainable Development Strategy, relies largely on donations to maintain its commitment to supporting Egypt's marginalized communities.

In alignment with parent company Intesa Sanpaolo Group's "Rules for Donations in the International Subsidiary Banks", the Rules were acknowledged by ALEXBANK's Board of Directors in December 2019. Without compromising the objective of the international Rules, the guidelines were subject to localization to generate an enhanced response within Egypt's national context. More importantly, its localization guarantees our regulatory framework is considered while following international standards and procedures. The "Rules" make sure we remain accountable and transparent, fair and charitable. The localized version was later approved by the Board of Directors in February 2020.

Introducing clear eligibility criteria for both entities and potential projects, in addition to stringent reporting and monitoring of community contributions, the Rules for donations will allow for an improved engagement with the community urgent needs and long-term community investment via the cooperation with nonprofit organizations. Moreover, it will reduce any potential corruption risk associated with the matter of donations.

The process for a steady donation workflow has been set in place in coordination with all concerned stakeholders, ensuring the transparent management and implementation of the Rules within ALEXBANK. With a secure procedure in place, ALEXBANK will continue lending its support to communities in need through an effective network.



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