

# Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III

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## List of Abbreviations

BILMER	Bilgi Merkezleri (Information Centers)
BMZ	Bundesministerium für wirtschaftliche Zusammenarbeit und Entwicklung (Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development)
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
ESOB	Esnaf ve Sanaatkarlar Odaları Birliği (The Union of Chambers Tradesmen and Craftsmen)
DG ILF	Directorate General for International Labour Force
ILO	International Labour Organization
ILS	International Labour Standards
IOM	International Organization for Migration
İŞKUR	Turkish Employment Agency
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
KIGEP	Kayıtlı istihdama Geçiş Programı (Transition to Formality Initiative )
ME	Micro Enterprises
MoLSS	Ministry of Labour and Social Security
MSME	Micro Small and Medium Enterprises
PWD	Person with Disabilities
RBM	Result-based Monitoring
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
SSI	Social Security Institute
SuTP	Syrians under Temporary Protection
HC	Host Community
TESK	The Confederation of Tradesmen and Craftsmen
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNSDCF	United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework
WBL	Work Based Learning Programme

## Executive Summary

### Background and Context

Türkiye, an upper-middle-income country ranked 51st in the Human Development Index for 2025, has made notable progress in poverty reduction and economic growth over the past two decades. However, challenges during the last decade, including prolonged economic slowdown, the COVID-19 pandemic, the Syrian refugee influx, and the devastating twin earthquakes of February 2023, have strained its development trajectory. While unemployment has declined overall, persistent disparities remain, particularly in access to decent work for women, youth, and persons with disabilities. Informal employment continues to account for nearly 30% of the labour market, undermining social protection and job quality, especially for women, who face a 15% gender pay gap and low representation in leadership roles.

Syrian refugee women and disabled individuals face even greater barriers to labour market participation. Cultural norms, caregiving responsibilities, language barriers, and limited vocational training contribute to an employment rate of just 6.8% among Syrian refugee women. Many are confined to informal, low-wage roles with little security or mobility. Refugees with disabilities often lack access to inclusive hiring practices and workplace accommodations, resulting in near-total exclusion from formal employment. These intersecting vulnerabilities highlight the urgent need for targeted interventions to ensure equitable labour market integration and prevent further marginalization of the most at-risk groups.

### Project Overview

Initiated in 2018, the goal of the “Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and Turkish Citizens (TC)” programme has been to increase the number of these beneficiaries working in decent conditions in Türkiye, with special attention to the most vulnerable populations. The International Labour Organization (ILO), with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany through the KfW Development Bank (KfW) is implementing the third phase (Dec 2022 - Dec 2025) of project. Phase III of the project builds on previous efforts to promote decent work and formal employment opportunities for Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and host communities in Türkiye. It addresses persistent challenges including limited access to decent jobs for women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PwDs); inadequate awareness of formalization processes among micro-enterprises (MEs); and low representation of Syrian refugee women in formal employment initiatives. The project also seeks to overcome policy gaps that hinder inclusive labour market integration and social protection. To respond to these challenges, Phase III introduces targeted interventions through three interconnected components, where these components reinforce the project’s overarching objective: to promote decent work through skills investment, improved service delivery, and transition to formality.

- **Component 1: Work-Based Learning (WBL)**: focuses on work based learning programme (WBL), combining on-the-job and off-the-job training to support long-term formal employment. scaled to reach 1,000 beneficiaries, with inclusive quotas for women and PwDs.

- **Component 2: BILMERS:** delivered through BILMERS, provides micro-enterprises and workers with accessible information and support on formalization including work permit procedures, incentives, and penalties for non-compliance.
- **Component 3: Transition to Formality Programme (KIGEP)**– aiming to formalize 7,500 workers, equally split between SuTP and Turkish citizens, with a minimum of 30% women.

Gender-sensitive selection criteria, employer incentives, and field consultant support are integrated to ensure inclusive outreach and implementation. Through these three components, Phase III reinforces the project's commitment to sustainable employment, gender equality, and social protection, while leveraging ILO's comparative advantages and strategic partnerships to maximize impact.

This midterm evaluation serves both accountability and learning purposes. It assesses progress to date, identifies what is working and what is not, and provides actionable recommendations for future implementation. Primary stakeholders include ILO Türkiye Office: Project team, technical and administrative staff. Donor: KfW, National Partners: MoLSS, SSI, PMM, and workers' and employers' organizations, Local Stakeholders: Municipalities, Organized industrial zones, and Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen, and Direct Beneficiaries: SuTP and host community individuals participating in project activities.

### **Evaluation Data and Methodology**

This evaluation adopts a predominantly qualitative approach, and data collection is conducted remotely which enhanced geographic and organizational representation. A predominantly qualitative and remote approach enabled efficient engagement across all six provinces while saving time and resources. Additionally, two recent evaluations (BILMERS and KIGEP) and a widely disseminated survey had already engaged stakeholders, so further intensive fieldwork risked fatigue. The evaluation conducted desk Review to make an analysis of ILO documentation, and national/international reports on decent work and labour market participation, secondary Data Analysis while using existing quantitative data from project documents and post-activity surveys to support qualitative findings. 30 key informant Interviews were conducted with ILO project staff, national and local implementing partners, and donor. Remote Data Collection enabled broader reach while the evaluation covered 6 provinces, including Ankara, Adana, Bursa, Gaziantep, Istanbul, and Konya.

### **Main Findings**

The main findings of the final evaluation are clustered under six main themes: (i) Relevance and Strategic Fit, (ii) Validity of Intervention Design, (iii) Effectiveness, (iv) Efficiency, (v) Sustainability and Impact Potential, (vi) Gender equality and non-discrimination. The main findings and descriptions of these findings of the report are as follows:

#### ***Relevance and Strategic Fit of the Project***

Phase III of the project remains highly relevant to Türkiye's national development priorities and international commitments. It aligns closely with the 11th and 12th National Development Plans, both of which emphasize inclusive growth, formal employment, and refugee integration. The project's focus on women and persons with disabilities (PwDs) is well-matched with national targets, including the 5% employment quota for PwDs. Its multi-component design, combining skills development, Micro, Small, and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSME) support, and employer incentives, addresses persistent labour market challenges such as informality and low female labour force participation. The project also benefits from a strong foundation of stakeholder engagement, drawing on lessons from earlier phases (Phase I and Phase II) and incorporating feedback from government institutions, municipalities, CSOs, and private sector actors.

While the project's core objectives remain relevant, recent shifts in the political and economic landscape, particularly the regime change in Syria in December 2024 policy emphasis on voluntary refugee returns, may influence future perceptions of its role. Although these developments present new considerations, they do not diminish the project's current value in supporting vulnerable populations and promoting decent work. Continued adaptability according to the shifting policies towards migration and also refugee population, will be important to maintain alignment with evolving national priorities.

### *Validity of Project Design*

The project's design is grounded in a clear understanding of Türkiye's labour market challenges, particularly the high rates of informal employment among Syrian refugees, women, youth, and persons with PwDs. It adopts a multi-pronged strategy that combines skills development, employer incentives, and support for micro and small enterprises to promote formal employment. Each component is tailored to address specific barriers: the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme targets vulnerable individuals with inclusive quotas; BILMER centers provide critical information and administrative support to MSMEs; and financial incentives encourage employers to formalize workers. The design also reflects a thoughtful and inclusive problem analysis, recognizing the distinct needs of refugee women and PwDs, and incorporating feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including government institutions, municipalities, CSOs, and private sector actors.

While the intervention logic is strong and many targets are on track, there are areas where the design could be further strengthened. The current indicator set relies heavily on quantitative metrics, which limits the ability to capture qualitative outcomes such as empowerment, workplace inclusion, and shifts in employer attitudes. Additionally, the Theory of Change does not explicitly address discrimination as a risk factor, despite its relevance to the project's goals. Integrating social risks and qualitative indicators into future iterations would enhance the framework's ability to anticipate challenges and measure deeper impacts. Despite these gaps, the project remains realistic and responsive, adapting its strategies to the evolving socio-political context while maintaining a long-term vision for inclusive labour market reform.

### *Effectiveness*

Phase III of the project has demonstrated strong effectiveness, with most quantitative targets nearly achieved and implementation benefiting from lessons learned in earlier phases. The inclusive partnership model, strategic outreach, and adaptive problem-solving have strengthened institutional capacity and improved employment outcomes. Components such as Work-Based Learning (WBL) have exceeded placement and having good retention rates, while fostering inclusive programming for women and persons with disabilities. BILMERs have exceeded many of its targets and contributed to institutional strengthening, early staffing challenges and the absence of a targeted strategy for reaching women-owned businesses highlight areas for improvement. KIGEP component has proven effective in addressing formalization needs through its trusted partnership with SSI, simple design, and strong field relevance. Its appeal to employers and coordination with other UN agencies have supported smooth implementation. Both recent KIGEP and WBL Impact Assessments have also provided relevant supporting evidence and complemented the current evaluation. However, there is a potential to make the KIGEP intervention more nuanced by adding additional activities to respond to the concerns around workplace conditions, limited SME capacities, and gaps in labour rights protections highlight areas for improvement.

The project's governance structure has enabled smooth coordination among stakeholders, and its communication strategy has effectively raised visibility even though refugees and employment is highly

politically and socially sensitive issue and reinforced impact through field-based storytelling and alignment with global ILO narratives.

Nonetheless, several challenges remain. Political sensitivities, particularly around municipal engagement in refugee programming, have disrupted some activities in BILMER side. WBL continues to face barriers such as limited vocational training options, low female participation among refugees, and regulatory ambiguities about exemption from work permits. BILMER centers, while impactful, require stronger strategies to reach women-owned businesses and address early staffing gaps. Limited engagement from institutions like ISKUR and trade unions also constrains broader ownership.

### *Efficiency of resource used*

The project has demonstrated a strategic and adaptive use of financial, human, and technical resources to deliver its intended outputs. Drawing on lessons from earlier phases, the team implemented cost-effective measures such as long-term agreements in Turkish Lira to mitigate inflation and wage fluctuations, ensuring financial stability. The management structure, which is anchored by a multidisciplinary ILO team, has proven well-suited to the project's scale and complexity, providing strong leadership and technical oversight across diverse geographic areas. Despite initial logistical challenges in field deployment and partner coordination, the adoption of a risk-based methodology and consistent technical support have strengthened implementation and accountability.

While overall resource allocation has been responsive, certain operational constraints have affected delivery timelines. External factors such as the 2023 earthquakes, inflation, and administrative delays, particularly in contract approvals and premium disbursements, created temporary setbacks. Nonetheless, the project remained broadly aligned with its work plan by adapting incentive schemes, increasing field engagement thanks to the frequent monitoring visits, increasing monitoring capacities of local implementing partners, and reallocating responsibilities during staff transitions. These efforts reflect a high degree of operational resilience and commitment to maintaining momentum under complex conditions.

### *Sustainability and Impact Potential*

The project has demonstrated strong potential for long-term sustainability by fostering local ownership, promoting behavioral shifts toward formal employment, and building institutional capacity. High retention rates among beneficiaries, particularly in technical roles, suggest that once individuals access decent work, they tend to remain in stable, formal jobs. This phase placed greater emphasis on integrating women and PwDs into the labour market, contributing to incremental but meaningful changes in employment practices. While the overall numerical impact remains modest given the scale of Türkiye's informal sector, the project's influence on social norms and employment behavior is notable. Its contribution to policy dialogue, particularly around workplace accessibility and inclusive hiring, has laid important groundwork for future alignment with national strategies.

Sustainability is further supported by the project's efforts to expand the knowledge base and strengthen local networks. Implementing partners have deepened their understanding of labour market dynamics through direct engagement with employers and communities, making them more responsive and effective. Although preliminary steps of handover to institutions like ISKUR is still pending, there is clear interest in integrating key components such as Work-Based Learning (WBL) into public service delivery. Local partners have expressed strong commitment to continuing activities, even without direct funding, and government stakeholders have shown increasing ownership, particularly in regions where BILMER centers and WBL initiatives have gained traction. Continued investment in

institutional partnerships, referral systems, and documentation of field insights will be essential to ensure the project's outcomes evolve and endure beyond Phase III.

### ***Gender Equality and Non-discrimination***

The project has made meaningful progress in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly through targeted financial incentives and outreach to hard-to-reach groups. In 2024, 511 women were engaged, supported by childcare services and monthly payments, which is adjusted to reflect national wage increases, to reduce barriers to participation. Special support was provided to mothers of young children and PwDs, aligning with ILO's commitment to inclusive employment. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) data played a key role in identifying gaps and informing responsive measures, including outreach campaigns and focus group discussions to understand the challenges faced by Syrian refugee women. However, their participation in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme remained low at just 5%, highlighting the need for more tailored interventions.

Despite these achievements, several structural gaps remain. Gender-disaggregated data is limited in scope, with little insight into age groups or NEET populations, and the decentralized gender focalpoint instead of a dedicated gender focal point for this project solely has hindered systematic integration of gender equality principles across components. Stakeholder engagement activities, such as the GEDI-supported workshop in Ankara, helped raise awareness of inclusive employment practices, but gender equality trainings were not fully embedded into the project design. Strengthening institutional mechanisms, expanding qualitative data collection, and integrating gender modules into beneficiary programming will be essential to deepen the project's impact and ensure more equitable outcomes for women and other marginalized groups.

### ***Conclusion:***

Key conclusions:

- The project remains highly relevant and aligned with Türkiye's national development priorities and ILO strategic outcomes.
- Implementation is effective, with most output targets on track or exceeded, particularly under WBL and KIGEP.
- Sustainability prospects are promising but depend on formal institutional handover and strengthened risk mitigation.

The project demonstrates strong alignment with national priorities and global frameworks, particularly in promoting inclusive employment, gender equality, and refugee integration. Its pragmatic and evidence-based design have proven adaptable to shifting political dynamics and external constraints, such as elections and public discourse around refugees. Components like Work-Based Learning (WBL), BILMER, and KIGEP have delivered meaningful results while surpassing placement and retention targets, strengthening institutional capacity, and appealing to employers through their simplicity. Operational efficiency has been a hallmark, with strategic use of resources and robust coordination helping the project meet ambitious targets across diverse regions.

However, several areas require further attention to maximize impact and sustainability. The Theory of Change lacks explicit recognition of discrimination risks, and protection concerns at the beneficiary level remain under-addressed. Workplace monitoring and grievance mechanisms need strengthening, particularly within SMEs. Sustainability is promising but contingent on formal handovers to public institutions, secured funding, and clearer transition plans. Gender equality efforts have been embedded across components, yet outreach to Syrian women and women-owned businesses remains limited.

Addressing administrative delays, staff turnover, and data system gaps will be critical for future phases, alongside continued investment in local ownership, vocational training, and inclusive employment practices.

### *Lessons Learned and Emerging Good Practices*

Some messages have emerged from the analysis of the document review and key informant interviews, and this section provides a discussion on lessons for ongoing and future implementation of this project and similar projects for improving project effectiveness, targeting and results. At the same time, this section also serves for presenting good practices coming out of this project.

**Lessons Learned I:** To address low participation of women, particularly refugees and women with caregiving responsibilities, in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme, the project introduced targeted financial incentives and adjusted payments in line with national wage increases. These incentives, together with qualitative diagnostics, are critical for increasing refugee women's participation in work-based learning programmes and should be embedded at the design stage in similar interventions.

**Lessons Learned II:** Adaptive Design and Data Sensitivity: Operating in a politically sensitive and economically volatile environment, the project highlighted the importance of flexibility in design and implementation. As stated by key informants in municipal level, early recruitment challenges and particularly participant hesitation around personal data collection in WBL programme, were addressed by refining procedures to ensure privacy and build trust. These adaptive measures improved recruitment effectiveness and reinforced the value of responsive, context-aware programming.

**Good Practice I: *Inclusive Job Fairs and Employer Trainings for Persons with Disabilities:*** To address the employment barriers faced by PWDs, particularly among refugee communities, the ILO Office for Türkiye organized inclusive job fairs, including a series of career days and training events, which successfully connected PWD job seekers with employers.

**Good Practice II: *BILMER Information Centers:*** The establishment of BILMER Information Centers emerged as a standout achievement of the project, which offer accessible guidance on formalization of businesses, labour rights, fair recruitment, and legalization of workplace, helping individuals address employment-related challenges, increase their knowledge about legal, and reduce vulnerability to exploitation.

**Good Practice III: *Strategic Selection and Capacity Strengthening of Local Implementing Agencies:*** The project's strategic selection and capacity building of local implementing agencies, particularly the Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen, emerged as a good practice and a key success factor. These respected institutions leveraged their deep understanding of local labour markets and strong community ties to effectively deliver project components.

### *Recommendations:*

1. ***Enhancing Policy Coherence and Transferability of Formalization and Social Protection Models:*** December 2024 declaration on voluntary refugee returns may affect the long-term relevance of the project. Ongoing phase and future phases must proactively assess and adapt to evolving policy landscapes to maintain strategic fit. **(RELEVANCE)**

Actions to take:

- National institutions and the ILO should jointly initiate a structured dialogue to explore how these models can be adapted and transferred to the Syrian context. This collaboration could

take the form of a multi-stakeholder brainstorming platform, which is bringing together representatives from MoLSS, ISKUR, SSI, local municipalities, employer organizations, and civil society, to assess the feasibility

- Beyond the national institutions, this multi-stakeholder brainstorming platform may focus on fostering technical exchange and policy dialogue in Türkiye, working in coordination with the ILO Damascus office and the ILO Arab States Office.
2. To build on the simplicity and appeal of the intervention for employers, ILO should consider linking participation to ILO's online training modules on workplace, gender equality, decent work. These modules can serve not only as a tool for skill-building but also as a means to encourage shifts in social norms and workplace behavior. Embedding them into the programme design would strengthen its developmental impact on the targeted population. **(Validity of Intervention Design)**
  3. ILO should Incorporate social risks such as workplace discrimination into future iterations which would enhance the framework's ability to anticipate challenges and support more equitable and sustainable labour market outcomes. **(Validity of Intervention Design)**
  4. ILO should formulate and strengthen the risk management framework, particularly through clearer referral protocols, structured oversight, and consistent monitoring, which is essential to uphold rights-based principles and ensure accountability in future phases. **(Validity of Intervention Design)**
  5. (WBL) With guidance from the ILO and local implementing partners, future phases should invest in high-quality, sector-relevant vocational training and subsidize certification costs to improve employment outcomes. Piloting tailored approaches, such as adjusting class schedules, offering stipends during training, and streamlining certification logistics, can help identify effective models and ensure that training is accessible, practical, and aligned with labour market needs. **(Effectiveness)**

(BILMER): ILO should develop a Strategy for Women-Owned Businesses while creating targeted outreach and support mechanisms for women entrepreneurs, especially in underrepresented sectors. **(Effectiveness)**

(BILMER): Given the strong interest from partners in maintaining them, ILO and DGILF, as the line institution responsible for national oversight of BILMERs, should support the development of a financial feasibility plan to assess whether these offices can be sustained using national and local resources. A tailored feasibility study would help clarify cost structures, identify potential funding gaps, and offer practical options for long-term integration into local institutional budgets. **(Effectiveness)**

(KIGEP): ILO should strengthen KIGEP's design by introducing a systematic risk mitigation framework, including clearer accountability for workplace monitoring and robust grievance mechanisms. Additionally, targeted capacity-building for SMEs, such as online training on safeguarding decent work standards, will increase their engagement, and make the component more than social security premiums. **(Effectiveness)**

6. ILO and national partners should prioritize strengthening operational systems. This includes streamlining administrative procedures to reduce delays, developing contingency plans to manage staff turnover, and investing in improved data management tools, such as digital reporting platforms, to enhance responsiveness and real-time tracking. **(Efficiency)**

7. ILO should continue to work closely with national stakeholders to secure government buy-in for embedding key project components, such as WBL and BILMER centers, into existing national frameworks. Formalizing institutional transition plans and obtaining clear commitments from public institutions will be essential to ensure long-term sustainability, scale-up, and integration of these models into Türkiye’s regular service delivery systems. **(Sustainability)**
8. ILO should continue investment in targeted outreach and institutional capacity-building which is essential to sustain progress and deepen impact for women and persons with disabilities in the labour market. Particularly for BILMER component, ILO should work on a robust strategy and reach out techniques for reaching women-owned businesses **(Gender Equality and Non-discrimination)**
9. ILO should assign gender and PWD and/.or “leaving no one behind” focal point, who can review the content of activities and implementation through gender and disability lenses during the implementation stage. **(Gender Equality and Non-discrimination)**

## 1. Introduction:

This Mid-term Evaluation (MTE) covers the implementation of the “Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens Project” for the period December 2022 to the end of December 2025. The project is implemented by the ILO Türkiye Office and funded by the KfW. The MTE was carried out between July 2025 to October 2025 by the independent consultant Gokce Baykal.

<b>MID-TERM EVALUATION – KEY INFORMATION TABLE</b>	
<b>Project Title</b>	<b>TUR/22/02/DEU Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III</b>
<b>Contracting Organization</b>	International Labour Organization (ILO)
<b>ILO Responsible Office</b>	ILO ANKARA, TURKIYE
<b>Technical Units</b>	MIGRATION
<b>Funding source</b>	KfW Germany
<b>Budget of the Project</b>	EUR 15,000,000 (fifteen million Euro)
<b>Project Location</b>	Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Gaziantep, Hatay, Istanbul, Kahramanmaraş Konya, Mersin and Sanliurfa
<b>Project Duration</b>	December 2022-December 2026
<b>Type of Evaluation</b>	Mid-term Evaluation as per the <b>Terms of Reference (ToR)</b> given in Annex 1
<b>Name of the Evaluator</b>	Gökçe Baykal

## 2. Project Background and Context

2.1. The average living standards are around half the EU average in Türkiye and high levels of informal employment at 29.7 per cent is observed.<sup>1</sup> There are persistent equity gaps, including socioeconomic, regional and rural-urban disparities in decent work, household income and infrastructure. In align to this, Türkiye has a very low female labour participation rate. According to recent gender statistics data published by UN Women on participation in labour markets in Türkiye,<sup>2</sup> female labour force participation is still quite low, at 36.8 percent, compared to the OECD average, which is 63.2 per cent for women.<sup>3</sup> The gender pay gap is 15 percent. Along this, women occupy only 22 percent of company managers, 18 percent of board memberships, and 11 percent of senior executive positions.<sup>4</sup> While most women remain out of the formal labour market, many women are in fact working in the informal economy in Türkiye.<sup>5</sup> An important result of informal employment is the lack of social protection which is a core element of decent working conditions. According to TURKSTAT 2023 data, 35.8 per cent of all working women in the country lacked any coverage under any social security scheme in their major employment, while this ratio was 25% for men.<sup>6</sup> It is rightly claimed that informality is both men's and women's employment issue in Türkiye.

2.3. The female labour force participation among Syrian refugee women living in Türkiye is also low. It is reported by Ministry of labour and Social Security in 2024 that out of 117,334 work permits, only 6.8 percent is given to Syrian refugee women compared to Syrian refugee men.<sup>7</sup> This is partly due to social norms and expectations that men should work outside the home, but women should work inside the home. Besides social norms, the issues are accompanied by problems of childcare and the male-dominated nature of homes, which is undeniably behind the stated low female labour force participation among Syrian women refugees. In addition to these, lack of Turkish language fluency, low education attainment, and skill levels contribute to the barriers to employment of refugee women in Türkiye. Overall, along with the low rates of accessing employment opportunities, considering the informality, quality of job, and working conditions are still issues for both Syrian refugee women (more starkly) and host community women too.

2.4. Between 2021 and 2025, Türkiye's unemployment rate steadily declined from 11.97 per cent in 2021 to 8.45 percent in 2024, before slightly rising again to 8.6 per cent in mid-2025. While this downward trend suggests macroeconomic recovery, the benefits have not been evenly distributed. Youth unemployment remains persistently high at over 16 per cent and the employment rate for women continues to hover around 32 per cent, far below the male rate of 66 per cent.<sup>8</sup> For the host community, these figures reflect ongoing challenges in labour market access, especially for low-skilled and young workers. For Syrian refugees, where many of whom lack formal education, Turkish language proficiency, or legal work permits, the labour market remains largely inaccessible. Despite policy efforts to integrate refugees, most continue to work informally, often in low-wage, unstable jobs with limited protections.

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<sup>1</sup> Turkstat, Household Labour Force Survey (HLFS) 2024. <https://data.tuik.gov.tr/Bulten/Index?p=Labour-Force-Statistics-2024-54059&dil=2#:~:text=Labour%20force%20realized%20as%2035,compared%20to%20the%20previous%20year.>

<sup>2</sup> 2023 Gender Statistics, UN Women, accessed via <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/12/gender-statistics-turkiyehttps://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/12/gender-statistics-turkiye>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.oecd.org/en/data/insights/statistical-releases/2024/04/labour-market-situation-updated-april-2024.html#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20the%20number%20of,for%20men%20\(Figure%203\).](https://www.oecd.org/en/data/insights/statistical-releases/2024/04/labour-market-situation-updated-april-2024.html#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20the%20number%20of,for%20men%20(Figure%203).)

<sup>4</sup> 2023 Gender Statistics, UN Women, accessed via <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/12/gender-statistics-turkiyehttps://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2022/12/gender-statistics-turkiye>

<sup>5</sup> Duman, A. (2023). The Gendered Relationship Between Temporary, Informal Employment and Wages: Evidence from the Turkish labour Market. *Feminist Economics*, 29(4), 194–222. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13545701.2023.2249000>

<sup>6</sup> <https://kadingirisimci.gov.tr/media/ffvjlczc/8-turkiye-de-kadnların-işgücüne-katılımı.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> "Foreigners' Work Permits Data 2024", <https://www.csgb.gov.tr/istatistikler/calisma-hayati-istatistikleri/resmi-istatistik-programi/yabancilarin-calisma-izinleri/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.tuik.gov.tr/Home/Index>

2.5. The situation is even more precarious for disabled and female refugees. Syrian women face entrenched barriers such as cultural norms, childcare responsibilities, and limited vocational training<sup>9</sup>, resulting in an employment rate of just 6.8 percent stated above. Many are confined to informal roles like domestic work or seasonal agriculture, which offer little security or upward mobility. Refugees with disabilities, meanwhile, are often excluded from employment altogether due to a lack of tailored support services, workplace accommodations, and inclusive hiring practices. These intersecting vulnerabilities mean that economic recovery has bypassed the most marginalized groups, deepening their dependency on humanitarian aid and social safety nets. Without targeted interventions, the gap in labour market participation between these groups and the broader population is likely to persist.

### 3. Description of the Project

3.1. Phase III of the project builds on previous efforts to promote decent work and formal employment opportunities for Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and host communities in Türkiye. This phase specifically addresses persistent challenges including (i) limited access to decent jobs for women, youth, and PWDs; (ii) inadequate awareness of formalization processes among micro-enterprises (MEs); (iii) informality among refugees; (iv) low representation of women, particularly Syrian refugee women among formal employment initiatives. Additionally, the project seeks to overcome policy gaps that hinder the creation of an enabling environment for social protection and inclusive labour market integration.

3.2. To respond to these challenges, Phase III introduces targeted interventions aimed at increasing access to decent jobs, with a focus on vulnerable groups. The Work-Based Learning (WBL) Programme is scaled up to reach 1,000 beneficiaries, ensuring that at least 50 per cent are women and 10 per cent are persons with disabilities. Building on partnerships established in Phase II, the project continues collaboration with existing implementing partners while also engaging specialized CSOs to tailor interventions for PWDs. Business strategies tested in earlier phases are further refined, and incentive based mechanisms are introduced to support gradual transitions to formal employment. Advocacy efforts are intensified to promote the benefits of formalization and foster a more conducive policy environment for social protection.

3.3. The overarching development objective remains consistent: to promote decent work for SuTP and host communities through investment in skills, improved service delivery, and transition to formality. Component 1 focuses on work-based learning programme (WBL), combining on-the-job and off-the-job training to support long-term formal employment. Component 2, delivered through BILMERS, provides micro-enterprises and workers with information on work permit procedures, incentives, and penalties for non-compliance. Component 3 continues the collaboration with the Social Security Institution (SSI) to facilitate the formalization of at least 7,500 workers, which is equally split between SuTP and Turkish citizens, with a minimum of 30 per cent women. Gender-sensitive selection criteria, employer incentives, and field consultant support are integrated to ensure inclusive outreach and implementation. Through these three components, Phase III reinforces the project's commitment to sustainable employment, gender equality, and social protection, while leveraging ILO's comparative advantages and strategic partnerships to maximize impact.

3.4. Through the implementation of its three interconnected components, the project aims to achieve tangible outcomes that contribute to inclusive and sustainable labour market integration. First,

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<sup>9</sup> IFRC, 2022, "Exploring the livelihoods of Women Refugees in Türkiye: A Qualitative Study on ESSN Applicants", which can be accessed through <https://data.unhcr.org/fr/documents/details/95570>

vulnerable groups from both the SuTPs and HC populations are equipped with the skills and qualifications necessary to access formal employment opportunities, particularly through expanded WBL initiatives. Second, the formalization of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) is strengthened by providing employers and workers with clear, accessible information and administrative support, particularly through BILMERS, which helps demystify the transition to formality and encourages compliance. Lastly, the project facilitates the formalization of SuTP and HC workers by offering targeted incentives, including provision of social security contribution subsidies, work permit assistance, and employer engagement strategies, thereby creating a more enabling environment for decent work and long-term economic inclusion.

## 4. Evaluation Background: Purpose; Scope and Approach

4.1. This evaluation serves both independent assessment of the progress to date and organizational learning purposes. We understand the primary rationale to be to analyse outcomes and draw lessons from the experience of the ILO regarding the project, to contribute to further implementation of the project and help define and analyses what is working and what is not, how to overcome the challenges in the further implementation.

4.2. The terms of reference for the evaluation set the agenda clearly. While stressing the application of key OECD/DAC criteria of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact potential, the evaluation has (i) examined the progress of project implementation to date, highlighting both enabling and hindering factors. Where appropriate, suggest adjustments to the anticipated achievement levels and recommend corrective measures to enhance project performance; (ii) evaluated the project's implementation strategies in terms of their effectiveness in delivering intended outcomes and impacts, including any unforeseen results; (iii) assessed the approaches adopted to ensure the project's sustainability; (iv) determined the project's alignment and contributions to Türkiye's Twelfth Development Plan, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the ILO objectives, and its coherence with other related initiatives; (v) extracted key lessons learned and identified promising practices that could benefit stakeholders

4.3. This mid-term evaluation has examined the project's progress from its inception on 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2022 up to the actual time of the mission, October 2025, encompassing all planned activities, outputs, and outcomes. It has focused on assessing the effectiveness of implementation, the interplay between project components, and their alignment with national policies and programs. The evaluation also aims to uncover the factors behind the achievement or lack thereof, of expected results, from outputs to potential impacts. Gender equality and the inclusion of PWD has been integrated as cross-cutting themes, ensuring meaningful stakeholder participation.

## 5. Evaluation Methodology

5.1. The evaluation used the Result-based Monitoring (RBM) approach as the evaluation methodology and for research methodology purposes, this is predominantly a qualitative study. Data was collected remotely which facilitated to reach out more key informants from various organizations and locations as well. Two data collection methods were used:

- *In-depth desk review of key level documentation*: Analysis of key documents and the data they contain formed one of the core parts of the evaluation. The documents shared kindly by ILO, including but not limited to; project materials such as progress reports, annual reports, reports on specific components of the project, previous final and mid-term evaluations of Phase I and

Phase II, log frames, project materials- both digital and hardcopy; academic publications and national/international reports on decent work, gender equality, Syrian refugees’ practices of participation in labour market, female labour force participation, both host community and Syrian refugee women. The documentary review was used both as information sources and as a basis for triangulating information gained through key informant interviews. (see Document List in Annex E)

- *Key informant interviews with internal and external stakeholders:* These were conducted with those individuals within and outside ILO deemed to be best placed to help answer the top-line questions, together with the subsidiary questions set out in the evaluation matrix. Key informant interviews both with ILO project staff and those from internal departments of ILO, donor, national stakeholders in Ankara and local implementing organizations in selected provinces including Adana, Ankara, Bursa, Istanbul, Gaziantep and Konya were conducted. A general protocol and guidelines for the conduct of interviews and meetings is located under Annex D and Annex D1.

5.2. Priority was given to sites that reflect both successful and less successful project outcomes, as perceived by stakeholders and documented in progress reports, to better understand the factors influencing implementation. The field visits covered up to five provinces, including Istanbul (representing municipality perspective in two different location, Sultanbeyli and Kucukcekmece), Antep, Adana and Bursa (representing all three components’ -ISMEP, BILMER and KIGEP’s implementing partner and Bursa is not selected often for refugee related studies therefore can offer a different perspective), Ankara and Konya allowing for diverse and representative observations across different contexts. The locations selected for this study representing all the components’ implementation locations-more or less. As the final assessment of Phases I and II noted that while overlapping activities across components occasionally led to inefficiencies, effective coordination allowed them to complement and strengthen one another. (Phase III Annual Report 2024). It would be important to see whether it is still an issue and how different components complement each other in that regard. We conducted 35 KIIs with ILO and other stakeholders. The respondents were selected based on the list that is provided by ILO during the inception phase. (See Table X

Table X. Key Stakeholder Interview List

<b>Key Informant Interviews</b>	
Project Implementing Institution: ILO (Ankara) (8)	Technical Advisor on Refugee Response Project Manager BILMER Component Lead WBL/ISMEP Component Lead KIGEP Component Lead Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Communication Officer Finance Officer
Donor: KfW (Ankara and Germany) (2)	Deputy Country Director Portfolio Manager
National Stakeholders (Ankara) (4)	MoLSS- Directorate of International Labour Force (DGILF) Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) Social Security Institution

Local Municipalities (4)	Kuçükçekmece and Sultanbeyli Municipality of Istanbul Yildirim Municipality of Bursa
Workers' and Employers' Organizations (4)	Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (HAK-İŞ) Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Türkiye (DISK) Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations (TISK) TESK
Professional organisations / Public Institutions (8)	GESOB-Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) in Gaziantep KONESOB- Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) in Konya AESOB- Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) in Adana AOSB-Haci Sabanci Organized Industry Zone in Adana ASOSEM-Organized Industry Zone and Learning Center in Ankara

5.3. Triangulation was conducted as we understand that a single method and source is not adequate to provide a comprehensive picture and therefore using multiple methods and sources helps facilitate deeper understanding.

5.4. The evaluation process faced few limitations, each of which was carefully considered and addressed to ensure the quality and reliability of findings.

5.4.1. **Timing of Fieldwork During Summer Holidays:** The evaluation initially began during the summer holiday period, which proved to be suboptimal for fieldwork. Many key informants were on leave, creating uncertainty and potential gaps in data collection. To mitigate this, the fieldwork was postponed to September, allowing for broader availability of stakeholders and more reliable engagement.

5.4.2. **Risk of Selection Bias:** During the inception phase, there was concern that stakeholder selection might be influenced more by responsiveness and willingness to collaborate than by representativeness or data saturation. However, this risk was effectively managed. The evaluation team successfully reached out to all key external stakeholders, including those at the ministry and local levels. Interviews were conducted with individuals most knowledgeable about the project, and in some cases, group interviews were held with both consultants and managers to ensure comprehensive insights.

5.4.3. **Heavy Reliance on Qualitative Methods:** While mixed methods are ideal for impact evaluations, this evaluation primarily relied on qualitative approaches. Quantitative surveys are particularly valuable when pre-intervention data is available for comparison. Although such baseline data was limited, the evaluation was informed by recent surveys and assessments of specific project components, which helped strengthen the evidence base and contextual understanding.

5.4.4. **Discontinued Collaborations:** Some collaborations had ended by the time of the evaluation, particularly with municipalities where project activities had concluded. This posed a risk to stakeholder access. However, with support from the ILO, the evaluation team was able to re-establish contact and successfully engage these stakeholders in the process.

**5.4.5 Remote Fieldwork and Digital Interviews:** As it is assumed that conducting interviews remotely might pose challenges in terms of depth and authenticity of responses. To address this, the team prioritized building trust, ensuring digital accessibility, and creating safe, confidential environments that encouraged open dialogue. Additionally, due to the remote interviews, it created flexibility and many local stakeholders participated in interviews alongside consultants who maintain daily contact with beneficiaries, including both refugee and host community members, allowing for indirect yet meaningful feedback. Recent evaluations of the BILMER and KIGEP components also helped fill any remaining information gaps.

## 6. Main Findings

### 6.1. Relevance

*Is the project coherent with the Government objectives, National Development Frameworks, beneficiaries' needs, and does it support the outcomes outlined in the UNSDCF, DWCP, the SDGs, Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) as well as ILO P&B outcome 4 on "Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work"; outcome 5 on "Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market; and outcome 7 on "Adequate and effective protection at work for all".*

6.1.1. The project demonstrates strong coherence with national development frameworks. Türkiye's 11<sup>th</sup> (2019-2023) and 12<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan (2024-2028) emphasize inclusive and sustainable economic growth, with a strong focus on decent work, formal employment, and social integration of refugees. There is strong evidence of continued relevance of the project's objectives to the 12<sup>th</sup> National Development Plan, which has been operating at the time of the implementation of the Third Phase of the project. The 12<sup>th</sup> Plan prioritizes increasing formal employment opportunities, particularly for women and persons with disabilities, aligning with its gender equality and accessibility goals of the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the project. Even though a 5 per cent of employment quota for individuals with disabilities is already exists under Labour Law, 12<sup>th</sup> National Plan put an emphasis on this while reinforcing institutional commitments to equity<sup>10</sup>, which perfectly aligns with particularly component 1 where work-based learning (WBL) programme supporting long term formal employment of persons with disabilities at the rate of 10 per cent. Both national development plans recognize the importance of integrating refugees into the labour market, citing work permits and vocational training as key tools to reduce aid dependency and promote self-reliance<sup>11</sup>.

6.1.2. From a global perspective, the project is well-aligned with the outcomes outlined in the UNSDCF (2021-2025) and DWCP. The UNSDCF prioritizes economic empowerment and gender equality, aiming to increase women's participation in the labour market through improved access to decent work, skills development, and social protection. It supports efforts to reduce gender disparities in employment and promote equal opportunities, aligning with SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth)<sup>12</sup>. The framework also addresses migration and refugee issues under its focus on "Migration, Harmonization, and Self-Reliance." It promotes the integration of refugees into the labour market through formal employment pathways, vocational training, and legal access to work. These efforts contribute to the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) and aim to reduce dependency on humanitarian aid through formal employment while fostering social cohesion<sup>13</sup>. The project also addresses the central message of the 2030 Agenda of "leave no one behind", which is at the heart of the SDGs, as a commitment.

6.1.3. Its focus on skills development and lifelong learning further reinforces ILO P&B outcome 5, while the inclusion of workplace protections and legal access to employment supports outcome 7. Moreover, the project's emphasis on sustainable enterprise and innovation through work-based learning and employer engagement contributes to ILO P&B outcome 4. By creating pathways for refugees to transition into formal employment, the initiative not only meets immediate beneficiary needs but also strengthens the broader labour ecosystem. Its design reflects a coherent and multi-layered approach that integrates national policy priorities with international labour standards and refugee protection frameworks, making it a relevant and impactful model for inclusive employment programming.

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Twelfth-Development-Plan\\_2024-2028.pdf](https://www.sbb.gov.tr/wp-content/uploads/2025/03/Twelfth-Development-Plan_2024-2028.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Data.unhcr.org—"Livelihoods and Economic Inclusion of Refugees in Türkiye" April 2025.

<sup>12</sup> UNSDCF Document, [https://turkiye.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/UNSDCF\\_17.03.22.pdf](https://turkiye.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/UNSDCF_17.03.22.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

6.1.4. Overall, the project remains aligned with the needs of refugees and continues to reflect the strategies and policies of national partners, as confirmed through the desk review and key informant interviews. However, the December 8th declaration concerning Syria has introduced a shift in policy focus, from integration toward voluntary returns, which may affect the project's relevance moving forward. Given the recency of this development and the ongoing uncertainties surrounding the situation in Syria, it is noted here as an early signal to consider in the upcoming phases of the project.

*Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team etc.)?*

6.1.5. The Project's goals are closely aligned with the ILO's strategic focus, which centers on advancing International Labour Standards (ILS) and decent work. These core principles are clearly embedded in the Project's framework. The design of the project is also aligned with Recommendation No. 205 (adopted in June 2017) on employment and decent work for peace and resilience, which emphasizes the importance of inclusive labour market access in situations of crisis and displacement. In this regard, the programme's interventions also reflect ILO's guiding principles on facilitating access of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons (FDPs) to the labour market. Both frameworks highlight the need to ensure equal treatment, non-discrimination, and targeted support measures that strengthen resilience and social cohesion. In addition, the design presents a clear methodology for promoting the transition to formal employment for both Syrians under temporary protection and the host community, outlining how this will foster access to decent work. Initially, the Project supports these aims by addressing skill gaps in the labour market and encouraging formalization through incentives for social security contributions.

6.1.6. This approach has also been positively received by national institutions responsible for labour and migration policies. Key informants emphasized that formalization remains a top priority in the context of refugee integration. In terms of tripartism, the Project reflects the ILO's commitment to ensuring that its standards and policies are inclusive of the perspectives and needs of workers, employers, and government. Although social dialogue among social partners is ongoing, the Project to date has engaged more closely with government institutions and employer organizations, reflecting its implementation requirements.

*How effectively does the project coordinate with local implementing partners?*

6.1.7. The effectiveness of the project's coordination with local implementing partners is closely tied to the selection of appropriate and capable organizations. The partners involved are highly knowledgeable in their respective fields, possess a strong understanding of market dynamics, and are trusted by both employers and employees. Their extensive networks and credibility have made them well-suited to meet the needs of the project. The ILO is commended for identifying these partners and for its own strengths, including its technical expertise, responsiveness, active field presence, and collaborative, non-hierarchical approach to partnership.

6.1.8. The project has been adapted in response to evolving needs, and interviews highlighted how the ILO values and integrates the local knowledge and field experience of its partners, complementing this with its global perspective. This mutual exchange has enhanced coordination and contributed to the project's overall effectiveness. Local organizations reported that their input was heard, and their requests addressed, which has positively influenced the achievement of targeted outcomes.

## 6.2. Validity of Intervention Design

*To what extent and how does the project address the major root causes of the decent work deficits identified for the target group – informally employed women, PWD, refugees, other vulnerable groups; and respond to it?*

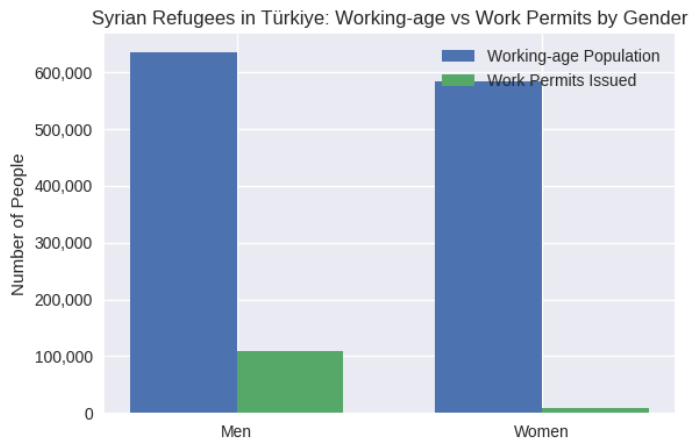
6.2.1. The project directly addresses key root causes of decent work deficits in Türkiye, particularly informality among refugees with a special emphasis on women during the Phase III, host communities, and people with disabilities, by combining skills development, formal employment incentives, and targeted support for the abovementioned groups.

6.2.2. Informal employment remains one of the most persistent barriers to decent work in Türkiye, affecting both SuTPs and vulnerable Turkish citizens. According to the detailed report by Luis Pinedo Caro for the ILO<sup>14</sup> indicates that in 2020, approximately 940,000 Syrians were employed in Türkiye, with an overwhelming 92% engaged in informal work. This group is believed to represent nearly 10% of the country's total informal workforce. The same study reveals that only 11.2% of Syrian women participate in the labour market, highlighting a heavy reliance on informal income sources among the refugee population. While many Syrians are informally employed, a notable portion are also self-employed or operate small businesses. The most updated figures published by both Presidency of Migration Management and Ministry of labour and Social Security, highlight a significant gender gap in formal employment access among Syrian refugees in Türkiye.

	Women	Men	Total
<b>SuTP Population</b>	1,176,353	1,259,023	2,435,276
<b>Working Age SuTP Population (18-64)</b>	583,876	635,411	1,219,287
<b>Work Permit Issued</b>	7,897	109,347	117.334

6.2.3. While over 17% of working-age men have received work permits, only about 1.4% of women have, underscoring the need for targeted interventions to improve formal labour market inclusion for refugee women.

<sup>14</sup> Caro, LP (2020) Syrian refugees in the Turkish labour market: a socio-economic analysis. Sosyoekonomi 28(46), 51–74.10.17233/sosyoekonomi.2020.04.03



6.2.4. Among the host community, informal employment is also widespread, particularly among women and youth, due to limited access to formal job opportunities, skills mismatches, etc. According to the ILO dataset<sup>15</sup>, Türkiye has an informal employment rate of 27.7 percent. The overall rate of women working informally was 34.4 percent, while the overall rate of men working informally was 23.8 percent.

6.2.5. The project directly addresses these challenges through a multi-pronged strategy. Component 1 supports the transition to formal employment by upskilling SuTP and vulnerable Turkish citizens through a scaled-up Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme. This initiative combines on-the-job and off-the-job training, aiming to place 1,000 beneficiaries into formal employment, with a retention target of at least 50%. The emphasis on women (30%) and people with disabilities (10%) ensures that the most excluded groups are prioritized. Component 2 tackles informality at the enterprise level by supporting micro and small enterprises (MSMEs) in their formalization journey. Through locally operated Information Centers (BILMERS), the project fills critical information gaps related to work permit procedures, registration requirements, and social security incentives. The goal of reaching 25,000 workers and 5,000 businesses reflects a systemic effort to reduce informality and expand access to decent work protections. Component 3 complements these efforts by offering financial incentives to employers for formalizing workers, including work permit fee support and targeted benefits for women. Collaboration with the Social Security Institution and field consultants ensures that these mechanisms are effectively implemented and monitored.

6.2.6. People with disabilities in Türkiye face significant barriers to labour market participation. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TÜİK), only 22.1% of working-age individuals with disabilities are employed, and many of those are in informal or precarious jobs. Discrimination, lack of workplace accommodations, and limited access to vocational training contribute to their exclusion from decent work. The project responds to these deficits by integrating PWD into its core programming. Within Component 1, 10% of WBL beneficiaries are targeted to be individuals with disabilities. To ensure that interventions are tailored to their needs, partnerships are being strengthened with specialized NGOs, and municipal associations. These collaborations aim to provide accessible training, inclusive placement opportunities, and ongoing support, thereby aligning with ILO standards on disability inclusion and promoting equitable access to formal employment.

***To what extent did the problem analysis identify its differential impact on men and women and on vulnerable groups (people living poverty, informally employed etc.)?***

<sup>15</sup> <https://ilostat.ilo.org/topics/informality/> accessed on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025.

6.2.7. The project's problem analysis demonstrates a thoughtful and inclusive approach by recognizing that the Syrian refugee population is not a homogeneous group. It acknowledges the distinct barriers faced by refugee women, particularly those with limited or no prior work experience, which is common among certain segments of the population from Syria. In response, Phase III of the project introduced specific recruitment quotas for women to ensure their inclusion in formal employment pathways.

6.2.8. Similarly, quotas were established for people with disabilities, reflecting the project's commitment to reaching the most vulnerable and upholding the principle of "leaving no one behind." Beyond gender and disability, the problem analysis also considers local dynamics and geographic disparities. Implementing partners were strategically selected across different cities to reflect local labour market conditions and facilitate outreach to refugee populations more effectively. This localized approach highlights the project's responsiveness to contextual challenges and its effort to build on lessons learned from previous phases.

6.2.9. While the analysis effectively identifies and responds to decent work deficits for women and persons with disabilities, it offers limited insight into the challenges faced by youth, particularly those not in education, employment, or training (NEET). The growing NEET population among both Turkish and Syrian youth, as well as the prevalence of uninsured youth employment, remains underexplored in the differential impact assessment. These gaps will be further discussed in Section 3 on efficiency, alongside data on outreach and labour force participation rates.

*To what extent is the project realistic (in terms of expected outputs, outcome and impact) given the proposed intervention logic, time and resources available and the social, economic and political environment?*

6.2.10. The transition to formal employment for Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and vulnerable Turkish citizens (TC) is a complex, multi-dimensional challenge that requires long-term, sustained efforts. While it may be overly ambitious to claim that the project fully resolves this issue, its design reflects a realistic and pragmatic approach to fostering sustainable transformation in the labour market, particularly when the engagement of key stakeholders is ensured.

6.2.11. Phase III of the project builds on the experiences, best practices, and lessons learned from Phases I and II, as well as from other ILO-led refugee response initiatives in Türkiye. The intervention logic is grounded in evidence and shaped by continuous feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour and Social Services (MoLSS), ISKUR, the Social Security Institution (SSI), the Directorate General of International Labour Force, professional organizations with public institution status, workers' and employers' organizations, local municipalities, international organizations, NGOs, CSOs, and private sector actors. This inclusive and consultative approach enhances the credibility and feasibility of the project's expected outputs and outcomes.

6.2.12. In terms of measurable outputs, such as increasing access to formal employment, where the project has set realistic targets, many of which have already been met or are on track to be achieved. These results will be discussed in greater detail in the effectiveness section of the report. However, the advocacy component, particularly efforts to create an enabling environment for refugee employment, has faced notable constraints due to the prevailing socio-economic and political climate. The refugee issue remains highly politicized, and public discourse around the return of Syrians to their home country (e.g., the December 7th repatriation narrative) has complicated efforts to promote inclusive labour market policies. Rising unemployment among the host community and persistent rhetoric suggesting

that refugees are “taking jobs” continue to fuel public resentment, making advocacy work more challenging.

6.2.13. Despite these limitations, the project’s overall design remains realistic and responsive to the current context. It acknowledges the structural barriers and adapts its strategies accordingly, focusing on achievable goals while maintaining a long-term vision for inclusive labour market reform.

*To what extent has the project integrated ILO cross cutting themes (such as ILS, tripartism, gender, non-discrimination, and environmental issues) in the design?*

6.2.14. The project has effectively integrated key ILO cross-cutting themes, particularly International Labour Standards (ILS), tripartism, gender equality, and non-discrimination, into both its design and implementation. Through tripartite consultations involving government institutions, employers’ organizations, and workers’ representatives, the project has ensured that principles of equal treatment and workplace inclusion are upheld for refugee men and women, persons with disabilities, and Turkish citizens alike.

6.2.15. ILO’s active presence in the field has played a supervisory and advocacy role, especially in addressing workplace discrimination. One of the project’s notable contributions has been its role in introducing refugee populations to employers who had not previously engaged with them. By facilitating direct interaction, the project has helped demonstrate the employability, resilience, and skills of refugee workers by challenging stereotypes and fostering more inclusive hiring practices.

6.2.16. Gender equality has been actively promoted through the introduction of specific recruitment quotas for women, which has encouraged implementing partners to reach out to female beneficiaries more deliberately. Similarly, quotas for persons with disabilities have reinforced the project’s commitment to inclusive employment. These measures reflect a strong emphasis on non-discrimination and the promotion of decent work for all.

6.2.17. While environmental sustainability has not been a prominent focus in this project, the other cross-cutting themes are deeply embedded in ILO’s mandate and have been comprehensively mainstreamed throughout the project’s design and delivery. The integration of these themes contributes to the project’s alignment with ILO values and enhances its relevance and impact in the context of Türkiye’s refugee response.

*Are the indicators of the achievements clearly defined, describing the changes to be brought about? Were the indicators designed and used in a manner that they enabled reporting on progress under specific SDG targets and indicators?*

6.2.18. The project continues to utilize the Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) developed in earlier phases, incorporating lessons learned and recommendations from the final evaluation of Phase II. The PMF includes clearly defined indicators that specify the expected results and the timing of measurement, allowing for structured tracking of progress throughout implementation. These indicators are realistic and appropriately aligned with the project’s scope, particularly in measuring access to formal employment, training participation, and outreach to vulnerable groups.

6.2.19. However, the current indicator set is predominantly quantitative, focusing on metrics such as the number of individuals reached, trained, or placed in formal employment. While these figures are essential for assessing scale and coverage, relying solely on quantitative indicators presents limitations. It makes the project vulnerable to overlooking deeper, qualitative dimensions of change, such as shifts in employer attitudes, improvements in workplace inclusion, or the lived experiences of beneficiaries. Without qualitative indicators, it becomes more difficult to evaluate the true impact of the interventions on empowerment, social cohesion, and long-term employability.

6.2.20. To strengthen the evaluation framework, future phases should consider integrating qualitative indicators that capture behavioral, institutional, and perceptual changes. This would enhance the project's ability to report meaningfully on progress under specific SDG targets, particularly those related to gender equality (SDG 5), decent work and economic growth (SDG 8), and reduced inequalities (SDG 10). A mixed-methods approach would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how the project contributes to sustainable development and inclusive labour market transformation.

*To what extent does the elements presented in the points above have been articulated in a comprehensive and systemic theory of change that can guide project implementation towards the project objectives*

6.2.21. The project presents a well-structured and systemic Theory of Change that effectively guides implementation toward its overarching objective: increasing access to decent work for Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and vulnerable Turkish citizens. The framework clearly articulates the logical progression from impact to outcomes and outputs, with each component addressing a specific barrier to formal employment, including skills development, MSME formalization, and employer incentives.

6.2.22. The Theory of Change draws on lessons learned from previous phases and integrates stakeholder feedback, including from public institutions, social partners, and implementing agencies. This iterative design strengthens its relevance and feasibility within Türkiye's evolving socio-economic and political context. The inclusion of a risk profile, which is covering labour market volatility, implementation disruptions, changes in refugee employability, and stakeholder capacity, demonstrates a proactive approach to managing external uncertainties.

6.2.23. However, one notable gap is the absence of discrimination as a recognized risk factor. While the project promotes inclusion through gender and disability quotas and awareness-raising activities, the Theory of Change does not explicitly address the risk of workplace discrimination or social exclusion, particularly toward refugee populations, women, and persons with disabilities. Given the project's emphasis on decent work and non-discrimination, this omission limits the framework's ability to fully anticipate and mitigate barriers to equitable labour market integration.

6.2.24. To enhance the comprehensiveness of the Theory of Change, future iterations should incorporate discrimination as a cross-cutting risk area. This would allow for more targeted mitigation strategies, such as employer sensitization, grievance mechanisms, and monitoring of workplace practices. Overall, while the current framework provides a strong foundation for implementation, integrating social risks more explicitly would strengthen its capacity to deliver inclusive and sustainable outcomes.

### 6.3. Effectiveness

*What progress has been made towards achieving the overall project outputs/objectives/outcomes, identifying factors affecting project implementation (positively and negatively)?*

6.3.1. Overall, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the project, implementation progressed more smoothly, largely due to lessons learned throughout phases I and II. According to extensive reporting including annual reports, monitoring reports, component specific reports, the project has nearly achieved all its quantitative targets, with only a few remaining. These outstanding targets are expected to be met by the end of December 2026, especially now that the contract has been extended. Before delving into the effectiveness of each component's implementation, we will first identify the general factors, both positive and negative and “gray” parts that has influenced the project's progress.

Table X.

Results chain	Indicators	Total Target	2023	2024	2025	Achieved
<b>Project Objective: Facilitate access to formal employment opportunities to improve SuTP's and Turkish Citizens' self-reliance and social protection</b>	<b># of direct beneficiaries provided with the access to the formal employment Baseline: 0</b>	<b>10,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>4,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>8,025</b>

*Learning from previous phases has enhanced the project's overall impact and responsiveness*

6.3.2. Several important lessons emerged throughout the implementation of the project, contributing to improved practices and stronger outcomes. One early challenge involved resistance during recruitment, particularly around the collection of personal data. This created hesitation among potential participants, but the ILO addressed the issue by refining data collection procedures to ensure privacy and build trust, ultimately improving recruitment effectiveness.

6.3.3. Efforts to recruit refugees faced challenges and limited awareness about the benefits of employment over social assistance. Through targeted outreach and awareness-raising activities, refugees became more convinced of the long-term advantages of stable employment. Importantly, the project's focus on retention rates boosted motivation among local implementing partners as well. Unlike many other projects that overlook this aspect, partners in this initiative saw firsthand how technical training and job stability led to better income and longer-term employment, reinforcing the value of their efforts.

6.3.4. Initially, implementing partners expressed concern over the volume of reporting required. However, over time, they recognized how structured reporting contributed to the project's efficiency and helped avoid repeated mistakes. Monitoring visits and regular documentation proved valuable not only for tracking progress but also for keeping institutions accessible and responsive to the beneficiaries. These visits reinforced the message that support structures were in place informally, particularly in cases of workers' rights violations and helped maintain accountability.

*Non-hierarchical partnership model*

6.3.5. Adopting a non-hierarchical partnership model has significantly enhanced ILO's collaboration with local implementing partners such as Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen, Chambers of commerce and industry, and municipalities. This approach fosters mutual respect and shared

ownership, allowing partners to feel genuinely valued and engaged in the process. It strengthens trust and transparency, encourages open communication, and accelerates problem-solving by creating a more responsive and inclusive working environment. The partners appreciated ILO's working style with them as equal contributors rather than sub-contractors, their motivation and commitment increase. This model also promotes adaptability, encourages innovation, and helps build long-term institutional capacity, laying the groundwork for more sustainable and impactful outcomes.

### ***Coordination Meetings and Peer Learning***

6.3.6. Regular coordination meetings, where all local implementing partners are present, have proven to be highly valuable for the implementing agencies. These gatherings provide a platform for partners to showcase their successes, share challenges encountered during implementation, and discuss the strategies they used to overcome them. This open exchange of experiences fosters mutual learning, strengthens collaboration, and contributes to continuous improvement across the project.

### ***Partner Diversification***

6.3.7. Collaborating with a diverse range of partners has proven to be both enriching and capacity-enhancing, fostering mutual learning and strengthening implementation. The inclusion of new actors, particularly municipalities during Phase III marked a strategic shift toward broader engagement with public institutions. Municipalities play a vital role in refugee programming, often serving as the first point of contact for refugees after local leaders such as muhtars. Their proximity to communities and established outreach mechanisms makes them effective partners, as evidenced by previous studies. In cities like Bursa, municipal involvement has also created synergies with other employment-related initiatives, amplifying impact across similar thematic areas.

6.3.8. However, working with municipalities also presents challenges. Given the political sensitivity surrounding refugee issues, some municipalities face difficulties even in publicly announcing project activities. As elected bodies, they must navigate complex political landscapes, which can affect their level of engagement. For example, in one of the provinces, despite significant preparatory efforts, a change in the local administration led to closure of BILMER activities without explanation. Another municipality shared how politically delicate and logistically difficult it was to initiate collaboration at the outset. These experiences highlight the importance of strategic planning and risk mitigation when engaging with politically governed institutions.

In contrast, partnerships with employer associations, chambers of industry, and chambers of artisans have been notably effective. These organizations possess strong outreach capacity, deep sectoral knowledge, and are widely respected and trusted by employers. Their involvement enhances credibility and ensures that programming is aligned with labour market needs. Engaging these actors more systematically can help bridge gaps between training and employment, ensuring that employers are well-informed about the skills and qualifications required in their sectors. This alignment is critical for improving job placement outcomes and sustaining long-term employment opportunities.

### ***Outcome 1: SuTPs and TC vulnerable groups are qualified to participate in the formal labour market***

One of the most notable achievements of the WBL during the Phase III was its success in generating and maintaining employment opportunities. Through the WBL/ISMEP programme, 1,453 individuals participated in workplace training and secured job placements, well above the initial target of 1,000 (see Table X below). Three months after the programme concluded, 60% of participants remained employed, exceeding the expected retention rate of 50%. This outcome highlights the effectiveness of

the project's blended learning model and its focus on employment support, which contributed to sustainable livelihoods for beneficiaries and helped meet business demands for skilled workers.

Table X. Result Matrix-Component 1 (WBL)

Results chain	Indicators	Total Target	2023	2024	2025	Achieved
<b>Outcome 1:</b> SuTPs and TC vulnerable groups are qualified to participate in the formal labour market	# of direct beneficiaries placed into jobs as WBL trainees	1,000	330	330	340	1,453
	% direct beneficiaries obtained MoNE verified training certification	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%
<b>Output 1.1:</b> Vulnerable groups are provided skills development and job placement through the Work-based learning programme (WBL)	# beneficiaries placed into jobs as WBL trainees	900				1,452
	# retained beneficiaries placed into jobs as WBL trainees	450				870
	% of trainees MoNE obtained training certifications	90%				*
<b>Output 1.2:</b> People with Disabilities have enhanced access to the labour market through WBL programme	# of beneficiaries placed into jobs as WBL trainees	100				104
	# retained people with disabilities placed	50				56
	% of trainees MoNE obtained training certifications	90%				*

Source: 2024 Annual Report

\*In the meantime, ILO team is collaborating with their partners to secure the statistics on the percentage of direct beneficiaries who earned MoNE-approved training certificates.

Promoting the inclusion of women and PwD continued to be a key priority throughout Phase III, though challenges persist. According to the annual report, women represented 34% of participants, including 169 refugees and 1,050 Turkish nationals. For PwD, the programme met the 5% inclusion quota, with 195 individuals participating. 6 of whom were refugees and 189 Turkish citizens. These figures reflect ongoing efforts toward inclusive programming, while also underscoring the need for targeted strategies to reach underrepresented groups more effectively.

The percentage of women participating in the programme closely mirrors national trends in female labour force participation, which remain relatively low. This disparity is even more pronounced among Syrian refugee women compared to their Turkish counterparts. Several intersecting factors contribute to this limited engagement, including household responsibilities, caregiving duties, and prevailing conservative norms that discourage women from working in mixed-gender environments or industries such as manufacturing. As local implementing partners mentioned that concerns about safety, long

commutes, and returning home late further deter enrolment in the first place to these projects and participation. These barriers are deeply rooted in social norms and cultural expectations, which continue to restrict refugee women's access to employment opportunities.

Access for PwDs, particularly among refugee populations, also presents ongoing challenges. Many face difficulties obtaining official disability report from hospitals due to bureaucratic hurdles and limited institutional support. Cultural stigmas around disability and social isolation further inhibit their integration into public life and participation in programmes. Additionally, recent policy changes have restricted camp access to only the most vulnerable groups, such as individuals with disabilities, single parents and elderly population. Strengthening engagement with refugee camps and tailoring outreach to these populations may offer a pathway to increase participation and ensure more inclusive programming moving forward

The WBL component demonstrated strong results, building on lessons learned from Phase I and Phase II and successfully reaching its target numbers. However, according to the local implementing agencies interviewed, the vocational training emerged as a relatively weaker dimension. The focus leaned heavily toward job placement, prioritizing quantity over quality. Indeed, WBL is designed as work-based learning, so the majority of the learning takes place on the job while being employed. This is the unique feature of WBL, that it reduces the opportunity cost of training. However, even though acknowledging employers' reluctance to release staff for participation in training if they were designed off site, local implementing partners consistently emphasized the need for more robust and technically focused vocational training off site, noting that companies increasingly require skilled personnel to meet operational demands.

Young participants expressed particular interest in obtaining formal certification, which they view as a pathway to more stable employment. Certifications from recognized institutions, such as the MYK (*Mesleki Yeterlilik Kurumu*-Vocational Qualifications Board), are especially valued by employers, who often prioritize candidates with standardized credentials from the same training provider. However, the cost of certification remains a barrier for many participants. Supporting access to these qualifications, potentially through partnerships with a single certifying institution, could enhance motivation and improve employment outcomes.

Regular visits held by the local implementing partners also revealed a clear link between technical training, certification, and job retention. Participants without formal qualifications, often placed in sales or entry-level roles, tended to change jobs frequently. In contrast, those with certified technical skills were more likely to secure long-term positions and earn higher incomes. These findings underscore the importance of investing in quality vocational training and certification pathways to promote sustainable employment and economic empowerment.

The WBL component also created strong synergy with other projects implemented by the same local implementing partners. In fact, all these partners had prior experience working with development agencies on similar initiatives, which significantly contributed to their capacity and effectiveness. These local partners are not only knowledgeable and skilled, but also well-respected actors within their provinces. Their established networks with other institutions further enhanced collaboration and resource sharing. For example, one of the partners highlighted the presence of a KOSGEB representative as a major advantage, noting how the two projects, WBL and KOSGEB-supported initiatives, mutually reinforced each other's goals and outcomes. Another example can be drawn from Bursa. In Bursa, the Yildirim Municipality operates a Women's Education and Entrepreneurship Center that offers vocational and technical training across a wide range of disciplines. The center benefits from a diverse pool of instructors, and when needed, the Public Education Directorate appoints additional qualified teachers to fill gaps. Prominent programs such as ISDEP, another programme run by ISKUR and the TRC-run

programmes are commonly active in the province, contributing to a robust ecosystem of employment and skills development.

The recent gray area is introduction of exemptions from work permits. Türkiye has recently introduced a series of regulatory changes aimed at easing work permit requirements for refugees and foreign nationals. According to an interview with the Ministry of labour and Social Security, the revised regulations include temporary exemptions for certain groups, such as refugees and professionals providing essential services. These changes are intended to simplify the exemption process and extend the validity period during which eligible foreign workers can operate without a formal permit. However, both local implementing partners and the ILO team have expressed uncertainty regarding the specifics of the exemptions. There is a lack of clarity about which sectors are covered and how the exemptions are applied in practice. This ambiguity has created challenges in aligning project activities with the new regulatory framework and ensuring that beneficiaries can fully benefit from the updated policies.

***Outcome 2: Formalization of MSMEs is enhanced through access to adequate information and support with transition to formality***

Component 2, which focuses on improving access to adequate information for MSMEs, has been effectively implemented through the BILMER offices in close collaboration with the Directorate General of International labour Force (DGILF). BILMERs have exceeded targets in several areas, including outreach to employers, employees, and the registration of workplaces and work permits. However, progress in employee counseling has lagged slightly (See Table X below). With the recent project extension and strong collaboration among local consultants and implementing agencies, it is anticipated that these targets will be met in the coming period.

**Table X. Result Matrix-Component 2 (BILMERs)**

Results chain	Indicators	Total Target	2023	2024	2025	
Outcome 2: Formalization of MSMEs is enhanced through access to adequate information and support with transition to formality	# of consultations provided (indirect and direct beneficiaries) Baseline: 0	25,000	8,330	8,330	8,340	10,484
	# of direct beneficiaries received transition to formality support Baseline: 0	1,500	500	500	500	1,890
Output 2.1: <i>SuTPs and Turkish vulnerable groups are provided adequate information on formalization process and are supported with transition to formality</i>	# of consultations provided (indirect and direct beneficiaries)  # of direct beneficiaries received transition to formality support (500 employers, 1,000 employees)  # of information Centres continued to be operational	25,000  1500 of which: 1,000 28 employees & 500 companies  11				10,484  1,890 in total 1,232 Employees 658 Employers  7
Output 2.2: Skills of implementing partners/BILMER staff are developed to better respond to needs of MEs workers and employers and increase sustainability	# BILMER and relevant stakeholder staff (ESOB, municipality) trained	100				363
	# MSMEs owners trained	500				770

As of October 2025, seven BILMERs are operational across key provinces, including Adana, Gaziantep, Istanbul, Konya, Mersin, Şanlıurfa, Bursa (Yıldırım Municipality), Hatay (Reyhanlı Municipality), and Istanbul (Sultanbeyli Municipality). These centers continue to support the transition to formality through long-standing partnerships with local institutions such as ESOBs and municipalities.

The selection of provinces for BILMER implementation is strategically sound. These regions not only host high concentrations of Syrian refugees but also include areas affected by the recent earthquakes, making them critical zones for targeted support. By focusing on provinces like Gaziantep, Şanlıurfa, Hatay (even though there is no more BILMER office in Reyhanlı, Hatay), and others with dense refugee populations and active local economies, the project ensures that its interventions are both relevant and impactful. This alignment enhances the potential for formal employment, strengthens local institutional capacity, and maximizes the reach of decent work initiatives.

As noted at the beginning of the effectiveness section, lessons learned throughout the project helped steer implementation in the right direction. However, one key informant highlighted that the initial phase was marked by challenges, particularly due to a high turnover rate within the ILO and among BILMER staff. Frequent personnel changes made it difficult to establish consistent communication and build working relationships, which in turn led to delays in receiving responses and coordinating activities. While better coordination might have been possible during this period, the informant emphasized that the situation eventually stabilized and did not significantly hinder overall progress. These early challenges underscore the importance of continuity and clear communication structures in multi-stakeholder projects.

According to the local implementing partners, the role of BILMER information desks has proven indispensable. There is no viable substitute for the services they provide, particularly in preventing exploitation, such as overcharging by private accountants for permit-related services. Their presence has helped safeguard refugees from such practices and ensured more equitable access to formal employment pathways.

While the initiative has not yet developed a specific strategy for reaching women, there is recognition of the need to identify and support women-owned businesses. A targeted strategy and action plan would be beneficial to ensure that women entrepreneurs are not overlooked, especially in contexts where such businesses are underrepresented.

Finally, BILMERs have contributed to institutional strengthening. As it is observed and shared during the KIIs, Chambers of Tradesmen have gained valuable experience in project implementation, with some delivering large-scale initiatives. Their visibility and capacity have grown, and there is evidence that the concept of decent work has been more widely embraced. In areas like Reyhanlı, BILMERs have had a tangible impact on promoting registered employment and addressing informality among beneficiaries but unfortunately it has closed down.

### ***Outcome 3: Transition to Formality***

The KIGEP component (Component 3) has demonstrated moderate effectiveness in achieving its intended outcomes, with notable strengths in retention and operational continuity. As of September 2024, the total number of beneficiaries reached 62% of the Phase III target, with women accounting for 21% of participants. However, only 3% of total beneficiaries were Syrian women, highlighting a persistent gap in outreach to this group. While the component has not yet met its full target, the project received a one-year extension, and given its stable implementation since 2019, it remains feasible to reach the remaining goals within the extended timeframe.

Retention rates offer a strong indication of effectiveness. The overall retention rate stands at 66%, with Turkish citizens showing particularly high retention, which is 78% overall, including 81% for men and 71% for women. Syrian beneficiaries had a lower retention rate of 55%, with a significant gender disparity (57% for men and 34% for women). These figures suggest that while the programme is successfully placing individuals into formal employment, additional support may be needed to improve retention among Syrian women. The long-standing operational structure, combined with consistent engagement from implementing partners and employers, has contributed to smooth delivery and meaningful outcomes, even as targeted outreach and tailored support remain areas for further improvement.

Table X. Result Matrix-Component 3 (KIGEP)

Results chain	Indicators	Total Target	2023	2024	2025	
<b>Output 3.1:</b> Employers are incentivized to formalize employees (50% SuTPs and TCs)	# of employees supported by KIGEP with SSI premium payments	7,500  3,750				4,683  2,139
	# of work permits issued for SuTP					
<b>Output 3.2:</b> Awareness is raised about the KIGEP program and benefits of having decent jobs with social security	# of monthly meetings conducted	36				0
	# of Impact Assessment report published	1				0

Source: Annual Report, ILO, 2024.

The KIGEP component has demonstrated several notable strengths. Its collaboration with the Social Security Institution (SSI), which is a long-standing and trusted partner, has been particularly effective. Despite occasional delays, the partnership has operated efficiently, supported by a component lead with extensive experience, which has contributed to smooth implementation.

Another key strength is the widespread need for formalization support in the field. Although multiple projects and institutions are working on similar issues, the high number of informally employed individuals ensures that efforts are complementary rather than duplicative. Coordination meetings with other UN agencies, such as IOM and UNHCR, have further helped avoid overlap, as these actors typically operate in different provinces.

The simplicity of the KIGEP component has also been a major asset. Its straightforward design appeals to employers, who often face complex administrative requirements and appreciate the ease of engagement. Indeed, it is a serious burden on small and medium enterprises, and the component eases this financial burden with no conditions.

While the project has made efforts to monitor workplace conditions through regular field visits and partner engagement, concerns remain regarding the adequacy of safeguards against potential labour rights violations. Interviews revealed that some SMEs in certain provinces operate under substandard conditions, such as outdated or unsafe facilities, which may pose risks to employee health and safety. Although monitoring mechanisms are in place, it remains unclear what specific actions are taken when issues are identified, who is responsible for follow-up, and whether employees feel safe reporting concerns.

Additionally, anecdotal evidence from the field suggests troubling practices in isolated cases, such as employees being asked to withdraw funds from their bank accounts and return social security premiums to employers. These instances highlight the need for a more robust and systematic risk mitigation framework. Strengthening grievance mechanisms, clarifying accountability structures, and enhancing transparency in workplace monitoring will be essential to ensure that supported organizations uphold decent work standards and that beneficiaries are protected from exploitation.

On the other side of the picture, beneficiary side, some challenges were observed, particularly in the early stages. Many potential beneficiaries were reliant on social assistance, mainly ESSN, where it combined with free healthcare and wages close to the minimum threshold, reduced motivation to pursue formal employment. However, the KIGEP survey conducted by the ILO found that only 9% said they would prefer ESSN assistance over formal employment.<sup>16</sup>

Additionally, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often lacked the capacity and sustainability to fully engage with the programme. KIGEP's outreach has helped identify these gaps, and future efforts such as online training and capacity-building initiatives may help strengthen SME participation. It is also worth noting that unionization rates among SMEs remain low, which may limit broader labour rights advocacy within this segment. Furthermore, to increase local visibility and to implement smaller scale local level KIGEP initiatives, the support of organizational zone managements and similar nature local stakeholders might be sought.

*Has the management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with all key stakeholders and partners in Türkiye, ILO and the donor to achieve project goals and objectives?*

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<sup>16</sup> KIGEP Business and Employee Survey Results, 2023.

The management and governance structure established for the project has largely functioned strategically and effectively in collaboration with key stakeholders in Türkiye, the ILO, and the donor. Several factors contributed to this success:

- **Strong Financial Oversight:** Effective budget management, coupled with favourable currency exchange rates, ensured that sufficient resources were available to meet programme outcomes without major financial constraints.
- **Collaborative and Non-Hierarchical Approach:** The project adopted a non-hierarchical model that fostered inclusive engagement with key stakeholders and partners. This approach helped build trust and facilitated smoother coordination, particularly with long-standing partners such as the Ministry of labour and Social Security.
- **Challenges with ISKUR Engagement:** While ISKUR has historically been a key partner, its participation in this specific project was limited due to its demanding agenda. This posed a challenge to long-term sustainability efforts, although the project team acknowledged the issue and maintained open channels for future engagement.
- **Leadership Transition and Continuity:** Although there was a change in project management, the incoming manager brought valuable regional experience and successfully adapted it to the Turkish context, ensuring continuity and strategic direction.
- **Local Partner Dynamics:** Local implementing partners did not report any significant delays or disruptions, indicating that operational coordination remained stable. Their involvement in joint monitoring visits further reinforced alignment and accountability.
- **Advisory Board and Social Dialogue:** The advisory board played a pivotal role in broadening stakeholder engagement and promoting social dialogue. While trade unions demonstrated strong technical understanding of the project, their level of involvement was not as deep as ideally desired. Nevertheless, the ILO team expressed a clear commitment to enhancing union engagement in future phases.
- **Managing a Large Network of Implementing Partners:** Although the number of implementing partners could have posed coordination challenges, this was mitigated by structuring them under distinct project components. ILO team members demonstrated strong familiarity with each partner's role and contributions, which helped streamline collaboration.

In summary, despite some limitations, such as ISKUR's limited involvement and the need for deeper engagement with unions, the management and governance structure has proven effective in aligning diverse actors toward shared project goals. The structure has evolved over time, incorporating lessons from earlier phases and demonstrating adaptability, strategic coordination, and a commitment to inclusive implementation.

**Has the knowledge sharing and communication strategy been effective in raising the profile of the project within the country and among the cooperating partners?**

The project's knowledge sharing and communication strategy has been largely effective in raising its profile both within Türkiye and among cooperating partners, despite operating in a highly sensitive and politically complex environment. Given the evolving public discourse around refugees, donor funding, and migration policies, the project has strategically framed its messaging around "decent work" and "formal employment," which has helped navigate these sensitivities and maintain broad stakeholder engagement. The inclusion of host community beneficiaries further strengthened the narrative and ensured balanced visibility.

Visibility efforts were adapted to reflect changing restrictions. As noted by a key informant, visibility constraints have varied over time, which is less restrictive in 2019, but more challenging during Phase III. Despite these limitations, the ILO team remained proactive, embedding the project's communication

within broader institutional campaigns such as the *Global Coalition for Social Justice* and the *Global Call for Social Justice*, launched by the ILO Director-General in 2022. These global narratives have been effectively localized, reinforcing the project's alignment with ILO's strategic priorities and enhancing its resonance in Türkiye.

The communication team played a central role in amplifying the project's impact. A dedicated communications specialist was present in the field to document best practices and success stories, contributing to a rich portfolio of visibility materials. These include 17 videos and a multimedia product featuring beneficiary testimonials, as well as news reports typically featuring 3–4 speakers per event. Such outputs have helped humanize the project's outcomes and foster public understanding.

Capacity-building efforts further supported the strategy's effectiveness. In February 2024, communications and advocacy training was delivered in Antalya, targeting unions, confederations, and implementing partners. These sessions, including ITC-led modules, enhanced stakeholders' ability to communicate project goals and outcomes effectively.

In summary, the project's communication strategy has been responsive, context-aware, and well-integrated with ILO's global messaging. It has successfully elevated the project's visibility while navigating political sensitivities and promoting inclusive narratives around decent work and social justice.

***To what extent is the monitoring and evaluation system results-based and to what extent is it being used to take management decisions?***

The project's Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system is structured around a results-based approach, anchored in the Performance Monitoring Framework (PMF) and the Logical Framework/Result Matrix. These tools define specific indicators for each outcome and output, enabling systematic tracking of progress toward the project's overarching objectives. Monthly progress reports serve as the primary output of the monitoring process, providing detailed updates on achievements, challenges, and recommendations. These reports are shared with the donor, KfW, and are used to reassess risks and assumptions outlined during the proposal development phase.

While the system has traditionally focused on quantitative indicators, continuous field-level monitoring, particularly face-to-face engagement with employers, beneficiaries, and implementing partners, has added qualitative depth. Structured feedback mechanisms, including interviews and consultations, have helped identify trends, challenges, and opportunities, especially during Phase III. Key informant interviews confirmed that ILO staff are highly knowledgeable about field-level dynamics, and their insights have informed adaptive management.

Monitoring data has been actively used to guide decision-making. For example, in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme, financial support for persons with disabilities was adjusted multiple times based on field observations to better encourage labour market participation. Similarly, Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for BILMER and WBL were revised in consultation with partners and beneficiaries to reflect evolving needs and feedback.

However, some limitations have affected the consistency of monitoring. The last monitoring mission took place in April 2025, with no further visits planned for the year. Monitoring consistency was affected by temporary suspensions while the project reviewed the budget and awaited the outcome of the no-cost extension (NCE) request. Agreements with BILMERs and KIGEP could only be extended once the NCE was approved. In parallel, ILO Project Team was also waiting for the finalisation of an agreement with ISKUR-which ultimately did not materialize. Additionally, while the project has made efforts to build

the capacity of implementing partners through annual training sessions, internal challenges, including the resignation of the project manager and budget-related delays, led to the cancellation of planned physical training in early 2025. Despite this, remote support has continued, and a new M&E training for incoming partners is planned for the extension time frame of the project.

The project has also adopted a risk-based methodology, following recommendations from an internal audit. This approach, implemented in the previous year, has helped prioritize monitoring efforts and improve the strategic use of resources.

In summary, the M&E system is fundamentally results-based and has been effectively used to inform management decisions, adapt implementation strategies, and respond to field-level realities. Continued investment in partner capacity and restoration of field monitoring activities will be key to sustaining this effectiveness in future phases.

### *Assess how contextual and institutional risks have been managed by the project management?*

Project management has responded to contextual risks with flexibility and foresight, particularly in light of political developments in Syria following the regime change in December 2024. While the potential for refugee returns has increased, the actual impact on project implementation remains limited. Key informants from migration and government institutions acknowledged policy shifts and emphasized planning for future phases in alignment with the evolving context. Although cross-border social security coordination has been discussed, it remains an uncertain development with minimal immediate effect on the project.

While a formal risk register exists, it does not adequately address risks faced by beneficiaries, particularly child labour and workplace abuse. Referral mechanisms remain vague, with implementing partners and consultants often unclear about procedures for reporting or escalation. Some partners reported witnessing child labour but refrained from action due to their affiliations with union-member companies, where the employer denied the issue or framed it as informal family involvement. In interviews, partners struggled to respond to hypothetical abuse scenarios, highlighting the need for clearer protocols.

Monitoring visits by ILO and implementing partners have been vital for safeguarding rights, but budget constraints have reduced their frequency. Although some consultants mentioned their maintenance of direct communication with beneficiaries, this informal approach cannot replace a structured referral system. Cases of discrimination, wage withholding, and workplace accidents were sometimes resolved through personal networks, but this ad hoc method lacks consistency and accountability. In some provinces, support was withheld due to discomfort with observed child labor, indicating ethical alignment but also underscoring the need for a formalized response framework. Overall, risk management would benefit from clearer guidance, stronger referral pathways, and more consistent oversight mechanisms.

#### 6.4. Efficiency

*Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and specially outcomes?*

Overall, the project has demonstrated a strategic and effective allocation of financial, human, and technical resources to achieve its intended outputs and outcomes. Drawing on lessons learned from Phases I and II, the project team made informed decisions that enhanced operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. For example, long-term agreements denominated in USD helped mitigate the impact of inflation and minimum wage increases, avoiding the need for frequent budget revisions and ensuring that payments remained aligned with expectations. As one key informant noted, this approach prevented disruptions caused by currency fluctuations and maintained financial stability throughout implementation.

The project's management structure has also proven to be efficient and well-suited to the scale and complexity of activities. The core ILO team, which is comprising 11 experts including project manager, technical advisor, specialists in three components including social security, employment services, skills development, monitoring and evaluation, communications, finance, and administration assistant, has provided strong leadership and technical oversight. This structure is appropriate given the project's budget, ambitious targets, and geographic coverage across multiple cities in Türkiye.

However, the allocation of human resources for monitoring and evaluation presents a challenge. With only one dedicated Monitoring and Evaluation Officer responsible for tracking all indicators and managing data across multiple KfW-funded components within the same project, the workload is substantial. The same holds true for Finance Department as well. However, it is noted that improvements have been observed over time to lessen the burden on ILO staff to a certain extent. Local implementing partners have become more proficient in data collection and reporting, which has enhanced the timeliness and accuracy of indicator tracking. In addition, more staff and along with partners, might being sensitized to and contribute to M&E.

Field-level resource deployment has also evolved. Initially, high numbers of partners and cities made field visits and expense verification demanding. As one informant shared about the high number of partners within different locations and how challenging it becomes time to time. Despite these logistical challenges, technical support has been consistently available and instrumental in achieving project outputs. Notably, the adoption of a comprehensive risk-based methodology, which is developed in response to internal audit recommendations, mentioned that it has strengthened implementation and accountability.

*Were the project's activities and operationalization in line with the schedule of activities as defined by the work plan? If not, what are the factors that hinder timely delivery and what are the counter measures taken to achieve project outcomes and impact during the life of the project?*

Overall, the project's activities have largely aligned with the schedule defined in the work plan, particularly in terms of reaching and exceeding beneficiary targets. Components such as BILMERs and the Work-Based Learning Programme (WBL) have surpassed initial log frame expectations, while KIGEP has progressed steadily toward its goal of formalizing 7,500 workers. These achievements reflect strong operational capacity and adaptability, even amid significant external challenges.

Throughout 2024, the project operated in a volatile socio-economic environment shaped by the aftermath of the February 2023 earthquakes, soaring inflation, and depreciation of the Turkish Lira. These factors placed pressure on both jobseekers and employers, with many businesses struggling to maintain formal employment due to rising costs. In response, the project implemented timely countermeasures, including a revision of its incentive scheme in March 2024. Social security support was increased from 2,500 TRY to 6,000 TRY per person, and work permit support rose from 1,500 TRY to 3,000 TRY in KIGEP component. These adjustments were well-received by employers.

Operational challenges also emerged at the local level. In cities like Konya, strong social assistance networks made it difficult to recruit beneficiaries, as many individuals relied on community support rather than formal employment. To address this, ILO guided the implementing partner to increase its field presence, which helped improve outreach and engagement with refugee population. In Istanbul, particularly in districts like Küçükçekmece where over 60,000 Syrian refugees reside, the scale of operations required more advanced data management systems. Stakeholders noted that transitioning from manual Excel-based reporting to digital platforms would enhance efficiency and allow for real-time updates, improving responsiveness and timely delivery.

Administrative and bureaucratic delays also affected timely delivery. In some cities, payment issues and delays in contract approvals hindered implementation. For example, delays in premium support disbursement by SSI created financial strain for businesses, while slow contract processing, which is not solely for ILO but common across UN agencies, led to postponed payments for project staff. Despite these setbacks, local implementing partners consistently reported receiving the support they needed from ILO to navigate these challenges.

Staff turnover further impacted delivery timelines, causing temporary slowdowns in activity during the new recruitments. Nevertheless, the project-maintained momentum by reallocating responsibilities and reinforcing coordination mechanisms.

In summary, while the project faced a range of national and local challenges, its ability to adapt through strategic revisions, increased field engagement, and responsive support systems by ILO team in Ankara enabled it to remain broadly aligned with its work plan and deliver meaningful outcomes.

### ***To what extent did the project leverage resources to promote gender equality and nondiscrimination?***

The project has made substantial efforts to leverage its resources through financial, technical, and institutional means, to promote gender equality and non-discrimination, in alignment with ILO's core values and normative frameworks. These efforts have been embedded across multiple components of the project and supported by targeted activities designed to address structural barriers faced by women and PwDs in accessing decent work.

One of the most notable initiatives was the stakeholder workshop titled "*Strengthening Employment for People with Disabilities: Collaborative Solutions*", held in Ankara in March 2024 with support from the ILO's Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI). The workshop convened 37 experts from national and local government, employers, workers' organizations, academia, civil society, and UN agencies. It served as a platform to raise awareness of ILO's standards and good practices, and to generate recommendations for improving labour market access for PwDs. These discussions complemented national-level developments, including the *National Action Plan on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2023–2025)*, the launch of the *Academy on Life Without Disability*, and a Memorandum of Understanding signed between TISK and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security to support PwDs employment.

Following the workshop, the project organized a series of inclusive training sessions and career days in Adana, Ankara, and Gaziantep between May and July 2024. A total of 172 PwD participated in personal competency development training, while 85 company representatives received training on inclusive communication and recruitment practices. These sessions culminated in "Barrier-Free Career Days," which facilitated direct engagement between employers and jobseekers with disabilities, promoting inclusive hiring.

To advance gender equality, the project provided additional financial incentives to women participating in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme, including targeted support for women with small

children (ages 4–72 months) and PwDs. These monthly payments were adjusted in early 2024 to reflect increases in the national minimum wage and wage subsidies, ensuring that financial support remained meaningful and responsive to economic conditions.

The project also invested in qualitative research to better understand gender dynamics in the labour market. Twelve focus group discussions were conducted with 126 women, including Syrian refugees, Turkish citizens, and women with disabilities, in Bursa, Gaziantep, and Istanbul. Insights from these discussions informed programme design and were compiled into a briefing note shared with KfW, with plans for publication in late 2025.

Finally, the project delivered capacity development training to 39 WBL beneficiary companies in Ankara and Bursa, focusing on decent work principles, gender equality, and inclusive employment practices. These sessions helped build institutional awareness and capacity among employers to support diverse and equitable workplaces.

## 6.5. Impact orientation and sustainability

*What level of influence is the project having on reduction of the decent work deficits for informally employed women and PWD and other areas of policies and practices at national and subnational levels?*

The project has demonstrated a meaningful level of influence in addressing decent work deficits among informally employed women and PWD, particularly at the local level. Quantitatively, it has met its outreach targets and effectively responded to the needs of the target population. High retention rates among beneficiaries, especially in technical and skilled roles, which have been positively noted by donors, and have helped motivate local implementing partners. This phase of the project placed a stronger emphasis on facilitating access to the formal labour market for women and PWD, contributing to incremental but important shifts in employment practices. However, given the vast size of Türkiye's informal sector and the large refugee population, the project's numerical impact remains modest. Still, its contribution to social behavior change is notable: once individuals secure stable, formal employment with regular salaries, they tend to remain in those roles, reinforcing the value of decent work.

Beyond direct service delivery, the project has also influenced local policy dialogue and institutional practices. By engaging municipalities, unions, and private sector actors, it has helped raise awareness of inclusive employment and decent work standards. While systemic change at the national level remains gradual, the project has laid important groundwork for future policy alignment, particularly in areas such as workplace accessibility, anti-discrimination, and inclusive hiring. Continued investment in scaling these efforts and strengthening referral and monitoring mechanisms will be key to sustaining and expanding the project's influence.

*Is the project contributing to expanding the knowledge base and building evidence regarding the project outcomes and impacts?*

The project is actively contributing to the expansion of the knowledge base and generating field-informed evidence on decent work challenges and outcomes. While the prevalence of informal employment in Türkiye is widely recognized, the project adds depth by documenting the lived realities of refugees and other vulnerable groups, particularly the cultural and social factors influencing their participation in the labour market. It sheds light on why individuals engage in informal work, how behavior change occurs over time, and what conditions encourage transitions to formal employment.

Moreover, the project strengthens local knowledge networks by empowering implementing partners to engage directly with employers and community members. These one-on-one interactions have enhanced partners' understanding of workplace dynamics and beneficiary needs, making them more responsive and grounded in field realities. This localized insight not only informs project adjustments but also contributes to broader policy discussions on labour inclusion, social protection, and gender-responsive employment strategies. Continued documentation and dissemination of these findings will be key to sustaining impact and influencing systemic change.

***To which extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDG and relevant targets? (explicitly or implicitly)?***

The results achieved through the project show strong potential for sustainability beyond its formal end, particularly if strategic handover and institutional partnerships are realized. Although initial plans to transition key components, such as Work-Based Learning (WBL), to state institutions like ISKUR were delayed due to ISKUR's demanding agenda, there remains clear interest and commitment from relevant public bodies to integrate WBL into their regular service delivery. If this collaboration is formalized, it would be instrumental in institutionalizing the project's achievements, scaling up BILMER and WBL interventions, and ensuring long-term benefits. The ILO's continued technical support would further strengthen this process, especially in piloting the mainstreaming of the WBL model within national systems.

Positive retention rates among beneficiaries also indicate a strong foundation for sustainability. Local implementing partners have consistently emphasized that jobs requiring technical skills tend to have higher retention than those in less specialized sectors, such as retail. Moreover, when beneficiaries begin to experience the stability of regular income and access to social security benefits, their preference shifts away from reliance on social assistance toward formal employment. This behavioral shift, as noted by several consultants and echoed by refugee participants, reinforces the long-term viability of the programme's outcomes.

The motivation and commitment of local partners, who have expressed a desire to continue WBL activities and training, further support the likelihood of sustained impact. Their deep understanding of market needs and strong relationships with employers position them well to carry forward the programme's objectives, even in the absence of direct project funding.

In summary, while formal handover to state institutions is still pending, the groundwork laid by the project, combined with strong local ownership and positive beneficiary outcomes, suggests that the results are likely to continue and evolve in a sustainable direction.

***To what extent are government stakeholders prepared to sustain project outcomes beyond Phase III?***

The programme has demonstrated a strong level of ownership among both implementing partners and beneficiaries, though with some variation across components and regions.

Local partners, particularly those involved in BILMER and WBL activities, have shown high levels of engagement and commitment. In Konya, for example, stakeholders highlighted the presence of a highly knowledgeable and well-connected contact person, which significantly enhanced local implementation. BILMER centers are widely regarded as valuable resources, especially by beneficiaries who previously faced financial exploitation when seeking work permit support through private accountants. These

centers have helped restore trust and provide equitable access to services, reinforcing beneficiary ownership.

While some municipalities have been less visibly engaged, which is often due to political sensitivities, the capacity of their personnel has nonetheless been significantly strengthened through the programme. This suggests a form of indirect ownership, where individuals within institutions continue to carry forward programme values and practices.

KIGEP's engagement has been more financially driven, yet it has successfully partnered with WBL initiatives. Stakeholders involved in KIGEP are eager to continue WBL activities, particularly training programmes, and are well-informed about market needs at the provincial level. Their strong relationships with employers and trusted institutions such as chambers of commerce and artisans have further anchored the programme locally.

Retention rates and visible results have been key motivators for sustaining ownership. Partners see firsthand the impact of their efforts, which helps build momentum and makes a compelling case for continued support, especially from government stakeholders. Beneficiaries, as reflected in survey results, are generally satisfied with the programme, reinforcing its relevance and value.

In summary, while budget constraints and political dynamics have posed occasional challenges, the overall level of ownership is high. The programme has cultivated a network of motivated partners and empowered beneficiaries, laying a strong foundation for sustainability and future scale-up.

## 6.6. Gender Equality and non-discrimination issues

### *What are so far, the key achievements of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment?*

The project has made notable strides in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment, particularly by reaching hard-to-access groups through targeted initiatives and incentives. Despite persistent challenges, such as cultural norms, childcare responsibilities, workplace discrimination, and lack of safe transport, the project successfully engaged 511 women in 2024, offering childcare support and financial incentives to facilitate their participation. However, the gender gap in employment remains significant, especially for Syrian refugee women, who represented only 5% of Work-Based Learning (WBL) participants. The KIGEP retention study further highlighted disparities, showing higher retention rates among Turkish women compared to Syrian women, underscoring the need for more tailored support.

On the stakeholder engagement front, the project facilitated important dialogue through activities like the "Strengthening Employment for People with Disabilities: Collaborative Solutions" workshop held in Ankara in March 2024. Supported by the ILO's Gender, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Branch (GEDI), the workshop helped raise awareness of inclusive employment practices and ILO's normative frameworks. However, gaps remain in mainstreaming gender across all project components. Gender-disaggregated data is limited, with little insight into age groups or NEET (Not in Education, Employment, or Training) populations. Moreover, the absence of a dedicated gender focal point within the project structure has hindered systematic integration of gender equality principles. Addressing these gaps, particularly through gender equality modules for beneficiaries and stronger institutional mechanisms, will be essential for deepening the project's impact.

Last but not least, gender equality trainings could have been more systematically integrated to raise awareness among both refugee and host communities. While such interventions were not included in the initial project design, key informants highlighted the need for more targeted efforts, such as

extended seminars focused on evolving gender roles, women's participation in the workforce, and fostering inclusive workplace cultures.

### *To what extent is the M&E data supporting project decision making related to gender?*

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) data has played a meaningful role in guiding gender-related decisions within the project. Based on gender-disaggregated data, the project identified gaps in women's participation and responded with targeted measures to improve inclusion. For example, to increase female engagement in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme, additional financial incentives were introduced for all women participants, with special support for mothers of young children (ages 4–72 months). These payments were made directly to beneficiaries on a monthly basis, and as noted in the 2024 annual report, the incentive amounts were adjusted in line with national minimum wage increases and corresponding employer wage subsidies.

Beyond financial support, M&E findings prompted specific outreach efforts by implementing partners and the provision of childcare services to reduce barriers to participation. Despite these efforts, the inclusion of Syrian refugee women remained limited. In response, the project conducted focus group discussions (FGDs) to explore underlying causes, such as cultural norms, caregiving responsibilities, and mobility constraints, and to inform future programming. However, while M&E data has been instrumental in shaping responsive interventions, further improvements are needed in capturing qualitative insights and intersectional dimensions (e.g., age, disability, refugee status) to better tailor gender strategies and ensure equitable outcomes. Strengthening the feedback loop between data collection and adaptive planning will be key to deepening the project's impact on gender equality.

### *Has the project addressed other vulnerable groups, such as people living in poverty, PWD and informally employed, if so which ones?*

Yes, the project has effectively reached several vulnerable groups, including informally employed and unemployed individuals from both refugee and host communities. It specifically prioritized women and PWD, aligning strongly with the Sustainable Development Goal principle of "leaving no one behind." To promote inclusive employment, the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme offered targeted financial incentives to women, mothers of young children (ages 4–72 months), and PWD. These monthly payments were made directly to beneficiaries, helping reduce barriers to participation and retention.

Beyond direct support, the project also contributed to broader stakeholder engagement and policy dialogue. As mentioned in the Annual Report (2024), a key milestone was the "Strengthening Employment for People with Disabilities: Collaborative Solutions" workshop held in Ankara in March 2024, which convened 37 experts from government, labour unions, academia, and civil society. The workshop generated recommendations to improve access to decent work for PWD. Additionally, the establishment of the "Academy on Life Without Disability", which is a joint initiative by TISK, TÜRK-İŞ, and HAK-İŞ, the signing of an MoU between TISK and the Ministry of Labour and Social Security in September 2024 reflect growing national ownership and commitment to sustainable inclusion of PWD in the labour market.

## *7. Lessons Learned and Good Practices*

Insights gathered from the document review and key informant interviews have revealed several key messages. This section explores lessons learned and promising good practices that can guide the design and implementation of future projects.

**Lessons Learned I:** The project identified low recruitment of women, particularly refugee women with caregiving responsibilities and disabilities, in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme. To address this, the ILO introduced targeted financial incentives, adjusted monthly payments to reflect wage increases, and conducted qualitative research to inform gender-responsive programming. Additionally, employer trainings were delivered to promote inclusive hiring practices.

**Lessons Learned II:** Operating in a politically sensitive and economically volatile environment, the project highlighted the importance of flexibility in design and implementation. Early recruitment challenges—particularly participant hesitation around personal data collection—were addressed by refining procedures to ensure privacy and build trust. These adaptive measures improved recruitment effectiveness and reinforced the value of responsive, context-aware programming.

### ***Good Practice I: Inclusive Job Fairs and Employer Trainings for Persons with Disabilities***

Recognizing the barriers faced by PWDs, especially refugees, in accessing formal employment, the ILO Office for Türkiye launched a targeted initiative to promote inclusive labour market integration. Following a stakeholder workshop in March 2024, the ILO organized a three-city series of trainings and career days in Ankara, Adana, and Gaziantep. These inclusive job fairs connected job seekers with disabilities to employers committed to inclusive hiring.

In addition to employment opportunities, the events featured introductory seminars aimed at building participants' confidence and job readiness. Topics included self-confidence in business life, effective CV preparation, and successful interview techniques. To complement these efforts, a dedicated training program was held for employers, with 50 company representatives from various sectors participating. The sessions covered inclusive communication strategies, best practices for hiring employees with disabilities, reasonable workplace accommodations, techniques for reviewing CVs of PWDs, and the broader importance of diversity and inclusion. Simulated interviews were also conducted to help employers apply inclusive recruitment practices in real-world scenarios.

This initiative not only expanded access to decent work for PWD but also strengthened employer capacity and commitment to inclusive employment, setting a strong example for replication across other regions.

### ***Good Practice II: BILMER Information Centers***

BILMER offices stand out as a key good practice within the project based on the desk review, recent assessment and data driven from key informant interviews. These centers were established as part of the initiative and did not exist prior to its launch, making them an indispensable resource for both refugee and host community members. BILMER centers provide essential information and guidance on labour rights, fair recruitment, and workplace protections, helping individuals navigate employment-related challenges.

By addressing issues such as recruitment fees, deceptive practices, and lack of awareness, where factors that often lead to exploitation and indebtedness, the centers play a critical role in safeguarding vulnerable workers. Notably, there have been cases where individuals were charged excessive fees by intermediaries, underscoring the importance of accessible and trustworthy support. Consultants recruited through the project have strengthened institutional capacity, and in some cases, have been retained as permanent staff, further embedding BILMER's role within local structures. These centers

have become a sustainable and impactful model for promoting decent work and protecting labour rights.

### **Good Practice III: Strategic Selection and Capacity Strengthening of Local Implementing Agencies**

One of the project's notable good practices is the strategic selection and capacity building of local implementing agencies, which has significantly enhanced ownership and effectiveness on the ground. This approach is clearly reflected in field outcomes, particularly through partnerships with the Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen. These institutions are highly respected and trusted by their members, possess deep knowledge of local labour market dynamics, and maintain close relationships with their communities, while making them well-suited to deliver project components. Their provision of training centers within their premises has further supported the Work-Based Learning (WBL) component and created sustainable infrastructure for future programming.

Municipalities have also played a role as access points for refugee populations, leveraging their experience from previous projects. However, their involvement has occasionally been affected by political sensitivities surrounding refugee issues, as seen in the unexpected closure of the BILMER center in Reyhanli. Despite these challenges, their participation remains valuable. Importantly, the project's emphasis on strengthening institutional capacity has led to lasting impact, where some staff trained under the project have been retained permanently, embedding expertise within local systems. This model of empowering local actors not only improves delivery but also fosters long-term sustainability and community trust.

## ***8. Conclusions and Recommendations***

Criterion	Conclusion	Recommendations	Priority	To Whom
<p><b>Relevance and Strategic Fit</b></p>	<p>1. The project demonstrates strong alignment with both national development priorities and global frameworks, particularly in promoting inclusive employment, gender equality, and refugee integration. While recent policy shifts regarding regime change in Syria, December 2024 may influence future relevance, the project’s multi-layered design and responsiveness position it well to adapt to evolving contexts.</p>	<p><b>1. <i>Enhancing Policy Coherence and Transferability of Formalization and Social Protection Models:</i></b> December 2024 declaration on voluntary refugee returns may affect the long-term relevance of the project. Ongoing phase and future phases must proactively assess and adapt to evolving policy landscapes to maintain strategic fit.</p> <p>Actions to take:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ National institutions and the ILO should jointly initiate a structured dialogue to explore how these models can be adapted and transferred to the Syrian context. This collaboration could take the form of a multi-stakeholder brainstorming platform which is bringing together representatives from MoLSS, ISKUR, SSI, local municipalities, employer organizations, and civil society, to assess the feasibility</li> <li>➤ Beyond national institutions. multi-stakeholder brainstorming platform can emphasize technical exchange and policy dialogue within Türkiye in coordination with ILO Damascus and ILO Arab States Office.</li> </ul>	<p>High</p>	<p>PMM, MoLSS, PMM and Project Management Team</p>

<p><b>Validity of Intervention Design</b></p>	<p>2. The project adopts a pragmatic and evidence-based approach to advancing formal employment for Syrians under Temporary Protection and vulnerable Turkish citizens, recognizing the complexity of the challenge. While advocacy efforts face external constraints such as elections, negative rhetoric about refugees, the project’s inclusive design, stakeholder engagement, and realistic targets position and compromising retention rates it as a credible and adaptable model.</p> <p>3. While the project’s Theory of Change provides a solid foundation for promoting decent work and inclusion, the lack of explicit recognition of discrimination as a risk limits the strength of the design.</p> <p>4. Relevant to the conclusion above, while the project has demonstrated commendable adaptability in responding to shifting political dynamics and contextual risks, significant gaps remain in addressing beneficiary-level protection concerns.</p>	<p>2. To build on the simplicity and appeal of the intervention for employers, ILO should consider linking participation to ILO’s online training modules on workplace, gender equality, decent work. These modules can serve not only as a tool for skill-building but also as a means to encourage shifts in social norms and workplace behavior. Embedding them into the programme design would strengthen its developmental impact on the targeted population. As an example to these training, ILO should consider trainings provided by ITCILO including but not limited to <i>“Access to decent work for refugees and other forcibly displaced persons”</i>, <i>“Establishing Fair Recruitment Processes”</i> and <i>“Extending Social Protection to Migrant workers, Refugees and Their Families”</i></p> <p>3. ILO should incorporate social risks such as workplace discrimination into future iterations which would enhance the framework’s ability to anticipate challenges and support more equitable and sustainable labour market outcomes.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>High</p> <p>High</p>	<p>Project Management Team</p>

		<p>4. ILO should formulate and strengthen the risk management framework, particularly through clearer referral protocols, structured oversight, and consistent monitoring, which is essential to uphold rights-based principles and ensure accountability in future phases.</p>		
Effectiveness	<p>5. The Phase III of the project has demonstrated strong effectiveness, with most quantitative targets nearly achieved and implementation benefiting from lessons learned in earlier phases. The inclusive partnership model, strategic outreach, and adaptive problem-solving have strengthened institutional capacity and improved employment outcomes.</p> <p>5a. <b>WBL: the Work-Based Learning (WBL)</b> component of Phase III has delivered impressive results in generating and sustaining employment, surpassing placement and retention targets while fostering inclusive programming for women and persons with disabilities. However, persistent barriers, such as limited vocational training options, low female participation among refugees, and</p>	<p>5. (WBL) With guidance from the ILO and local implementing partners, future phases should invest in high-quality, sector-relevant vocational training and subsidize certification costs to improve employment outcomes. Piloting tailored approaches, such as adjusting class schedules, offering stipends during training, and streamlining certification logistics, can help identify effective models and ensure that training is accessible, practical, and aligned with labour market needs.</p> <p>5.a. (BILMER): ILO should develop a Strategy for Women-Owned Businesses while creating targeted outreach and support mechanisms for women entrepreneurs, especially in underrepresented sectors.</p>	Medium	ILO Türkiye, line Ministries, and local stakeholders

	<p>regulatory ambiguities around work permit exemptions persists.</p> <p>5b. <b>BILMER:</b> the BILMER component has played a pivotal role in advancing formal employment and protecting vulnerable workers by providing essential information and support services across strategically selected provinces. While the initiative has exceeded many of its targets and contributed to institutional strengthening, early staffing challenges and the absence of a targeted strategy for reaching women-owned businesses highlight areas for improvement to ensure even more inclusive and sustainable outcomes in future phases.</p> <p>5c. <b>KIGEP:</b> The KIGEP component has proven effective in addressing formalization needs through its trusted partnership with SSI, simple design, and strong field relevance. Its appeal to employers and coordination with other UN agencies have supported smooth implementation. However, concerns around workplace conditions, limited SME capacity, and gaps in labour rights protections highlight areas for improvement.</p>	<p>5b. (BILMER): Given the strong interest from partners in maintaining them, ILO should support the development of a financial feasibility plan to assess whether these offices can be sustained using ESOBs' own resources. A tailored feasibility study would help clarify cost structures, identify potential funding gaps, and offer practical options for long-term integration into local institutional budgets.</p> <p>5c.(KIGEP): ILO should strengthen KIGEP's design by introducing targeted capacity-building for SMEs, such as online training on safeguarding decent work standards, will increase their engagement, and make the component more than social security premiums.</p>		
<b>Efficiency</b>	<p>6. The project has demonstrated efficient and strategic use of financial, human, and technical resources, enabling it to meet ambitious targets across diverse locations in Türkiye. The project has demonstrated</p>	<p>6. ILO and national partners should prioritize strengthening operational systems. This includes streamlining administrative procedures to reduce delays, developing contingency plans</p>	Medium	Project Management Team and UN Agencies

	<p>strong alignment with its work plan and exceeded key beneficiary targets, reflecting robust operational capacity and adaptability in a challenging socio-economic context. Nonetheless, addressing persistent issues such as administrative delays, staff turnover, and the need for improved data systems will be critical to sustaining timely delivery and maximizing impact in future phases.</p>	<p>to manage staff turnover, and investing in improved data management tools, such as digital reporting platforms, to enhance responsiveness and real-time tracking.</p>		
<p><b>Impact Orientation and Sustainability</b></p>	<p>7. The project has made commendable strides toward sustainability by fostering local ownership, building institutional capacity, and promoting behavioral shifts toward formal employment, particularly among women, persons with disabilities, and refugees. Its influence on local policy dialogue, knowledge generation, and inclusive employment practices has laid a solid foundation for long-term impact, with strong retention rates and motivated partners reinforcing the viability of its outcomes.</p> <p>Sustainability remains contingent on several critical factors. While local partners are eager to continue activities, reliance on external funding and lack of clarity around future institutional commitments may hinder progress. A preliminary steps of formal handover to state institutions, such as ISKUR remains pending, and political sensitivities have affected municipal engagement.</p>	<p>7. ILO should continue to work closely with national stakeholders to secure government buy-in for embedding key project components, such as WBL and BILMER centers, into existing national frameworks. Formalizing institutional transition plans and obtaining clear commitments from public institutions will be essential to ensure long-term sustainability, scale-up, and integration of these models into Türkiye’s regular service delivery systems.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>PMT and National Stakeholders</p>

	Without clear transition plans and secured funding, sustainability risks persist.			
<b>Gender Equality and Non-discrimination</b>	<p><b>8.</b> The project has demonstrated a strong and strategic commitment to advancing gender equality and non-discrimination by embedding inclusive practices across its components and engaging a wide range of stakeholders.</p>	<p>8 ILO should continue investment in targeted outreach and institutional capacity-building which is essential to sustain progress and deepen impact for women and persons with disabilities in the labour market. Particularly for BILMER component, ILO should work on a robust strategy and reach out techniques for reaching women-owned businesses</p> <p>9 ILO should assign gender and PWDs and/.or “leaving no one behind” focal point, who can review the content of activities and implementation through gender and disability lenses during the implementation stage.</p>	<p>Medium</p> <p>Medium</p>	<p>Project Management Team</p>



**TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR):**

**INDEPENDENT MID-TERM  
EVALUATION  
OF**

**Promoting Decent Work for Syrians  
under Temporary Protection and  
Turkish Citizens - Phase III**

Project title	Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III
Project Code	TUR/22/02/DEU
Administrative Unit	EVAL at ILO HQ
ILO Technical Units	ILO Office for Türkiye
Funding Partner	KfW
Budget	EUR 15,000,000 (fifteen million Euro)
Implementation period	12 December 2022 – 31 December 2025
Country	Türkiye
Type of evaluation	Independent Evaluation
Timing of evaluation	Mid-term Evaluation
Evaluation Manager	François Murwanashyaka, Project Coordinator, ILO Country Office Dar es Salaam

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The International Labour Organization (ILO), with the financial support of the Federal Republic of Germany through the KfW Development Bank (KfW) is implementing the third phase (Dec 2022 - Dec 2025) of project ‘Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens’.

Initiated in 2018, the goal of the “Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection (SuTP) and Turkish Citizens (TC)” programme has been to increase the number of these beneficiaries working in decent conditions in Türkiye, with special attention to the most vulnerable populations. The programme aimed to reach both refugees and Turkish citizens and was implemented in 18 Turkish provinces, focusing on regions with the highest Syrian populations. Having been implemented by the ILO, the programme has been part of the ILO Refugee Response Programme of the ILO Office for Türkiye. Phases I and II have been extended until December 2024.

While Türkiye has provided for the legal right to work for refugees in Türkiye, informal work arrangements remain pervasive among Syrian refugees, leaving them exposed to a range of decent work deficits, such as low wages, long working hours and occupational safety and health risks. Many Syrian refugees have had no choice but to accept temporary jobs in the informal economy in low skilled sectors. Among the key barriers to formal employment, Syrian refugees identified limited Turkish language skills, difficulties to access services and information, misconceptions about formal employment, not having Turkish networks, feeling discriminated by Turkish employers, with women disproportionately affected. Additionally, Syrians earn below the minimum wage, and Syrian women’s participation in the labour market remains markedly lower than that of Turkish women.

The impact of Covid-19 further exacerbated the situation and compounded challenges in accessing the formal labour market, with more youth consequently having been forced into the informal economy, with young women being the most affected. In the last quarter of 2021, the unemployment rate stood at around 11 percent, the employment rate stood at 46 percent, of which the male employment rate was recorded at 64.2 percent, the female employment rate at 29.2 percent, and youth unemployment recorded at 21 percent.

On top of the pandemic, Türkiye has also experienced unprecedentedly high inflation rates at an average monthly increase of 4.8% and an annual increase in the Consumer Price Index of 54.44%, as of February 2022, significantly affecting household incomes and basic needs. The crisis has also affected smaller enterprises disproportionately, with the rate of highly affected micro enterprises standing at 51 per cent, against 38 per cent in the case of large enterprises<sup>17</sup>. Research indicates that in 2021 due to the pandemic and increasing inflation, debt is almost inevitable in the lives of refugees in Türkiye. Consequently, many refugees are forced to resort to negative coping mechanisms.

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Business for Goals (2021), *Impact of COVID-19 Crisis on Enterprises*, Q4 Survey (21 Dec 2020 – 15 Jan 2021), 24 February 2021, [https://www.business4goals.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/B4G\\_Covid-19-Q4-Survey-Report\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.business4goals.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/B4G_Covid-19-Q4-Survey-Report_ENG.pdf).

Therefore, the Phase III of this project specifically addresses the following challenges:

- Insufficient access to decent jobs for all, in particular for women, youth and persons with disabilities.
- Lack of adequate information on the process of formalization for businesses and workers.
- Insufficient information among MEs about both the process and benefits of formalization processes in general as well as about social protection benefits to the workers.
- Low representation of women generally among the Transition to Formality Initiative programme, (locally known as KIGEP beneficiaries), and in particular Syrian women.
- Lack of conducive policies to create an enabling environment to effectively address social protection.

To address those challenges, in this phase, the programme creates more access to decent jobs for women and people with disabilities, targeting at least 50 per cent of all Work-Based Learning (WBL) Programme beneficiaries to be women and at least 100 people with disabilities; strengthen business strategies designed and tested and a gradual transition through cost sharing introduced; promote more the participation and/or formalization of women among companies. The programme puts more efforts to advocate for benefits of formality while creating a more enabling environment for transition to formality. A number of advocacy events are planned as part of phase III to both increased awareness and to create a more conducive environment for social protection.

The programme is anchored in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015. With its focus on promoting decent work for all through supporting formal employment this project contributes to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals 1 (No Poverty), 4 (Better Education), 5 (Gender Equality) and Goal 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) as well as Goal 10 (Reduced Inequalities).

The priorities of the project are fully aligned with the policy framework defined in the UNSDCF 2021-2025, whose “Pillar 2. Competitive Production, Productivity and Decent Work for All” focuses on the labour market policies covering all groups in the society. Additionally, under its Pillar 1. Inclusive and Equitable Social Development, the Outcome 1.3. states the following: By 2025, persons under the Law on Foreigners and International Protection are supported towards self-reliance,” suggesting therefore further support for the livelihoods of the migrants and refugees.

The project is also in line with the ILO Programmes and Budget 2022 - 2023, under outcome 7 on “Adequate and effective protection at work for all”, outcome 4 on “Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work”; and outcome 5 on “Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market”.

The project is also contributing to the ILO Programmes and Budget 2022 - 2023, under outcome 7 on “Adequate and effective protection at work for all”, outcome 4 on “Sustainable

enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work”; and outcome 5 on “Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market”.

Moreover, the project is making substantive contribution to the Eleventh and Twelfth Development Plans of the Republic of Türkiye which addresses employment and working life.

Given that the overarching development objective of this project remains the same, in Phase III the project continues to promote decent work for SuTP and host communities in Türkiye through investment in skills (WBL), improved service delivery (BILMER) and transition to formality (KIGEP).

As part of Component 1, the implementation of scaled up WBL, which combines both on the job and off the job learning to continue supporting long-term formal employment of 1,000 beneficiaries with a larger emphasis on vulnerable groups such as women (50% of all WBL participants) and people with disabilities (10% of all WBL participants). To achieve this objective, the work under Phase II with is continuing in Phase III with the same implementing partners. For specific interventions for PWDs, new partnerships were established with specialised NGO/SCOs to ensure the interventions are designed in accordance with the needs of this group of beneficiaries.

As part of Component 2, employees, employers, and owners of micro-enterprises (likely informally employing SuTP and TC workers or own an unregistered businesses) are informed through BILMERs, not only about the incentives but also about work permit procedures and associated penalties in case they fail to register. The BILMERs will continue to operate until the end of 2025. Moreover, BILMERs continue providing support for formalization through consultations and administrative support for work permit applications on their behalf. In phase III, BILMERs will reach up to 25,000 workers and 5,000 employers targeting to register at least 500 businesses and 1,000 workers.

As part of Component 3, through the already established strong cooperation with Social Security Institution during Phase I and II, KIGEP facilitates the formalization of at least 7,500 workers (50/50 SuTP and Turkish, of which at least 30% women), through incentives, work permit support and special incentives for women. During implementation, gender-sensitive selection criteria (to give priority to female heads of households or single women for example), quotas and incentives for employers to hire women will be provided. For this component the collaboration with the Social Security Institution as well as the support through field consultants continues into phase III.

## **Project design**

The third phase (Dec 2022 - Dec 2025) of the project ‘Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens’ is designed to continue supporting an enhanced access to decent work for at least 10,000 SuTP and vulnerable TC, equally (50/50), of which at least 30% will be women. It will do so through specially designed interventions under its three components:

Component 1 (SuTP and TC vulnerable groups are qualified to participate in the formal labour market) continues to support increased access to formal decent work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and vulnerable Turkish citizens through upskilling of refugees to meet labour market demands, providing them with concrete work experience to increase their employability. It implements the upscaled WBL Programme combining on the job and off the job learning to continue supporting formal employment of 1,000 beneficiaries of whom at least 50% should be retained after completion of WBL, with an emphasis on vulnerable groups such as women (50%), and people with disabilities (10%). The work under Phase II with implementing partners continues into the third phase. For specific interventions for people with disabilities, new partnerships are to be established with specialized NGO/SCOs or Municipality associations to ensure the interventions respond to the needs of this group of beneficiaries.

Component 2 (Formalization of MSMEs is enhanced by access to adequate information and support with transition to formality) continues supporting micro-enterprises with the formalization processes both in relation to their business and their workers by filling information gaps related to administrative barriers, as well as promoting formalization among businesses and ensure their workers have access to social security and other social protections. It ensures that the employees, employers, and owners of micro-enterprises are informed through information centers, not only about the incentives but also about work permit procedures and associated penalties in case they fail to register. The existing Information Centers, locally known as BILMERS, (with current implementing partners ESOBs, Municipalities and others and with close cooperation with DGILF) continue operating and become sustainable in the process. The target of this component is at least 5,000 businesses and 25,000 workers to be reached through consultations, targeting to register at least 500 businesses and about 1,000 workers.

Component 3 (Transition to formality is facilitated for SuTP and Turkish citizens) continues supporting the transition to formality. It does so through incentives to companies to formalize their workers, through work permit fee support and special incentives for women. The target of this component is to facilitate the formalization of at least 7,500 workers (50% SuTP and 50% Turkish). For this component, the collaboration with the Social Security Institution as well as the support through field consultants continues in Phase III.

The project design considers lessons learned from previous phases, a comprehensive problem analysis as well as the best practices from global guidance and practice.

**Project implementation Phase III (12 December 2022 – 31 December 2025)**

Concerning the first component, the WBL has been directly piloted with the private sector enterprises through implementation arrangements which included a set of criteria for the potential implementing partners leading to scaling up the approach with partners. As a result, it was determined that WBL is best suited to be conducted by partners that have well-established relations with enterprises and a well-functioning training facility or an affiliated entity for training provision. For this purpose, the partners participating in WBL as part of phase II continues implementing WBL as part of Phase III. These include the following institutions: Union of Chambers of Craftsmen and Tradesmen (Gaziantep), Municipalities (Ankara Metropolitan Municipality, Istanbul Kucukcekmece Municipality and Bursa Yildirim Municipality), organized industrial zones (Adana, Ankara, Denizli), and chambers of industry (). However, implementation agreements with Ankara Metropolitan Municipality and Denizli Organized Industrial Zone had been concluded in 2023, while the one with Istanbul Kucukcekmece Municipality had been concluded in December 2024.

In addition, as part of the Phase III work, these partners were brought to another level which requires specific interventions to reach out to vulnerable groups such as women, youth (recent graduates) and persons with disabilities, each of these groups requiring specific outreach and inclusion channels and mechanisms. For PWDs, Engelsiz Kariyer (Career without Barriers) Relief International, ISKUR, SASFs, relevant branches of the municipalities (including Turkish Red Crescent that implements the largest social safety net for refugees (ESSN), including PWDs), were consulted and they committed contribution to training and job placement of PWDs as well as supporting the outreach of the implementing partners to PWDs.

Concerning Component 2 on accessing adequate information for MSMEs, the work under BILMERs continues to be implemented in close cooperation with the DGILF who will provide technical guidance on work-permits and interpretation of labour law on formalization of informal workers and businesses. BILMERs continue to provide support in transition to formality with the same implementing partners such as ESOBs in Adana, Gaziantep, Istanbul, Konya, Mersin, Şanlıurfa; Bursa Yildirim Municipality in Bursa, Reyhanli Municipality in Hatay and Sultanbeyli Municipality in İstanbul. As of January 2025, 7 BILMERs are active since the agreement with Reyhanlı Municipality was concluded in October 2024. In Phase III, BILMERs continue to provide consultancy and financial support to SuTP and Turkish microenterprises, focus on strengthening both partners' and BILMERs' capacity to provide more specific consultation services to MSMEs as well as develop capacities for strategic business planning to ensure sustainability.

Concerning the Component 3, to ensure continuation of daily KIGEP implementations, its IT system, and to automatize application and payment verification processes, the current implementation agreement with SSI will need to be amended to include the activities under this phase including the additional beneficiaries. To provide necessary field support, consultancy services on advocacy and communication related issues and academic support for impact assessment, service contracts or external collaborations might be needed in terms of the component III. Furthermore, to increase local visibility and to implement smaller scale

local level KIGEP initiatives, the support of organizational zone managements and similar nature local stakeholders might be sought.

Through the three components, the following results are expected to be achieved:

<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Outputs</b>
<p><b>Component 1:</b> SuTP and TC vulnerable groups are qualified to participate in the formal labour market</p>	<p>1,000 trainees have successfully participated in the WBL programme and placed to jobs. At least 50% of beneficiaries are women and 10% PWDs. Furthermore, at least 50% of all beneficiaries are retained in employment.</p>
<p><b>Component 2:</b> Formalization of MSMEs is enhanced through access of adequate information and support with transition to formality</p>	<p>At least 11 BILMERs continue providing adequate information on formalization</p> <p>At least 25,000 SuTP and Turkish employees of micro-enterprises and 5,000 micro-enterprises are reached and consulted through BILMERs of which at least 1,000 workers and 500 enterprises are formalized (50% SuTP /50% TC; and at least 30% are women)</p>
<p><b>Component 3:</b> Transition to formality is facilitated for SuTP and TC.</p>	<p>At least 7,500 beneficiaries (50% SuTP /50% TC; and at least 30% women) are formalized, whereby 3,750 SuTPs also receive work permits for formal employment</p>

### **Project management arrangements**

Phase III will continue under the overall supervision of the Director of the ILO Office for Türkiye. The project team remains the same as during Phase II whereas the majority of the team has been there from the beginning of the project.

The project transitioned from a Steering Committee to a more technical level Project Advisory Board consisting of technical experts from relevant stakeholder groups in order to benefit from specific technical guidance as we implement project interventions.

The project has a well-established team which functions since the beginning of the project through combined forces of the core project team as well as field consultants.

### **ILO staff (core team)**

- Project Manager
- Technical Officer on Refugees
- Skills Development Officer
- Employment Services Officer
- Social Protection Officer

- Communication Officer
- Monitoring and Evaluation Officer
- Finance and Administration Officer
- Procurement Officer
- Project Assistant
- Administrative Assistant

## **PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND CLIENTS OF THE MID-TERM INDEPENDENT EVALUATION**

### **Evaluation Background**

ILO considers evaluation as an integral part of the implementation of technical cooperation activities. This evaluation will be managed by ILO/EVAL through ILO officer certified as evaluation manager and implemented by independent evaluator.

The evaluation in ILO is for the purpose of accountability, learning and planning and building knowledge. It should be conducted in the context of criteria and approaches for international development assistance as established by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standard; and the UNEG Code of Conduct for Evaluation in the UN System.

This evaluation will follow the ILO policy guidelines for results-based evaluation; and the ILO EVAL Policy Guidelines Checklist 4.8 “Preparing the inception report”; Checklist 4.9 “Validating methodology”; and Checklist 4.2 “Preparing the evaluation report”. The evaluation will follow the OECD-DAC framework and principles for evaluation. For all practical purposes, these ToR and ILO Evaluation policies and guidelines define the overall scope of this evaluation. Recommendations emerging from the evaluation should be strongly linked to the findings of the evaluation and should provide clear guidance to stakeholders on how they can address them.

## **Purpose and objectives of the Mid-Term independent evaluation**

The main purpose of this mid-term independent evaluation is to provide an independent assessment of the progress to date, through an analysis of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, effects and orientation to impact of the project. The specific objectives of the evaluation are the following:

1. Assess the implementation of the project to date, identifying factors affecting project implementation (positively and negatively). If necessary, propose revisions to the expected level of achievement of the objectives and corrective actions the project could take.
2. Analyse the implementation strategies of the project with regard to their potential effectiveness in achieving the project outcomes and impacts; including unexpected results.
3. Review the strategies for sustainability.
4. Identify the contributions of the project to the Twelfth Development Plan of Türkiye, the SDGs, the ILO objectives and its synergy with other projects and programs.
5. Identify lessons and potential good practices for the key stakeholders.
6. Provide strategic recommendations for the different key stakeholders to improve implementation of the project activities and attainment of project objectives

## **Scope of the evaluation**

The mid-term evaluation will cover the period 1 December 2022 – 31 December 2025 (from design to implementation so far). The evaluation will cover all the planned activities, outputs and outcomes under the project, with particular attention to synergies between the components and contribution to national policies and programmes. The evaluation should help to understand how and why the project has obtained, or not, the specific results from output to potential impacts.

The evaluation will integrate gender equality and inclusion of PWD as cross-cutting concerns throughout its deliverables and process. It should be addressed in line with EVAL guidance note n° 4.5 to ensure stakeholder participation. Furthermore, it should pay attention to issues related to social dialogue and international labour standards.

The evaluation should help to understand how and why the project has obtained or not the specific results from output to potential impacts.

## **Clients**

The principal audiences for this evaluation are the Government of Türkiye, the social partners, the national and local project partners, the donor “KfW Kreditanstalt für

Wiederaufbau”, Workers and Employers organisations, Professional organisations, as well as other relevant ILO policy departments, branches and programmes.

## **REVIEW CRITERIA AND KEY EVALUATION QUESTIONS**

### **Review criteria**

The evaluation should address the overall ILO evaluation concerns such as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact as defined in the ILO Policy Guidelines for results-based evaluation, 2017:

[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_853289.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_mas/---eval/documents/publication/wcms_853289.pdf)

The review will address the following ILO evaluation concerns;

- Relevance and strategic fit of the project;
- Validity of the project design;
- Project effectiveness;
- Efficiency of resource use;
- Sustainability of project outcomes;
- Impact orientation;
- Gender equality and non-discrimination

The evaluation should address the questions below. Other aspects can be added as identified by the evaluator in accordance with the given purpose and in consultation with the evaluation manager. Any fundamental changes to the evaluation criteria and questions should be agreed between the evaluation manager and the evaluator, and reflected in the inception report.

### **Key Evaluation Questions**

The evaluator shall examine the following key issues:

#### **a) Relevance and strategic fit,**

- Is the project coherent with the Government objectives, National Development Frameworks, beneficiaries’ needs, and does it support the outcomes outlined in the UNSDCF, DWCP, the SDGs, Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) as well as ILO P&B outcome 4 on “Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work”; outcome 5 on “Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market; and outcome 7 on “Adequate and effective protection at work for all”.
- Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team etc.)?

- How effectively does the project coordinate with local implementing partners?

**b) Validity of intervention design**

- To what extent and how does the project address the major root causes of the decent work deficits identified for the target group – informally employed women, PWD, refugees, other vulnerable groups; and respond to it?
- To what extent did the problem analysis identify its differential impact on men and women and on vulnerable groups (people living poverty, informally employed etc.)?
- To what extent is the project realistic (in terms of expected outputs, outcome and impact) given the proposed intervention logic, time and resources available and the social, economic and political environment?
- To what extent has the project integrated ILO cross cutting themes (such as ILS, tripartism, gender, no-discrimination, and environmental issues) in the design?
- Are the indicators of the achievements clearly defined, describing the changes to be brought about? Were the indicators designed and used in a manner that they enabled reporting on progress under specific SDG targets and indicators?
- To what extent does the elements presented in the points above have been articulated in a comprehensive and systemic theory of change that can guide project implementation towards the project objectives

**c) Effectiveness:**

- What progress has been made towards achieving the overall project outputs/objectives/outcomes, identifying factors affecting project implementation (positively and negatively)?
- Has the management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with all key stakeholders and partners in Türkiye, ILO and the donor to achieve project goals and objectives?
- Has the knowledge sharing and communication strategy been effective in raising the profile of the project within the country and among the cooperating partners?
- To what extent is the monitoring and evaluation system results-based and to what extent is it being used to take management decisions?
- Assess how contextual and institutional risks have been managed by the project management?

**d) Efficiency of resource use**

- Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and specially outcomes?
- Were the project's activities and operationalization in line with the schedule of activities as defined by the work plan? If not, what are the factors that hinder timely delivery and what are the counter measures taken to achieve project outcomes and impact during the life of the project?

- To what extent did the project leverage resources to promote gender equality and nondiscrimination?

**e) Impact orientation and sustainability**

- What level of influence is the project having on reduction of the decent work deficits for informally employed women and PWD and other areas of policies and practices at national and subnational levels?
- Is the project contributing to expanding the knowledge base and building evidence regarding the project outcomes and impacts?
- To which extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDG and relevant targets? (explicitly or implicitly)?
- To what extent are government stakeholders prepared to sustain project outcomes beyond Phase III?

**f) Gender equality and non-discrimination**

- What are so far, the key achievements of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment?
- Has the use of resources on women's empowerment activities been sufficient to achieve the expected results?
- To what extent is the M&E data supporting project decision making related to gender?
- Has the project addressed other vulnerable groups, such as people living in poverty, PWD and informally employed, if so which ones?

## **EVALUATION METHODOLOGY**

The independent mid-term evaluation will comply with evaluation norms and standards and follow ethical safeguards, all as specified in ILO's evaluation procedures. The ILO adheres to the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) evaluation norms and standards as well as to the OECD/DAC Evaluation Quality Standards. The evaluation is an independent evaluation, and the final methodology and evaluation questions will be determined by the consultant in consultation with the Evaluation Manager.

The evaluation will apply a mixed methods approach, engaging with key stakeholders of the project at all levels during the design, field work, validation and reporting stages. To collect the data for analysis, the evaluation will make use of the techniques listed below (but not limit to). The data from these sources will be triangulated to increase the validity and rigor of the evaluation findings.

**Desk review** of project design and strategy documents, activity documents, communications and research and publications

**Key informant interviews** with project staff, relevant ILO specialists, Government of Türkiye, tripartite constituents, civil society organizations and other stakeholders and partners.

**Field In-depth interviews in Türkiye:** The Evaluator is expected to meet project beneficiaries' men and women to undertake more in-depth reviews on the project work and results. The evaluator must indicate the criteria selection for individuals to interview. Since 50% of the project's beneficiaries are Syrians under Temporary Protection, and some of them may not be fluent in Turkish, translation services might be required during the interviews. The expected cost of translation services should be factored into the financial proposal to ensure smooth communication and accurate data collection.

The selection of the field visits locations should be based on criteria to be defined by the evaluator. Some criteria to consider may include:

- Locations with successful and less or unsuccessful results (from the perception of key stakeholders and the progress reports). The rationale is that extreme cases, at some extent, are more helpful than averages for understanding how process worked, and results have been obtained;
- Locations that have been identified as providing particular good practices or bringing out particular key issues as identified by the desk review and initial discussions.

Field visits should cover up to four provinces, with a maximum of two nights per province, to ensure sufficient time for in-depth interviews and assessments while maintaining efficiency.

At the end of the field work the evaluator will present preliminary findings to the project key stakeholders in an online workshop to discuss and refine the findings and fill information gaps.

Methodology should include examining the interventions' Theory of Change, specifically in the light of logical connect between levels of results, its coherence with external factors, and their alignment with the ILO's strategic objectives, SDGs and related targets, national and ILO country level outcomes.

The data and information should be collected, presented and analyzed with appropriate gender disaggregation even if project design did not take gender into account. Multiple methods and triangulation will be applied to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data. A more detailed methodology for the assignment will be elaborated by the evaluator based on this ToR, in consultation with the ILO Evaluation Manager.

## **MAIN DELIVERABLES**

- a) An inception report - upon the review of available documents and an initial discussion with the project management and the donor (following EVAL Guidelines –Checklist 4.8). The inception report will:

- Describe the conceptual framework that will be used to undertake the evaluation;
- Elaborate the methodology proposed in the TOR with adjustments and precisions as required;
- Set out the evaluation matrix to indicate how each evaluation will be answered in terms of evaluation indicators, data sources, (emphasizing triangulation as much as possible) data collection methods, and sampling
- Selection criteria for locations to be visit ;
- Detail the work plan for the evaluation, indicating the phases in the evaluation, their key deliverables and milestones;
- Set out the list of key stakeholders to be interviewed and the guides to be used for interviews, observation, focal groups and other techniques that may be applied;
- Set out the agenda for the stakeholders' online workshop;
- Set out outline for the evaluation report;

The Inception report should be approved by the Evaluation Manager before proceeding with the field work.

- b) Stakeholders' online workshop to present preliminary findings at the end of field work phase. The evaluator will organize a half day meeting to discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation after data collection is completed. The online workshop will be technically organized by the evaluator with the logistic support of the project.
- c) First draft of Evaluation Report (see outline below). The report will be reviewed methodologically by the evaluation manager. After that, it will be shared with all relevant stakeholders for two weeks for comments. The comments will be provided to the evaluator to arrive to a final version that integrates the comments.
- d) **Final version of the Executive summary in ILO EVAL template and the evaluation report** incorporating comments received (or a specific justification for not integrating a comment). The report should be no longer than 30 pages excluding annexes. The quality of the report will be assessed against the EVAL checklist 4.9. The report should also include a section on output and outcome level results against indicators and targets of each project and comments on each one.

The final version is subjected to final approval by EVAL (after initial approval by the Evaluation manager/Regional evaluation officer)

The draft and final versions of the evaluation report in English (maximum 30 pages plus annexes) will be developed under the following structure:

- Cover page with key project data (project title, project number, donor, project start and completion dates, budget, technical area, managing ILO unit, geographical coverage); and evaluation data (type of evaluation, managing ILO unit, start and

completion dates of the evaluation mission, name(s) of evaluator(s), date of submission of evaluation report).

- Table of contents
- Acronyms
- Executive Summary
- Background of the project and its intervention logic
- Purpose, scope and clients of evaluation
- Methodology and limitations
- Review of project results
- Presentation of findings (by evaluation criteria)
- Conclusions and Recommendations (including to whom they are addressed, resources required, priority and timing)
- Lessons learnt and potential good practices
- Annexes (TOR, table with the status achieved of project indicators targets and a brief comment per indicator, list of people interviewed, Schedule of the field work overview of meetings, list of Documents reviewed, Lessons and Good practices templates per each one, other relevant information).

All reports, including drafts, will be written in English. Ownership of data from the evaluation rests jointly with the ILO and the evaluator. The copyright of the evaluation report will rest exclusively with the ILO. Use of the data for publication and other presentations can only be made with the written agreement of the ILO. Key stakeholders can make appropriate use of the evaluation report in line with the original purpose and with appropriate acknowledgement.

## **EVALUATION MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS AND WORK PLAN**

**Evaluation Manager:** the evaluation will be managed by Mr. François Murwanashyaka, Projection Coordinator, ILO CO Dar es Salaam, who has not had prior involvement in the project.

The Evaluation Manager is responsible for completing the following specific tasks:

- Draft and finalize the evaluation ToR with inputs from key stakeholders (draft TORs to be circulated for comments);
- Develop the call for expression of interest and select the independent evaluator in coordination with EVAL;
- Brief the evaluator on ILO evaluation policies and procedures;
- Initial coordination with the project team on the development of the field mission schedule and the preliminary results online workshop;
- Approve the inception report
- Circulate the first draft of the evaluation report for comments by key stakeholders;
- Ensure the final version of the evaluation report address stakeholders' comments (or an explanation why for anyone that has not been addressed) and meets ILO requirements.
- Share the report with EVAL for final approval and uploading in the public e-discovery repository.

### **Evaluator**

#### **Qualifications**

- University Degree with minimum 7 years of experience in international project /program evaluation in undertaking evaluations of similar projects preferably in Central Asia and Türkiye.
- Experience in using the Theory of change approach on evaluation.
- Strong background in local economic and enterprise development as well as Human Rights Based Approach programming and Results Based Management;
- Extensive experience in applying, qualitative and quantitative research methodologies including participatory approaches (mix methods);
- Knowledge of ILO's roles and mandate and its tripartite structure as well as UN evaluation norms and its programming is desirable;
- Excellent analytical skills and communication skills;
- Fluent in English and Turkish.
- Demonstrated excellent report writing skills in English.

**List of stakeholders to contact:**

- Direct beneficiaries
- Indirect beneficiaries
- Representatives of the donor

## Governmental counterparts:

- MOLSS - Directorate General of International Labour Force (DGILF)
- Social Security Institution (SSI)
- Turkish Employment Agency (ISKUR)
- PMM

## Workers' and employers' organizations

- Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations (TISK)
- Confederation of Turkish Trade Unions (TURK-İŞ)
- Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (HAK-İŞ)
- Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Türkiye (DISK)

## Professional organisations / Public Institutions

- The Confederation of Turkish Tradesmen and Craftsmen (TESK)
- Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOBs)
- Chambers of commerce and industry
- Municipalities
- Small and Medium Enterprises Development Organisation (KOSGEB)

## Cross-Sectoral Stakeholders

- Beneficiary representatives' groups and specialized NGOs (refugees, women and PWD)
- Specialized Public Agencies
- International/National NGOs

## Project team

ILO support units, ILO technical unit at HQ and technical back stopper.

**The role of the Project:**

The project management team will provide logistical support to the evaluator and will assist in organizing a detailed evaluation mission agenda. The projects will also ensure that all relevant documentation is up to date and easily accessible (in electronic form in a space such as Dropbox) by the evaluator from the first day of the contract (desk review phase).

**Evaluation Timetable and Schedule**

The MTE will be conducted from April - July 2025

<b>Activities and deliverables</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
<b>Inception phase</b>		
Elaboration and Finalization of ToR	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager Project team	13/01 – 17/02/2025
Sharing ToR with key stakeholders for inputs	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	12 – 21/03/2025
Call for expression of interest/Publication of ToR	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	24/03 – 11/04/2025
Selection of the consultant	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	14 - 22/04/2025
Contract signing	TURKYE Project Team	12 - 19/05/2025
<b>Inception meeting</b>	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager Evaluator	27/05/2025
Secondary data collection	Evaluator	28/05 – 03/06/2025
Development of data collection tools	Evaluator	04 – 10/06/2025
Draft of inception report	Evaluator	11 – 17/06/2025
Approval / Validation of the inception report and data collection tools	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	18 - 19/06/2025
<b>Data collection phase</b>		
Data collection/Field visit	Evaluator	20/06 – 24/07/2025
Debriefing	Evaluator	28/07/2025
<b>Report writing phase</b>		
Data Collation and Draft evaluation report development	Evaluator	30/07 - 18/0/2025
Submission of draft report	Evaluator	20/08/2025
Circulation of draft report among key stakeholders including donor for feedback	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	21/08 - 08/09/2025
Consolidating feedback and sharing with the Consultant.	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	09 – 15/09/2025
Integration of stakeholders inputs	Evaluator	16 – 18/09/2025
Stakeholders' validation online workshop	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	19/09/2025
Submission of final report after feedback	Evaluator	22/09/2025
Revision and transmission of the final version of the report	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager	23/09/2025
EVAl review for final comments, approval and online publication	ILO EVAL Evaluation manager and EVAl	24/09 – 13/10/2025
Submission of final report after feedback	Evaluator	15/10/2025

## **DELIVERABLES**

The Consultant is expected to fulfil the required tasks and execute the deliverables in the timeframe given below:

<b>Deliverables Expected for the Payment</b>	<b>Deadline</b>	<b>Amount of Payment upon Approval</b>
Inception Report	27/05/2025	Daily Fee will be paid for each day worked (Maximum 17 days) + Travel Cost if occurs.
Stakeholders' online workshop to present preliminary findings	19/09/2025	Daily Fee will be paid for each day worked (Maximum 26 days) + Travel Cost if occurs.
First Draft of Evaluation Report	22/09/2025	Daily Fee will be paid for each day worked (Maximum 10 days) + Travel Cost if occurs.
Final version of the executive summary in ILO Eval template and the evaluation report	15/10/2025	Daily Fee will be paid for each day worked (Maximum 7 days) + Travel Cost if occurs.

All payments will be proceeded upon the submission of the deliverables and the approval of the deliverables by the ILO.

## **ANNEXES**

### **RELEVANT POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

ILO Policy Guidelines for evaluation: Principles, rationale, planning and managing for evaluations, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

[http://www.ilo.ch/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS\\_571339/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.ch/eval/Evaluationpolicy/WCMS_571339/lang--en/index.htm)

### **ADHERENCE TO ILO GUIDANCE AND FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS**

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746808.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746808.pdf)

Code of conduct form (To be signed by the evaluators)

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746806.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746806.pdf)

Checklist 4.2: Preparing the evaluation report

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746808.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746808.pdf)

Checklist No. 4.8: Writing the inception report

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746817.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746817.pdf)

Checklist 4.9: Rating the quality of evaluation report

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746818.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746818.pdf)

Template for lessons learnt and Emerging Good Practices

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746820.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746820.pdf)

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746821.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746821.pdf)

Guidance note 4.5: Stakeholders participation in the ILO evaluation

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746724.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746724.pdf)

Guidance note 3.1: Integrating gender equality in the monitoring and evaluation of projects

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746716.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746716.pdf)

Template for evaluation title page

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Template for evaluation summary

[https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed\\_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms\\_746811.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_mas/@eval/documents/publication/wcms_746811.pdf)

UNEG Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation

<http://www.unevaluation.org/document/download/548>

## Annex B. Evaluation Questions

Please find the evaluation questions here listed below:

Evaluation Criteria	Evaluation Questions
<b>Relevance and Strategic Fit</b>	1.1. Is the project coherent with the Government objectives, National Development Frameworks, beneficiaries’ needs, and does it support the outcomes outlined in the UNSDCF, DWCP, the SDGs, Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) as well as ILO P&B outcome 4 on “Sustainable enterprises as generators of employment and promoters of innovation and decent work”; outcome 5 on “Skills and lifelong learning to facilitate access to and transitions in the labour market; and outcome 7 on “Adequate and effective protection at work for all”.
	1.2. Has the project been able to leverage the ILO contributions, through its comparative advantages (including tripartism, international labour standards, ILO Decent Work Team etc.)?
	1.3. How effectively does the project coordinate with local implementing partners?
<b>Validity of intervention Design</b>	2.1. To what extent and how does the project address the major root causes of the decent work deficits identified for the target group – informally employed women, PWD, refugees, other vulnerable groups; and respond to it?
	2.2. To what extent did the problem analysis identify its differential impact on men and women and on vulnerable groups (people living poverty, informally employed etc.)?
	2.3. To what extent is the project realistic (in terms of expected outputs, outcome and impact) given the proposed intervention logic, time and resources available and the social, economic and political environment?
	2.4. To what extent has the project integrated ILO cross cutting themes (such as ILS, tripartism, gender, no-discrimination, and environmental issues) in the design?
	2.5. Are the indicators of the achievements clearly defined, describing the changes to be brought about? Were the indicators designed and used in a manner that they enabled reporting on progress under specific SDG targets and indicators?
	2.6. To what extent does the elements presented in the points above have been articulated in a comprehensive and systemic theory of change that can guide project implementation towards the project objectives?
<b>Effectiveness</b>	3.1. What progress has been made towards achieving the overall project outputs/objectives/outcomes, identifying factors affecting project implementation (positively and negatively)?
	3.2. Has the management and governance structure put in place worked strategically with all key stakeholders and partners in Türkiye, ILO and the donor to achieve project goals and objectives?
	3.3. Has the knowledge sharing and communication strategy been effective in raising the profile of the project within the country and among the cooperating partners?

<b>Efficiency</b>	4.1. Have resources (financial, human, technical support, etc.) been allocated strategically to achieve the project outputs and specially outcomes?
	4.2. Were the project's activities and operationalization in line with the schedule of activities as defined by the work plan? If not, what are the factors that hinder timely delivery and what are the counter measures taken to achieve project outcomes and impact during the life of the project?
	4.3. To what extent did the project leverage resources to promote gender equality and nondiscrimination?
<b>Impact orientation and sustainability</b>	5.1. What level of influence is the project having on reduction of the decent work deficits for informally employed women and PWD and other areas of policies and practices at national and subnational levels?
	5.2. Is the project contributing to expanding the knowledge base and building evidence regarding the project outcomes and impacts?
	5.3. To which extent are the results of the intervention likely to have a long term, sustainable positive contribution to the SDG and relevant targets? (explicitly or implicitly)?
	5.4. To what extent are government stakeholders prepared to sustain project outcomes beyond Phase III?
<b>Gender Equality and Non-discrimination</b>	1.1. What are so far, the key achievements of the project on gender equality and women's empowerment?
	1.2. Has the use of resources on women's empowerment activities been sufficient to achieve the expected results?
	1.3. To what extent is the M&E data supporting project decision making related to gender?
	1.4. Has the project addressed other vulnerable groups, such as people living in poverty, PWD and informally employed, if so which ones?

## Annex C. List of key informant interviews

Key Informant Interviews	
Project Implementing Institution: ILO (Ankara) (8)	Technical Officer Project Manager BILMER Component Lead WBL/ISMEP Component Lead KIGEP Component Lead Monitoring and Evaluation Officer Communication Officer Finance Officer
Donor: KfW (Ankara and Germany) (2)	Deputy Country Director Portfolio Manager
National Stakeholders (Ankara) (4)	MoLSS- Directorate of International Labour Force (DGILF) Presidency of Migration Management (PMM) Social Security Institution
Local Municipalities (4)	Kuşukçekmece and Sultanbeyli Municipality from Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Yildirim Municipality of Bursa Metropolitan Municipality
Workers' and Employers' Organizations (4)	Confederation of Turkish Real Trade Unions (HAK-İŞ) Confederation of Revolutionary Trade Unions of Türkiye (DISK) Turkish Confederation of Employer Associations (TISK) TESK
Professional organisations / Public Institutions (8)	GESOB-Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) in Gaziantep KONESOB- Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) in Konya AESOB- Union of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen (ESOB) in Adana AOSB-Haci Sabanci Organized Industry Zone in Adana ASOSEM-Organized Industry Zone and Learning Center in Ankara

## Annex D1. Key Informant Interview Protocol

### Box 1 Interview protocol and meeting guidelines

#### *Protocol*

- Agree the length of the interview or meeting (typically 45-60 minutes)
- Introduce the consultant, explain the nature and purpose of the evaluation (below), and why we wanted this interview/meeting
- Record the names and positions of those you are interviewing or meeting with
- People should feel free to express their opinions. Stress that the consultant will take notes to help

Our team, \_\_\_\_\_ [introduce team members in room] is currently conducting an independent evaluation of the

## Annex D2. Interview Template and KII Questions Guideline with ILO

Interview Template:

Do you agree to participate in this study? Yes/No? (verbal response only requested)

If yes, the Interviewer will continue the interview. If no, the interviewer will thank the interlocutor for time and allow the person to leave.

General Group discussion/interview information		
Key informant name	Position	Institution/organisation
Location:		
Category of stakeholders:	<input type="checkbox"/> ILO <input type="checkbox"/> KfW <input type="checkbox"/> ISKUR <input type="checkbox"/> MoLSS DGILF <input type="checkbox"/> PMM <input type="checkbox"/> SSI <input type="checkbox"/> Workers and Employers' Organizations (state the name): <input type="checkbox"/> Public Organizations (state the name): <input type="checkbox"/> Municipalities (state the name): <input type="checkbox"/> Other type of institutions/experts/academicians (note): _____	
Date of KII:		
Name of Interviewer:		
Introduction	Please describe your role/engagement with the project (length of time, responsibilities, nature of interactions, etc.).	

### 1. Please briefly explain your role and involvement in Project.

[Aim: to understand the interviewee's involvement, roles, responsibilities in the Project]

To what extent were you personally part of the following processes:

- project design
- project management (administrative level)

- operational implementation (field level).

## 2. Please tell me about the Project and its components (overall objectives or specific objectives that you are responsible of implementing)

[Aim: to attain a deeper and accurate perspective of the Project and its components]

What was the purpose of the specific project you were part of? What topics were covered? Who were the target groups (beneficiaries)? What purpose did it serve?

### Design of the Project

- How / why did you decide to do the project on these topics / with these target groups?
- Were there any other projects you were considering? Why was this project prioritized?
- What would you do differently the next time you design a project like this?
- How was the project designed?
- What are your views on involving beneficiaries in the design phase of projects?
- Were you able to do this for this project? If yes, how / by what mechanisms did you achieve this? To what extent/in what ways did the beneficiaries participate in the design? What were the difficulties encountered and/or factors that facilitated the situation?
- What efforts were made to ensure that the project design considered target groups' perspectives?
- How gender sensitive was the design of the project?

### Relevance

- How well is the project relevant to the priorities/evolving priorities in Türkiye?
- How well is the project coherent with other projects implemented by ILO in Türkiye? ILO's country strategies?
- To what extent is the project coherent with SDGs?

### Effectiveness

- How successful is the project to reach its goals? Any accomplishments/failures you would like to mention/share?
- Were the targets set in the logical framework achieved?
- Did the project offer an appropriate approach to reinforcing the capacity of state institutions within the respective thematic area?
- What factors promoted or constrained progress towards achieving the outcomes?
- What have been the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the nature and degree of achievement of the project?
- What were the facilitating / challenging factors related to the project, your organization?
- If you were to do the project again, what would you do differently? What would you do the same? (Probe: Any lessons learned throughout the implementation)
- How well is the gender mainstreaming throughout the Project implementation?

### Efficiency

- What measures have been taken to increase efficiency over time? How has the financial efficiency evolved over time?
- Were appropriate mechanisms established for accountability?
- Has the project generated timely results through the most efficient use of inputs including financial and human resources and partnerships?

- How well has the project implementation been managed by the ILO? Were appropriate mechanisms established for accountability?
- Has the project been receiving adequate political, technical and administrative support from the ILO and its partners? Any lessons learned?

### Sustainability and Impact Potential

- What at difference did the actions bring about for beneficiaries? (positive and negative)?
- Have local capacities been strengthened?
- Are there any wider (positive or negative) unintended impacts?
- Do you think the Project provided resulted long-term results? Please explain. (prompt for different activities and stakeholders) AND Are the outcomes of the project sustainable? Applicable to national and other global contexts?
- In light of our discussion, thinking ahead the next phases, and considering the emphasis of this evaluation in terms of learning, is there anything specific that you would like to add?

## Annex D3. Interview Template and KII Questions Guideline with Project Stakeholders

Interview Template:

Do you agree to participate in this study? Yes/No? (verbal response only requested)

If yes, the Interviewer will continue the interview. If no, the interviewer will thank the interlocutor for time and allow the person to leave.

General Group discussion/interview information		
Key informant name	Position	Institution/organisation
Location:		
Category of stakeholders:	<input type="checkbox"/> ILO <input type="checkbox"/> KfW <input type="checkbox"/> ISKUR <input type="checkbox"/> MoLSS DGILF <input type="checkbox"/> PMM <input type="checkbox"/> SSI <input type="checkbox"/> Workers and Employers' Organizations (state the name): <input type="checkbox"/> Public Organizations (state the name): <input type="checkbox"/> Municipalities (state the name): <input type="checkbox"/> Other type of institutions/experts/academicians (note): _____	
Date of KII:		
Name of Interviewer:		
Introduction	Please describe your role/engagement with the project (length of time, responsibilities, nature of interactions, etc.).	

1. Please briefly explain your role and involvement in Project.
  - a. Please briefly tell me about your current position, your roles and responsibilities.

- b. Please briefly tell me about your organization's/institution's operations and responsibilities as it relates to the project under evaluation

## Relevance

### **For National Stakeholders, including Ministry, ISKUR, SSI, PMM:**

- How well does the project align with national development priorities and sectoral strategies?
- In your view, does the project complement existing government programmes targeting vulnerable groups?

### **For Donor:**

- How does the project reflect donor priorities and commitments under the UNSDCF, DWCP, SDGs, and Global Compact on Refugees (GCR)?
- Has the project demonstrated coherence with broader international frameworks and funding strategies?

### **For CSOs:**

- Do you feel the project reflects the realities and needs of the communities you serve?
- How inclusive has the project been in integrating unions/chambers/ perspectives?

## Validity of Intervention Design

### **For National Stakeholders, including Ministry, ISKUR, SSI, PMM:**

- Was the problem analysis sufficiently detailed to capture gender and vulnerability dimensions?
- How realistic do you find the project's goals given the current policy and institutional landscape?

### **For Donor:**

- To what extent does the intervention logic reflect evidence-based planning?
- Are you satisfied with how cross-cutting themes (gender, tripartism, ILS) were embedded in the design?

### **For NGOs:**

- Do you believe the intervention logic adequately addresses the challenges faced by informally employed women, PWDs, and refugees?
- How well does the theory of change reflect the lived realities of your beneficiaries?

## Effectiveness

- Are the activities implemented under the ILO's project has any impact on capacity of your organization/institution?
- How effective is the relationship between ILO and your organization in regard to the project implementation?
- What factors promoted or constrained progress towards achieving the outcomes?
- What were the facilitating / challenging factors related to local context?

## Efficiency

- What measures have been taken to increase efficiency over time?
- How well has the project implementation been managed by the ILO?
- Do you think that your organization has delivered adequate political, technical and administrative support to ILO? Any lessons learned?

- How well has the project implementation and your relationship to the project been managed by ILO?
- Any lessons learned so far?

#### **Coordination**

- How effective was the coordination mechanism between ILO and your institution?
- Are the roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders well defined and clear?

#### **Sustainability and Impact Potential**

- Have local capacities been strengthened?
- Are there any wider (positive or negative) unintended impacts?
- Do you think the Project provided resulted long-term results? Please explain. (prompt for different activities and stakeholders) AND Are the outcomes of the project sustainable? Applicable to national and other global contexts?
- In light of our discussion, thinking ahead the next phases, and considering the emphasis of this evaluation in terms of learning, is there anything specific that you would like to add?

#### **Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination**

##### ***For National Stakeholders, including Ministry, ISKUR, SSI, PMM:***

- What policy shifts or programmatic changes have occurred in support of gender equality?
- How is data being used to inform gender-responsive planning?

##### ***For Donor:***

- Are gender equality results meeting expectations?
- How do you assess the inclusivity of the project's approach to vulnerable groups?

##### ***For CSOs:***

- Has the project strengthened your capacity to address gender and inclusion?
- Are women and marginalized groups meaningfully involved in project activities?

ANNEX E. Emerging Good Practices

<b>ILO Emerging Good Practice I</b>	
<b>Project Title:</b> Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III	
<b>Project TC/SYMBOL:</b> TUR/22/02/DEU	
<b>Name of Evaluator:</b> Gokce Baykal	<b>Date:</b> 16.10.2025
The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.	
GP Element	Text
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<b><i>Inclusive Job Fairs and Employer Trainings for Persons with Disabilities</i></b>  This initiative by the ILO Office for Türkiye aimed to promote inclusive labour market integration for persons with disabilities (PWDs), both refugees and host community. Linked to broader goals of decent work and social inclusion, the practice involved organizing inclusive job fairs and employer trainings across Ankara, Adana, and Gaziantep. It followed a stakeholder workshop in March 2024 and delivered targeted support to both job seekers and employers, enhancing employability and inclusive hiring practices.
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	Türkiye's demographic context, including a large refugee population and evolving labour market dynamics, makes this initiative highly relevant. However, replicability may depend on the selection of new provinces in the upcoming stages of the project.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	Throughout the project, ILO had a challenge in accessing to the PWDs, particularly refugees. The initiative directly addressed barriers to employment for PWDs by providing tailored job readiness support and sensitizing employers. As a result, job seekers gained confidence and skills, while employers had access to PWDs, improved their awareness to recruit inclusively, leading to increased employment opportunities for PWDs and strengthened their access to the job market.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	Over 50 employers participated in training sessions, and hundreds of job seekers with disabilities attended career days. Beneficiaries included both Turkish citizens and refugees with disabilities. Key outcomes included improved job readiness, increased employer awareness, and enhanced access to formal employment for PWDs.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	This model is highly replicable by other ILO country offices, UN agencies, and national employment services. It can be adapted to different contexts with support from local municipalities, disability organizations, and chambers of tradesmen and craftsmen.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	The initiative aligns with ILO's Strategic Programme Framework, particularly goals related to inclusive labour markets, decent work for vulnerable groups, and non-discrimination. It supports Türkiye's DWCP priorities on employment and social protection for disadvantaged population.
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	

## ILO Emerging Good Practice II

**Project Title:** Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III  
**Project TC/SYMBOL:** TUR/22/02/DEU

**Name of Evaluator:** Gokce Baykal

**Date:** 16.10.2025

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<b><i>BILMER Information Centers</i></b> BILMER Information Centers were established under the project as a new institutional mechanism to provide refugees and host community members with critical guidance and targeted support for formalization of micro, small and medium sized enterprises (MSMEs). These centers address issues like supporting informal tradespersons, providing job seeker services, raising awareness of labour market rules, and referring people to training and employment opportunities. They become trusted information centers where preventing illegal fees demanded by accountants to formalize the workplaces, while increasing legal awareness.
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	The success of BILMERs is closely tied to Türkiye's unique labour market dynamics, large refugee population, and the presence of a supportive legal and institutional framework. Replication would require government, local government and/or chambers buy-in. The sustainability of these centers is depended on the budget, eagerness of national institutions to sustain them.
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	The establishment of BILMER centers directly addressed gaps in access to reliable labour market information and legal support. As a result, business owners, particularly refugees, gained awareness of their rights, how to make and keep their business legal, and were better equipped to avoid exploitative practices of other places, experts to pay high fees to keep their businesses legal. The recruitment of trained consultants further enhanced institutional capacity of chambers, creating a feedback loop of improved service delivery and trust and create an opportunity for sustainability of these centers.
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	BILMERs have served thousands of individuals from both refugee and host communities, offering one-on-one consultations, legal guidance, and referrals. Documented cases of increased awareness of labour rights among beneficiaries demonstrate tangible impact. Even though the turnover rate is high, but the retention of project consultants as permanent staff also reflects institutional sustainability in certain provinces.
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	This model can be replicated by municipalities, or chamber of commerce, chamber of artisans in Türkiye.
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	BILMERs contribute directly to ILO's Strategic Programme Framework goals on promoting decent work. They also align with Türkiye's DWCP priorities on strengthening labour market institutions and ensuring access to rights-based services for all workers, including refugees.
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	

### ILO Emerging Good Practice III

**Project Title:** Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III  
**Project TC/SYMBOL:** TUR/22/02/DEU

**Name of Evaluator:** Gokce Baykal

**Date:** 16.10.2025

The following emerging good practice has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text can be found in the full evaluation report.

GP Element	Text
<b>Brief summary of the good practice (link to project goal or specific deliverable, background, purpose, etc.)</b>	<p><b>Strategic Selection and Capacity Strengthening of Local Implementing Agencies</b></p> <p>This good practice centers on the strategic selection and strengthening capacity of local implementing agencies, notably the Unions of Chambers of Tradesmen and Craftsmen and selected municipalities. These actors were chosen for their deep-rooted community ties, credibility, and understanding of local labour market dynamics. Their involvement enhanced project ownership and effectiveness, particularly through the provision of training centers that supported the Work-Based Learning (WBL) component. The initiative also strengthened institutional capacity, with some trained staff retained permanently, embedding expertise and ensuring sustainability.</p>
<b>Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of applicability and replicability</b>	<p>The success of this model depends on the presence of trusted local institutions with operational capacity and community legitimacy. In Türkiye, chambers and municipalities have strong local networks and experience with refugee programming. However, political sensitivities, especially around refugee issues and municipalities' provision of services for refugees, can affect continuity, as seen in the closure of the BILMER center in Reyhanli. Replication requires careful stakeholder mapping and risk mitigation strategies to navigate such sensitivities.</p>
<b>Establish a clear cause-effect relationship</b>	<p>By selecting respected local actors and investing in their capacity, the project ensured more effective delivery and stronger community trust. Training centers embedded within chambers facilitated hands-on learning, while municipalities served as access points for refugee engagement. These choices led to improved program outcomes and institutional sustainability, evidenced by permanent staff retention as well.</p>
<b>Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries</b>	<p>Measurable impacts include increased participation in WBL programs, improved service delivery, and strengthened local institutional capacity. The retention of trained staff and establishment of training centers are tangible indicators of success.</p>
<b>Potential for replication and by whom</b>	<p>This model is replicable by ILO country offices and national ministries while selecting partners for eligible projects. Key actors include chambers of commerce, vocational training institutions, and municipal governments. Success depends on selecting locally respected partners and providing tailored capacity-building support.</p>
<b>Upward links to higher ILO Goals (DWCPs, Country Programme Outcomes or ILO's Strategic Programme Framework)</b>	<p>The practice supports ILO's Strategic Programme Framework goals on strengthening labour market institutions, promoting decent work, and enhancing access to skills development. It also aligns with Türkiye's DWCP priorities on inclusive employment and institutional capacity strengthening.</p>
<b>Other documents or relevant comments</b>	

## ILO Lesson Learned I

**Project Title:** Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III  
**Project TC/SYMBOL:** TUR/22/02/DEU

**Name of Evaluator:** Gokce Baykal

**Date:** 16.10.2025

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	The project identified low recruitment of women, particularly refugee women with caregiving responsibilities and disabilities, in the Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme. To address this, the ILO introduced targeted financial incentives, adjusted monthly payments to reflect wage increases, and conducted qualitative research to inform gender-responsive programming. Additionally, employer trainings were delivered to promote inclusive hiring practices.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	Women, particularly refugees and those with young children or disabilities, face structural barriers to formal employment in Türkiye, including caregiving burdens, limited mobility. These challenges were compounded by economic pressures and cultural norms. The project operated in urban centers with diverse populations, requiring tailored interventions sensitive to local dynamics and gender roles.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	Primary beneficiaries included: (i) Women participating in the WBL programme, especially Syrian refugees, host community, and women with disabilities; (ii) Employers engaged in WBL who received training on gender equality and inclusive employment; (iii) Indirectly, children of participating women and broader communities benefiting from improved gender inclusion.
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial low participation rates among women highlighted gaps in program accessibility and relevance.</li> <li>• Cultural norms and caregiving responsibilities limited women's availability for training and employment.</li> <li>• Lack of employer awareness and readiness to accommodate diverse needs contributed to exclusion.</li> </ul>
<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Financial incentives, especially for mothers of young children and women with disabilities, significantly improved participation, at least partly fulfilled the quotas,</li> <li>• Wage ensured continued relevance and attractiveness of support.</li> <li>• Qualitative research provided actionable insights, enhancing program design and stakeholder engagement,</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employer trainings contributed to build institutional capacity and commitment to inclusive hiring, fostering more equitable workplaces.</li> </ul>
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	The ILO demonstrated adaptive management by revising financial support mechanisms in response to economic changes; The integration of gender-responsive design and monitoring reflects ILO's commitment to inclusive programming and continuous learning.

## ILO Lesson Learned II

**Project Title: Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens – Phase III** **Project TC/SYMBOL: TUR/22/02/DEU**

**Name of Evaluator: Gokce Baykal**

**Date: 16.10.2025**

The following lesson learned has been identified during the course of the evaluation. Further text explaining the lesson may be included in the full evaluation report.

LL Element	Text
<b>Brief description of lesson learned (link to specific action or task)</b>	A key lesson learned was the importance of flexibility in project design, particularly in politically sensitive and economically volatile contexts. For example, early recruitment efforts faced resistance due to concerns over personal data collection. The ILO responded by refining data procedures to prioritize privacy and build trust, which significantly improved participant engagement and recruitment outcomes.
<b>Context and any related preconditions</b>	The project operated in a complex environment marked by political sensitivities around refugee inclusion and temporary IDs, voluntary returns, and deportations as well. These conditions heightened concerns among potential participants about how their personal data would be used, especially in communities with prior experiences of surveillance or exclusion. Trust-building and adaptive management were essential preconditions for successful implementation.
<b>Targeted users / Beneficiaries</b>	The primary beneficiaries were potential participants in the project's employment and training components, particularly refugees. Secondary beneficiaries included project staff and implementing partners who gained improved tools and protocols for ethical data collection and participant engagement.
<b>Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Initial recruitment efforts were hindered by participant hesitation due to fears around data misuse</li> <li>Lack of clarity and transparency in early data collection protocols contributed to mistrust</li> <li>Negative experiences with registration processes amplified resistance</li> </ul>

<b>Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Refining data collection procedures to emphasize privacy and informed consent helped rebuild trust</li> <li>• Clear communication and transparency around data use increased participant confidence</li> <li>• These adjustments led to improved recruitment effectiveness and broader engagement with project activities</li> </ul>
<b>ILO Administrative Issues (staff, resources, design, implementation)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ILO staff demonstrated responsiveness and adaptability by revising procedures in real time</li> <li>• The project's flexible design allowed for quick pivots, reinforcing the importance of agility in implementation</li> <li>• These administrative strengths contributed to the project's resilience and credibility in sensitive settings</li> </ul>

## ANNEX H. Document list

ILO:

- Terms of Reference of the Mid-term Evaluation
- Annual Narrative Progress Report, 1 January-31 December 2022
- Annual Narrative Progress Report, 1 January-31 December 2023
- Annual Narrative Progress Report, 1 January-31 December 2024
- Project Document Template (PRODOC) as of March 2021 – updated May 2023 due to earthquake response
- DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION PROJECT DOCUMENT of “Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens - Phase III”, March 2022.
- Final Evaluation Report of Phase I and Phase II of “ Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens”
- Mid-term Evaluation Report of Phase I and Phase II “ Promoting Decent Work for Syrians under Temporary Protection and Turkish Citizens”, September 2021.
- *Transition to Formality Programme (KIGEP) Business and Employee Survey Results*, July 2023.
- Developing Review of BILMER, December 2024.
- Stakeholder List