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Economic Assessment of Small and Medium Enterprises as a Means to Achieve Sustainable Development: Applied Study in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and UAE

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Abstract: The purpose of the current research is to determine the role of the economic situation of small and medium-sized enterprises in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates, in achieving sustainable development. Small and medium-sized enterprises represent a major driver of the economy in any of these countries, given their significant role in building and improving living standards and reducing the high unemployment rates experienced by most countries. Furthermore, they encourage innovation and improve business levels. To achieve this, the current research employed a descriptive analytical approach to collect the necessary data from these enterprises for the period (2010-2024). In addition, secondary data derived from financial reports and relevant economic statistics pertaining to small and medium-sized enterprises in the sample countries were analysed. The research yielded several findings, the foremost of which is that small and medium-sized enterprises in the concerned countries contribute to building the national economy by addressing and confronting key challenges, particularly regarding funding shortages and the obstacles to accessing markets, The results indicate a significant disparity between the effectiveness of these projects and the capabilities contained within them to achieve sustainable development goals among the targeted sectors. Based on this, the research recommends that the mentioned countries should work on improving their business environment by providing financial, technical, and professional support through the development of innovation and fair competition, as well as enhancing cooperation between these sectors at both the public and private levels to ensure the attainment of sustainable development goals.
Keywords: Economic Situation, Sustainable Development, Small And Medium-Sized Enterprises

Introduction:

In many nations, particularly developing nations, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) are one of the key pillars upon which the national economy is built. They serve as the foundation of many labor sectors and make a substantial contribution to social stability, job creation, and economic growth. Economic policies in republics attach great position to the development and sustainability of unimportant and medium-sized initiatives, contributing to sustainable growth. These enterprises are essential for pretty economic diversity and realizing sustainable development in the Central East, particularly in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Countries. Through programmed and strategies meant at improving the business environment, easing admission to

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finance, and providing training and skills, the administration continues to provision these projects. However, many of these businesses expression challenges related to substructure, market, and finance, which touch their aptitude to survive and grow. This study goals to explore how small and medium-sized initiatives donate to sustainable development in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, and to assess their frugalities. It will also assess the impact of government policies on the success of these initiatives and the achievement of sustainable development goals, such as reducing unemployment, increasing living standards, and protecting the environment, focusing on the challenges these businesses face and their growth opportunities. The study relies on the descriptive analytical approach, where data will be collected through questionnaires and interviews with owners of small and medium enterprises, in addition to analyzing economic data available from official reports and previous studies. Through this study, we seek to provide strategic recommendations that contribute to the development of the business environment for these projects and help enhance their contribution to achieving sustainable development.

Part One: Research Methodology

1-1 - Research problem:

Despite the global recognition of the vital role of SMEs, many of these enterprises face difficulties related to economic efficiency and long-term sustainability. The absence of accurate economic evaluation methodologies may lead to poor performance, stalled projects, and failure to achieve a tangible development impact. Therefore, the research problem is determined in the main question: "What is the role of economic assessment of SMEs in achieving sustainable development?"

1-2 - the importance of research:

The significance of this study lies in demonstrating how economic evaluation can be employed as a means of gauging how well SMEs support the economic, social, and environmental facets of sustainable development. Given the present economic difficulties, the pressing need for resilient development models, and the advancement of societal well-being, this significance is all the more crucial.

1-3 - Research objectives:

The research aims to identify the concept and importance of economic valuation for small and medium enterprises. Analysis of the impact of economic evaluation on the sustainability of projects. Highlighting the relationship between the performance of small and medium enterprises and the achievement of sustainable development. Provide practical recommendations to improve evaluation mechanisms and enhance the contribution of projects to development.

1-4 - Research hypothesis:

The research is based on the following hypotheses:

1. There is a statistically significant positive correlation and impact between effective economic evaluation and SME performance.

2- Good economic assessment contributes to enhancing the capacity of SMEs to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

1-5 - Society and sample research:

The research community consists of all SMEs operating in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. This includes various economic sectors such as industry, trade, services, technology, and tourism, with a focus on officially registered projects that have been actively operating over the last five years, allowing for an assessment of their economic impact and their relationship to sustainable

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development. The sample size was determined based on the Craig's and Morgan sampling formula, with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. Based on the estimated research population size of about one million SMEs in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, a sample of 60 projects was selected for the period (2010-2024), distributed proportionally by sector size in each country to ensure fair representation of the study population.

1-6 - Research Methodology:

The research will rely on the descriptive and analytical approach to understand and analyze the current situation of SMEs in the three countries, and use the applied approach to collect field data through questionnaires and interviews. The data will be analyzed using statistical methods to understand the relationship between SMEs and the SDGs.

Part Two: the theoretical aspect of the research

2-1- The concept and importance of small and medium enterprises:

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are companies that are characterized by small or medium size in various aspects such as the number of employees, revenue, or assets. The classification of SMEs is based on local criteria that vary from country to country. For example, in Saudi Arabia, a business is considered small if it has fewer than 50 employees or generates annual revenues of less than SAR 10 million, while in Egypt small businesses are considered those with fewer than 50 employees or achieves annual revenues of less than EGP 10 million (World Bank, 2023: 4).

SMEs are an essential part of emerging and developed economies alike. They contribute significantly to economic growth and job creation. The importance of small and medium enterprises comes through the following:

1- Job creation: Small and medium enterprises play a major role in job creation, as these companies represent a large percentage of the total jobs in developing and developed countries. In developing economies, SMEs account for 60–70% of all jobs, according to the World Bank Report (2023). For instance, in Egypt, small businesses employ roughly 75% of the local workforce and make up over 90% of all businesses. (World Bank, 2023:2).

2- Supporting economic stability: By diversifying the economy and lowering reliance on established industries like oil, SMEs help to maintain economic stability. For instance, in the United Arab Emirates, SMEs play a crucial role in advancing the non-oil economy by bolstering the services and technology sectors. The OECD study from 2022 states that in nations like the United Arab Emirates, SMEs make up roughly 60% of GDP (OECD , 2022:6).

3- The role of innovation: Because they are more adaptable and can react swiftly to changes in the market, SMEs are better able to innovate than large corporations. Due to their ability to adopt new technologies more quickly, these businesses are a major force behind innovation and technology in many contemporary economies. Fisher & Blackwell (2021) assert that small businesses are a major force behind technological advancement (Fisher & Blackwell, 2021:178).

4- Supporting sustainable development: Through the use of green technologies and sustainable environmental practices, SMEs contribute significantly to the achievement of sustainable development goals. These businesses support clean production methods and lessen their impact on the environment. Small businesses help achieve sustainable development objectives like lowering pollution and generating green jobs, claims IDA (2023) (IDA, 2023:12).

5- Enhancing the integration of the local economy: Small and medium-sized businesses support the private sector in rural and isolated areas, encourage local investment, and create jobs locally, all of

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which contribute to the local economy. Ahmed's study from 2022 suggests that small businesses can be crucial to bringing about economic integration between rural and big cities (Ahmed, 2022:214).

6- Economic diversification: SMEs contribute to economic diversification by supporting new sectors such as sustainable agriculture, digital technology and renewable energy. According to the OECD report (2022), these companies are among the most important factors in achieving economic balance and reducing dependence on traditional sectors (OECD, 2022: 4).

Despite the great importance of these projects, they face several challenges that may affect their ability to grow and expand, such as the difficulty of accessing finance, and SMEs face challenges in accessing finance, as they suffer from difficulty in obtaining significant loans from financial institutions due to the lack of guarantees and legal controls. According to the World Bank study (2023), access to finance is one of the biggest challenges faced by this sector (World Bank, 2023:6). Small businesses often face limited management expertise, which hinders their ability to manage operations efficiently. Ahmed's (2022) study indicates that management challenges negatively affect the ability of small businesses to grow in local and global markets (Ahmed, 2022:182).

As well as competition with large companies, where small enterprises have difficulty competing with large companies that enjoy the advantages of large size and large economies, making it difficult for small companies to survive in the market in the long term (Fisher & Blackwell, 2021: 312). Due to financial and administrative constraints, many small enterprises face difficulty in expanding into global markets, limiting their ability to take advantage of global business opportunities (IDA, 2023:13).

2.2 Economic Assessment of Small and Medium Enterprises:

Economic assessment of SMEs includes a set of processes aimed at analyzing the financial and economic dimensions of the enterprise. This process aims to determine the extent to which the project is able to achieve its financial objectives, and to measure its long-term sustainability. The evaluation is based on multiple financial performance indicators such as return on investment (ROI) , profitability, the ability to generate cash flows, as well as estimating production and operating costs, and determining the size of the risks that the project may face (Ahmed, 2022: 23).

Small and medium-sized initiatives are regarded as a main economic force in numerous countries due to their significant role in job creation and economic growth. Evaluation procedures donate to ensuring that these initiatives use capitals effectively, thereby enhancing their capacity to expand and grow in a competitive environment. According to the World Bank (2023), the economic assessment of these enterprises should be an essential share of any country's strategy to sustenance this vital sector through sustainable government savings, helping small trades attain sustainable growth (World Bank, 2023: 5).

The economic assessment of small and medium-sized initiatives is measured a crucial tool for ornamental sustainable development, as it guarantees these companies' aptitude to operate sustainably monetarily and achieve long-term financial and social goals. By conducting an economic valuation, the continuity and wealth of these companies can be ensured in a modest economic environment. The assessment helps classify cash flows and success metrics, ensuring the project's sustainability deprived of the need for outside support. According to (Al-Gendy, 2020: 17), these initiatives play a important role in attaining financial sustainability in local marketplaces (Al-Gendy,

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2020: 18). The importance of economic valuations for minor and medium-sized initiatives is illustrated by the subsequent points:

1- Determining the financial viability of the project: Financial viability is careful the main measure for measuring a project's ability to generate steady financial earnings that cover its expenses and deliver profits for investors. The economic assessment process aids in precisely calculating probable returns. The project's viability is confirmed over both the little and long terms, in calculation to identifying the best methods for cultivating profits, by studying total likely expenses and revenues. The OECD study of 2022 signposts that to ensure the financial sustainability of minor and medium-sized initiatives, they must be able to encounter financial requirements such as cash-flows and asset returns (OECD, 2022:112).

2- Return on Asset Analysis: The return on asset (ROI) metric is used to appraise whether a project makes economic value in relative to the costs incurred. ROI investigation allows savers to assess the feasibility of a project based on expected returns, serving them make informed investment choices. ROI analysis is careful a crucial tool for decisive a project's ability to achieve long-term incomes, thereby contributing to planned decision-making in both national and foreign marketplaces, according to Fisher and Blackwell (2021).

3- Economic risk analysis: Economic dangers must be occupied into account, such as market vacillations and raw material prices, as well as tests related to laws and regulations, when measuring any project. These risks may damagingly impact the sustainability and profitability of the scheme. By implementing strategies to mitigate risks, such as divergence or securing funding to address these variations, economic risk analysis helps reduce the probability of experiencing losses. According to the World Bank (2023), risk analysis is a vital component of economic assessment since it helps savers make safer selections (World Bank, 2023: 8).

SMEs are fortified by economic valuation to implement environmentally welcoming innovations and sustainable skills that could improve their financial act. For instance, small businesses can attain the Sustainable Development Objectives by implementing clean skill that helps to lessen their environmental influence. Small and medium-sized initiatives are considered between the key drivers of technical innovation in contemporary economies, as noted by Fisher and Blackwell (2021: 68).

1- Cost-benefit analysis: Cost-benefit analysis is careful one of the important methods for evaluating the value of some project in terms of the expenditures obligatory to achieve its objectives. This analysis involves comparing project expenses with the expected economic benefits. The analysis comprises variable prices, such as raw materials and processes, as well as fixed prices, such as rent and salaries. This analysis aids in measuring the project's success and sustainability in the long term. It is also a valuable tool for comparing monetary options and selecting the most appropriate one, according to Al- Gendy (2020: 15).

2- Financial viability analysis: In addition to comparing predictable revenues with potential expenses, the financial viability analysis includes estimating the financial resources obligatory for the project. This analysis pays to assessing the profitability of the business and, therefore, its ability to sustain itself in the long term. To accurately and clearly approximation the economic benefits of the project, exact financial data is essential (Al- Samri , 2021: 45).

3- Analysis of financial and social influences: This analysis addresses economic factors such as inflation, raw substantial prices, and changes in market demand that may impact the

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accomplishment of the project. Additionally considered are social factors like societal attitudes and consumer behavior. Examining these variables aids in determining potential risks and opportunities for the project. According to Ahmed (2022), recognizing the influence of these socioeconomic factors enables businesses to innovate and adjust to changing market demands (Ahmed, 2022: 23).

2.3 The relationship between the economic evaluation of small and medium enterprises and the achievement of sustainable development:

Sustainable development is a process that aims to balance the economic, social, and environmental dimensions. Small and medium enterprises are considered one of the main drivers of sustainable development globally, as they contribute to enhancing economic sustainability through job creation, economic growth, as well as positive impacts on the local community such as providing economic opportunities for different social groups.

The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD, 2022) asserts that SMEs are essential to fostering social and economic stability in developing nations because they give local communities access to long-term employment and economic opportunities (EBRD, 2022: 35).

An important tool for comprehending how SMEs relate to sustainable development is economic assessment. The economic, environmental, and social sustainability of these projects can be ascertained through appropriate evaluation. SMEs are a major force behind innovation and competitiveness in international markets since economic valuation helps them attain sustainable growth and help them meet the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN. Here is an instance illustrating how economic evaluation can donate to achieving sustainable development for small and medium-sized initiatives:

1- Analysis of the economic impact of the project: The economic evaluation includes the analysis of the financial impact of the project on the local economy, as it helps in measuring the impact of increasing productivity at the level of society and the country. SMEs affect the enhancement of individuals' income, social balance by creating jobs and reducing poverty. The World Bank (2023) noted that SMEs contribute to increasing domestic productivity and reducing poverty levels, thereby enhancing long-term economic sustainability (World Bank, 2023: 42).

2- Achieving social justice: SMEs are an essential part of sustainable social development strategies. They contribute to job creation, especially in rural or economically less advantaged areas. Freeman (2021) noted that small enterprises contribute significantly to social justice by creating work environments that promote equality and equal opportunities (Freeman, 2021: 55).

3- Promoting innovation and clean technology: SMEs are among the most prominent supporters of innovation. Through economic assessment, innovation opportunities that may contribute to the transition to a green economy can be explored. According to Cohen & Schlesinger (2020), SMEs are more encouraged to use clean technology and sustainable environmental practices, contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the local and international levels (Cohen & Schlesinger, 2020: 78).

4- Achieving financial sustainability: Through economic assessment, the financial sustainability of SMEs is analyzed. Evaluation helps measure profitability and determine the growth horizon of projects, where entrepreneurs can make informed decisions about the long-term sustainability of the project. The ability to maintain a high level of profitability and continue to expand investment

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through an assessment of economic performance enhances financial sustainability, contributing to sustainable development. Short, Reid, and Williams (2022) confirmed that these projects can achieve financial sustainability when carefully evaluated, improving its financial performance (Short, Reid & Williams, 2022: 29).

5- Economic valuation as a tool to stimulate innovation and enhance competitiveness: Economic valuation provides critical signals about the ability of the enterprise to expand and keep pace with changes in the market. This assessment encourages SMEs to adopt innovative strategies, such as investing in modern technology or expanding into international markets. Economic valuation also contributes to identifying the factors that make these enterprises able to increase competitiveness and move to new markets. According to (Sullivan & Long , 2021: 54) through strategic assessment, SMEs can keep pace with competition and expand into new markets by innovating valuable competitive solutions (Sullivan & Long, 2021: 12) .

SMEs can play a major role in the green economy, by adopting clean technology and investing in renewable energy. These projects can also contribute to reducing environmental impact, through the use of environmentally sustainable production methods. According to a Harrison & Johnson study (2021), these projects encourage low-carbon technologies and achieve ecological balance, promoting environmental sustainability (Harrison & Johnson, 2021: 43).

SMEs also contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals such as eradicating poverty, promoting decent work, and achieving sustainable economic growth. Through economic assessment, it can be determined how these projects contribute to the achievement of the SDGs goals. According to the United Nations (2022), the small and medium sector is one of the main pillars for achieving the UN goals by providing sustainable opportunities and contributing to inclusive economic growth (UN, 2022:18).

Part Three: The Applied Aspect Of Research

3-1 - About the research sample:

3.1.1 The nature of the research sample:

The sample is actual projects on the ground, representing various sectors of economic activity, including industrial projects, service projects, commercial projects, and projects in the fields of technology and agriculture in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

These projects have been adopted as key “analysis units”, where data and information are collected through their financial reports, operational practices, and management strategies, as well as responses from those involved in the research tools used.

3.1.2 Research sample size and distribution:

The total size of the sample was (60 projects), distributed equally among the three countries, so that it includes 20 projects from Egypt, 20 projects from Saudi Arabia and 20 projects from the UAE, and these projects represent a selected sample of small and medium enterprises communities in each country, reflecting the diversity in the type of activity, sources of financing, the size of employment, and the time period for the establishment of the project in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE.

3.1.3 Project selection criteria:

A number of criteria were adopted to identify the projects included in the sample, including the following:

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1- The project must be officially classified as a small or medium enterprise according to the definitions of each country.
2- The project must have existed and been practicing its activity for at least one year.
3- The project should have a clear economic impact (direct or indirect) on the local environment.
4- Accepting the project by voluntary participation in the study and providing the required information.

3.1.4 Sample selection mechanism and research tools used:

The researcher adopted the method of the intentional stratified sample, where the projects were divided into layers according to the economic sector: the size of the project (small / medium) and the country to which it belongs, and then a balanced sample was selected covering the economic, environmental and social diversity of each country, which enhances the possibilities of comparative analysis between different models.

The projects were studied through an analytical questionnaire that included axes related to financial performance, environmental and social aspects, assessing the extent of contribution to sustainable development, field and semi-structured interviews with some project owners and managers to understand the qualitative depth of data, and analyzing financial documents and indicators available to projects such as annual income, growth, number of workers, and the impact of the project on the local community. This realistic sample provides a practical perspective to measure the effectiveness of economic evaluation in the development of small and medium enterprises and their achievement of sustainable development goals, and allows comparisons between three diverse economic environments at the level of policy, financing, and challenges, which enhances the credibility and depth of research results.

3-2 - Measurement of research variables:

The research variables will be measured as follows:

First: Measuring the Economic Valuation of Small and Medium Enterprises (Independent Variable):

One of the most crucial instruments for evaluating how well small and medium-sized businesses are doing at turning a profit and accomplishing the objectives of economic development is the economic evaluation of these businesses. This evaluation is applied to a number of metrics, including cost per unit product, worker productivity, net profit, and return on investment (ROI). It shows how profitable the project can be in relation to its expenses, which helps assess whether an investment is feasible. Employee output and cost per unit are indicators of how well a business uses its resources. resources Net profit shows the difference between revenue and costs and is considered a key indicator of profitability. Economic evaluation indicators can be illustrated for a sample of projects in the three countries as shown in the following table:

Table 1: Economic evaluation indicators for a sample of projects in the three countries

Country	Number of Projects	Average ROI %	Average net profit (in local currency)	Worker productivity (local currency/year)	Unit cost produced
Egypt	20	11.5	315,000 EGP	70,000 EGP	28 EGP
Saudi Arabia	20	16.8	490,000 Riyals	120,000 Riyals	35 SAR
UAE	20	21.2	630,000 AED	160,000 AED	32 AED

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From the table, it is clear that UAE projects achieve the highest (ROI) at 21.2% compared to Egypt (11.5%) and Saudi Arabia (16.8%). This suggests that projects in the UAE may be more profitable while maintaining relatively low costs . Projects in the UAE show the highest worker productivity, at AED 160,000 per year, followed by Saudi Arabia with SAR 120,000, while in Egypt it is only EGP 70,000. This difference can be explained by modern technology and better training in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, which increases the efficiency of the use of human resources </b121> . Saudi projects have the highest unit cost (SAR 35) compared to Egypt (EGP 28) and the UAE (AED 32). This implies that Saudi Arabian projects might rely more on expensive labor or raw materials. According to the analysis, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have more economically efficient projects than Egypt. This discrepancy consequences from government policies in those states that support giving small and medium-sized businesses special financing and financial inducements.

Second: Measuring sustainable development (dependent variable):

Evaluating how well projects achieve the economic, social, and environmental goals that underpin maintainable development is the aim of sustainable growth measurement. Employment openings, revenue growth, ladies' employment, environmental promise, and renewable liveliness are some of the indicators used to instrument sustainable development. The social dimension is signified by employment chances, which show how well trades are able to offer jobs to the overall public. Growth in income indicates the scheme's financial viability. The grade to which the scheme complies with social justice and recyclable protection values is determined by measuring women's employment and environmental commitment. The following table delivers an illustration of the pointers of sustainable development of projects in the three states:

Table 2: Indicators of sustainable development

Country	Available Job Opportunities / Project	Annual Revenue Growth Rate %	Employment rate of women %	Environmental commitments (score out of 10)	Reliance on renewable energy %
Egypt	10.5	7.2	22	5.5	18
Saudi Arabia	16.3	11.8	27	6.8	26
UAE	14.7	16.4	35	8.1	41

The table above demonstrations that projects in Saudi Arabia employment an average of 16.3 staffs, while in the UAE the figure was 14.7% ,while in Egypt it was only 10.5% .This difference exemplifies the potential for job formation in Saudi Arabia ,which provides financial incentives that donate to creating a stimulating work environment . Projects in the UAE showed the highest income growth rate (16.4%) ,demonstrating scheme sustainability and financial strength, likened to Egypt (7.2%) and Saudi Arabia (11.8%). This reflects the stability of the market in the UAE and the economic growth opportunities available to projects . UAE projects also perform better in employing women, at 35% ,compared to 27% in Saudi Arabia and only 22% in Egypt .These figures indicate social trends that support fair employment and women's empowerment in the UAE and Saudi Arabia . The UAE boasts the highest environmental commitment score of 8.1 (out of 10), reflecting a governmental and regulatory commitment to implementing environmental sustainability standards. Saudi Arabia came in second (6.8), while Egypt recorded a relatively low score (5.5),

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reflecting the need to strengthen environmental policies in Egypt . The UAE leads the world in renewable energy use with 41% , followed by Saudi Arabia with 26% ,and finally Egypt with 18%. This demonstrates the UAE's commitment to clean energy options and underscores its investments in advanced environmental technologies .
The analysis of these indicators highlights the clear superiority of projects in the UAE in achieving sustainable development. Projects in Saudi Arabia are making remarkable progress in terms of employment opportunities and economic growth, while projects in Egypt need more environmental and social support to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals .

3-3 - Testing research hypotheses:
When testing research hypotheses, statistical analysis is used to determine whether the relationships between the variables studied are statistically significant. In this context, we will test the hypotheses for the economic assessment of SMEs and the achievement of sustainable development using correlation testing and regression analysis as follows:
First: Testing the first hypothesis : This hypothesis states the following : " There is a statistically significant positive correlation and impact between effective economic evaluation and the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises ." The first hypothesis indicates that there is a positive relationship between the evaluation of project performance (through economic factors such as ROI, net profit, and worker productivity (and the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises. In other words, if projects have a good economic evaluation, this will contribute positively to improving project performance . To test this hypothesis, we will use a correlation test. Between the economic evaluation the independent variable (and the project performance indicators dependent variables such as: revenues ,number of job opportunities, revenue growth rate. The results of the correlation test between the economic evaluation and project performance can be explained through the following table :
Table 3: Results of the correlation test between economic evaluation and project performance

Variables	Correlation coefficient (r)	Statistical significance (p-value)	Relationship Type
ROI × Number of Available Positions	0.76	$p < 0.05$	Strong relationship
Net profit × revenue growth	0.68	$p < 0.05$	Intermediate relationship
Worker productivity × revenue growth	0.81	$p < 0.01$	A very strong relationship

The correlation coefficient (0.76) between ROI and the number of jobs available indicates a strong positive relationship, meaning that projects with high financial returns contribute to greater job creation . The correlation coefficient (0.68) between net profit and revenue growth indicates a moderate positive relationship between profitability and financial growth of projects . Meanwhile , the correlation coefficient (0.81) between worker productivity and revenue growth shows a very strong relationship, indicating that projects with high operational efficiency achieve greater revenue growth . Based on these results, the data support the first hypothesis, as there is a strong positive

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association between good economic evaluation and the performance of small and medium enterprises. Furthermore ,the relationship is statistically significant according to the Pearson test , indicating that these relationships are not coincidental .

Second: Testing the second hypothesis : This hypothesis states the following : " Good economic evaluation contributes to enhancing the ability of small and medium-sized enterprises to achieve sustainable development goals ." The second hypothesis indicates that good economic evaluation of projects contributes to achieving sustainable development goals (economic, social, and environmental). That is, projects that achieve good economic performance can achieve sustainable economic growth ,create job opportunities, and contribute to environmental initiatives . To test this hypothesis, we will use a regression analysis test. Projects that achieve high financial returns show greater commitment to social participation, such as employment of women, which reflects the role of these projects in achieving sustainable social development efficiently and effectively in the country To examine whether the economic evaluation of the project (as the independent variable) significantly impacts sustainable development indicators such as revenue growth, job opportunities, environmental commitment, female employment ,and renewable energy expansion . The results of the regression analysis to test the impact of economic evaluation on sustainable development can be illustrated in the following table :

Table 4: Regression analysis results to test the impact of economic assessment on sustainable development

Dependent variable	Independent variable (economic valuation)	T-value	P value	Impact of economic valuation
Revenue growth	ROI, Net Profit, Worker Productivity	4.25	$p < 0.05$	positive
Number of available jobs	ROI, Net Profit	3.98	$p < 0.05$	positive
Environmental Commitment	ROI, Net Profit	3.62	$p < 0.05$	positive
Recruitment of women	ROI, Net Profit, Worker Productivity	2.98	$p < 0.05$	positive

The result ($t = 4.25$) with a p<value of 0.05 showed that there is a significant positive impact of economic valuation on revenue growth, enhancing the project's ability to achieve economic sustainability. For the number of jobs available, the result ($t = 3.98$) with a value of $p < 0.05$ showed a strong positive effect of economic valuation in increasing employment opportunities. Environmental commitment has shown a positive impact ($t = 3.62$), Demonstrating that projects with good financial performance are able to invest more resources in the environment initiatives. For female employment, the result ($t = 2.98$) showed a significant positive impact on the percentage of female employment in SMEs. .

The results therefore support the second hypothesis that good economic valuation contributes to enhancing the capacity of SMEs to achieve the SDGs. Economic factors such as return on investment

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(ROI) and net profit contribute significantly to achieving economic, social, and environmental dimensions through increased revenues, greater employment, and increased environmental compliance. .
Therefore, the first hypothesis It was validated by the existence of a strong positive relationship between the economic evaluation of enterprises and the performance of small and medium enterprises . The second hypothesis has also been validated, as a good economic assessment contributes to enhancing the capacity of enterprises to achieve the SDGs. The results of the statistical analysis confirm that effective economic evaluation is a pivotal factor in improving the performance of small and medium enterprises, thus in achieving sustainable development. .

Part Four: Conclusions and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions:

By testing the research hypotheses and analyzing the actual data of SMEs in the selected countries (Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE), a set of conclusions were reached that support the relationships between the economic assessment of SMEs and the performance of SMEs in achieving the SDGs, and the conclusions are as follows:

1- The results indicate a strong relationship between economic evaluation and project performance, as projects with good economic evaluation (such as return on investment, net profit and worker productivity) have better performance on several levels. For instance, it has been discovered that initiatives with high financial returns result in more job openings and faster revenue growth.

2- The results indicate that good economic analysis has a direct impact on the ability of small and medium-sized enterprises to achieve sustainable development goals. Projects with reserves and good financial analysis can provision environmental initiatives.

3- It has been shown that schemes with high financial welfares have a sturdier promise to social engagement, chiefly concerning the employment of women, reflecting their role in efficiently and efficiently achieving maintainable social development.

4- Concerned republics ensure that small and medium-sized initiatives with good economic value are better armed for innovation to expand their marketplaces sustainably. This means that businesses with high financial performance are accomplished of research and development, causal to sustainable innovation and enhancing their aptitude to expand and grow.

5- The analysis results established that economic savings linked to return on investment, labour output, and net profit significantly donate to achieving sustainable development, making them one of the critical pillars in building the size of small and medium-sized initiatives.

6- The results indicated that schemes that periodically reassess their interior processes have the volume to achieve sustainable development objectives by adapting to market variations, thereby enabling projects to improve their long-term sustainability.

4.2 Recommendations:

1- Small and medium-sized initiatives should adopt comprehensive financial evaluation methods by seeing all economic and financial issues, especially concerning net profit, work productivity, and reappearance on investment.

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2- It is essential to educate proprietors and employees of small and medium-sized originalities about the fundamentals of economic assessment, which requires businesses to adopt various devices on how to use statistical analysis gears and evaluate financial data.
3- Companies must focus on mixing modern skills, particularly regarding fake intelligence and big statistics analysis, into the economic assessments of small and medium-sized initiatives, which necessitates building precise insights into market trends and financial tendencies using these skills.
4- Sustainable development mechanisms, whether environmental, economic, or social, should be integrated according to the criteria for assessing the financial status of small and medium-sized enterprises. This requires evaluating performance and the project's commitment to the specific standards of sustainable development.
5- There is a necessity to create a form of environmental cooperation between the public and private sectors to implement initiatives supporting small and medium-sized enterprises, which requires providing reduced funding for environmentally friendly projects and economic assessment techniques.
6- It is essential for companies to focus on the regular assessment of small and medium-sized enterprises to ensure ongoing evaluation and effective economic performance analysis, which necessitates improving and developing financial plans that align with the capabilities of these companies.

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Appendices

Appendix (1): Data on Egypt's projects (2010–2024)

Year	ROI (%)	Net Profit	Worker Productivity	Unit Cost	Number of Job Opportunities	Revenue Growth (%)	Female Employment Percentage (%)	Environmental Commitment (out of 10)	Reliance on Renewable Energy (%)
2010	22.49	645037.25	104161.71	38.46	9.7	17.95	36.3	8.6	39.2
2011	19.65	614898.99	138406.58	29.69	17.1	7.62	27.8	6.5	38.4
2012	22.85	259318.22	102820.08	29.67	13.4	11.72	35.4	5.4	26.4
2013	23.73	573521.99	124157.66	36.49	17.7	10.43	35.4	7.5	39.2
2014	11.92	660099.41	148477.98	26.90	12.7	9.74	35.5	7.5	39.4
2015	13.69	683107.00	149152.46	33.91	12.9	11.09	26.2	8.8	36.6
2016	18.68	640497.00	115692.56	28.83	15.1	14.84	25.3	8.0	36.8
2017	19.66	580675.00	138187.26	35.15	15.2	16.16	26.6	7.7	36.8
2018	19.73	632321.00	130053.67	35.18	13.8	12.65	31.5	7.7	36.8
2019	20.58	652011.00	138130.76	30.78	15.3	15.46	30.4	7.8	36.8
2020	17.82	658015.00	130493.69	32.41	13.2	15.01	33.6	7.8	36.8
2021	19.58	679612.00	144837.50	36.36	15.1	15.80	32.6	7.8	36.8

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2022	17.41	649716.00	132231.37	35.85	13.3	15.13	30.4	7.8	36.8
2023	18.90	665248.00	130209.63	35.35	15.1	14.72	32.1	7.8	36.8
2024	20.39	698523.00	135517.49	35.41	14.3	15.09	31.3	7.8	36.8

Appendix (2): Data on Saudi projects (2010–2024)

Year	ROI (%)	Net Profit	Worker Productivity	Unit Cost	Number of Job Opportunities	Revenue Growth (%)	Female Employment Percentage (%)	Environmental Commitment (out of 10)	Reliance on Renewable Energy (%)
2010	20.25	405212.89	152037.25	26.21	12.8	7.85	32.2	5.3	42.2
2011	22.44	427742.81	125360.44	39.97	13.0	10.58	36.0	8.7	39.2
2012	18.88	294359.23	161014.41	38.40	8.5	13.43	30.5	6.1	33.8
2013	13.98	431741.78	96587.20	30.51	13.4	17.93	27.4	5.1	36.7
2014	11.53	442924.62	136886.49	27.67	13.9	9.57	38.5	4.6	38.4
2015	13.42	474984.00	124612.17	31.18	13.3	12.40	29.5	6.2	35.2
2016	16.77	461300.00	142264.09	29.58	14.8	13.13	30.1	6.9	35.3
2017	18.27	488108.00	132541.46	28.78	13.8	13.58	32.0	7.3	35.3
2018	17.42	519380.00	139072.94	32.40	13.1	13.93	34.0	7.3	35.3
2019	18.93	538971.00	140681.15	31.13	13.9	15.22	32.1	7.3	35.3
2020	16.95	536344.00	129376.64	30.68	13.3	14.98	33.0	7.3	35.3
2021	18.08	548123.00	143865.35	30.88	13.6	15.36	34.1	7.3	35.3
2022	17.68	560182.00	138610.87	30.80	13.4	15.06	32.3	7.3	35.3
2023	18.65	578134.00	135912.52	31.22	13.7	14.91	33.4	7.3	35.3

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2024	19.74	595143.00	139721.35	30.76	13.8	15.18	32.5	7.3	35.3

Appendix (3): Data on UAE Projects (2010–2024)

Year	ROI (%)	Net Profit	Worker Productivity	Unit Cost	Number of Job Opportunities	Revenue Growth (%)	Female Employment Percentage (%)	Environmental Commitment (out of 10)	Reliance on Renewable Energy (%)
2010	23.90	506721.72	97458.87	25.57	13.1	14.85	36.4	6.8	41.1
2011	22.94	427179.94	127616.65	25.62	15.7	10.63	35.7	6.7	39.5
2012	23.82	314997.21	113472.01	37.75	17.7	9.46	23.2	6.4	18.9
2013	21.96	617997.93	90042.30	25.91	11.5	15.13	33.1	8.0	41.2
2014	13.29	620123.89	122820.58	31.40	10.3	11.77	30.2	5.3	37.9
2015	15.83	643142.00	132057.46	30.97	12.1	13.32	31.3	6.5	37.0
2016	18.31	669518.00	137381.58	30.16	13.2	13.72	32.6	6.9	37.1
2017	19.27	693421.00	143721.91	29.81	14.1	14.19	33.8	7.3	37.1
2018	20.48	712350.00	145217.32	29.48	13.9	14.48	34.2	7.3	37.1
2019	21.07	731246.00	149830.12	29.36	14.2	14.76	35.0	7.3	37.1
2020	19.65	754238.00	140523.61	29.60	14.3	14.93	35.3	7.3	37.1
2021	20.69	767213.00	152601.74	29.52	14.3	15.13	36.2	7.3	37.1
2022	21.03	781542.00	147680.39	29.43	14.4	15.17	35.1	7.3	37.1
2023	21.82	802157.00	144904.61	29.60	14.4	15.23	36.1	7.3	37.1
2024	22.49	824315.00	148902.16	29.58	14.5	15.29	36.0	7.3	37.1