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Independent Final Evaluation of Employment Intensive Programme (EIIP) and Decent Employment Project in Jordan

QUICK FACTS

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BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

The Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) and Decent Employment Project in Jordan – Phase II (2022–2025), funded by the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, aimed to support a more inclusive and accessible green labour market for vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees. The project responded to persistent structural labour market weaknesses in Jordan, compounded by the Syrian refugee crisis, high unemployment in rural areas with limited job creation, and increasing climate and environmental pressures.

The EIIP AICS project objective was to improve access to decent, inclusive, and environmentally sustainable livelihood opportunities. This would be accomplished by combining: i) Labour-intensive green public works; ii) skills development and on-the-job training; iii) Institutional capacity building; and vi) Support to women-led small and micro enterprises.

The project was structured around two outcomes:

Outcome 1: Increased access to decent green jobs through local infrastructure projects.

Outcome 2. Increased and strengthened female-run small and micro enterprises.

Phase II further sought to build on earlier emergency employment interventions by strengthening linkages between short-term employment, skills acquisition, and longer-term livelihood sustainability.

To achieve this objective, the overall objective of the EIIP project was to support a more inclusive and accessible green labour market for vulnerable Syrian refugees and Jordanian men, women and persons with disabilities. This was to be achieved through two outcomes and five supporting outputs, focusing on employment-intensive green infrastructure works combined with skills

development and post-employment pathways, alongside support to women-led small and micro enterprise development.

Project Objectives	
Overall Objective	To support a more inclusive and accessible green labour market for vulnerable Syrian refugees and Jordanian men, women and persons with disabilities.
Outcome 1	Increased access to decent jobs generated through local infrastructure projects.
Outputs	Output 1.1: Engineers and technicians capacitated to utilize labour intensive methods in public works project.
	Output 1.2: Number of workdays generated in public works projects for Syrian and Jordanian men, women and persons with disabilities increased.
	Output 1.3: No. of workers benefited from post-employment job opportunities through on-the-job training.
Outcome 2	Female run, small and micro enterprises increased and strengthened.
Outputs	Output 2.1: Administer business development support to female entrepreneurs through the network of trainer established in phase I of the project.
	Output 2.2: Female run businesses (Jordanian and Syrian) established and expanded.

Beyond the formal results framework, the Project Document articulates a broader *Strategy of Intervention* grounded in the ILO's Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience framework (Recommendation No. 205) and *the Jobs for Peace and Resilience* approach. This framing situates the project not only as a labour market intervention but as part of a resilience-oriented response in a context of economic fragility and social tension. The strategy operationalised this approach through four interrelated areas:

	Enabling Environment: The project promotes decent work by developing technical guidelines, market assessments, and operational policies, integrating social safeguards for vulnerable groups, and adapting procurement conditions to enable labour-intensive infrastructure methods. Capacity Building: It strengthens national and local institutions, community organizations, and private sector actors to implement labour-intensive approaches, with targeted training for technical and managerial staff and dedicated support to women contractors. Short-Term Employment Creation: The project generates cost-effective, green, labour-intensive jobs that meet quality standards, while building workers' skills and improving climate-responsive community infrastructure. Women's Community Maintenance and Enterprise Support: It establishes women's maintenance groups and supports selected female entrepreneurs through training, performance-based grants, and coaching to enhance business sustainability.
Present situation of the project	The project closed at the end of December 2025. All planned activities were completed in line with approved specifications and contractual arrangements. Labour-intensive infrastructure works, engineer training, vocational and on-the-job training, and women's enterprise support components were fully implemented. A post-implementation Workers' Study and an Entrepreneurship Tracer Study were initiated, with final monitoring documentation pending at the time of evaluation. All activities reported tangible and broadly positive outputs aligned with original targets. However, outcome-level results remain less clearly defined and not effectively monitored. While short-term employment, skills acquisition, and business establishment were achieved, sustained employment and long-term enterprise viability had not yet been verified at project closure, and appears improbable.

**Purpose, scope
and clients of
the evaluation**

The purpose of the independent final evaluation of EIIP II was to assess the project's overall performance, design validity, and results against OECD-DAC criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and potential impact. It aimed to assess the project's Theory of Change, identify lessons learned, and generate actionable recommendations to inform future EIIP programming and strategic positioning.

The scope of the evaluation covered the full implementation period from March 2022 to December 2025 in Mafrqa and Irbid governorates. The primary clients of the evaluation were the ILO Country Office in Jordan, the Regional Office for Arab States, and the donor, the Italian Agency for Development Cooperation (AICS), with findings also relevant to national partners and ILO constituents.

**Methodology
of evaluation**

The independent final evaluation assessed the EIIP AICS project against OECD-DAC criteria, including relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and potential impact. It applied a theory-based, mixed-methods approach to validate the project's Theory of Change and generate forward-looking recommendations. The evaluation covered the full implementation period from March 2022 to December 2025 in Mafrqa and Irbid.

Methods combined desk review of project documentation and monitoring data with key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and field observations. Evidence was systematically triangulated to ensure credible and balanced findings. Cross-cutting themes, including gender equality, disability inclusion, labour standards, and environmental sustainability, were integrated throughout the analysis.

Stakeholders consulted included ILO staff, national partners, municipalities, implementing agencies, and beneficiaries, and findings were validated through a stakeholder review process. All data collection and analysis incorporated gender equality, disability inclusion, international labour standards, environmental

sustainability, and social dialogue, ensuring these dimensions inform both findings and recommendations.

**MAIN
FINDINGS &
CONCLUSIONS**

The evaluation concludes that EIIP Phase II successfully delivered planned outputs, including short-term employment opportunities, strengthened technical capacities, green municipal infrastructure, and support to women entrepreneurs. However, analysis of the project's Theory of Change identified a structural break in the transition from short-term stabilisation to durable employment outcomes. Sustainability, therefore, remains uncertain, as the causal pathways linking outputs to longer-term results were not sufficiently defined or operationalised.

These limitations stem from the original design, particularly with unclear articulation of assumptions, transition mechanisms, and risk management necessary to achieve durable outcomes. They occur when project outputs encounter structural problems, such as Jordan's complex labour market, without clarity on how to overcome limitations and arrive at sustainable outcomes.

Future programming should, therefore, prioritise strategic redesign to strengthen outcome sustainability. This includes institutionalising labour-intensive green methodologies within national and municipal systems through formal integration into budgeting, procurement, and professional development frameworks, supported by long-term partnerships.

In parallel, the ILO should establish a clearer and more sequenced pathway from training to sustained employment, linking infrastructure investments with structured labour market transition mechanisms. Stronger institutionalisation and improved labour market alignment will increase the likelihood that employment generation and skills development translate into lasting livelihood improvements.

Assessment of the Evaluation Criteria

Relevance

Satisfactory

Relevance of the EIIP II project was assessed as Satisfactory. The project aligned well with national priorities and the ILO Decent Work Country Programme, addressing urgent employment and livelihood needs of vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees in Mafrq and Irbid. Its integrated design—combining green public works, skills development, institutional capacity building, and women’s enterprise support—responded appropriately to high unemployment, service gaps, and environmental pressures. Participatory municipal selection strengthened contextual grounding. However, assumptions regarding sustained labour market absorption and institutional integration proved optimistic in a structurally constrained rural context, preventing a higher rating.

Coherence

Satisfactory

The EIIP II project demonstrated **Satisfactory** coherence internally and externally. Outcome 1 (green public works and skills development) and Outcome 2 (women’s enterprise support) were strategically designed as complementary pathways toward improved livelihoods within a green labour market framework. However, in practice they operated largely in parallel, with limited structured transition mechanisms linking beneficiaries across components.

Externally, the project aligned well with national frameworks, including the Jordan Response Plan and the ILO Decent Work Country Programme, and complemented existing initiatives. Institutional partnerships supported effective delivery, but limited integration of the EIIP model

	into routine municipal and national systems prevented a higher coherence rating.
Effectiveness Satisfactory to Unsatisfactory	Project effectiveness was Satisfactory in delivering planned activities and outputs, including 35,100 workdays generated, 311 workers employed short term, 106 engineers trained and accredited, 186 beneficiaries enrolled in vocational and on-the-job training, and 70 women-led businesses established. Field verification and triangulated evidence confirmed good quality infrastructure, improved technical capacity, and strengthened skills and confidence among participants. Short-term income stabilisation and enhanced employability were achieved. However, improved employability did not consistently translate into sustained employment, and long-term business viability could not yet be confirmed. Limited private sector engagement, weak rural labour markets, and the short project timeframe constrained outcome-level results. These elements were not effective, hence Unsatisfactory. Overall, effectiveness was strong in delivering outputs and immediate benefits, but partial in achieving durable livelihood transformation.
Efficiency Satisfactory	The project demonstrated Satisfactory efficiency in the use of time, financial resources, and institutional inputs. Activities were implemented largely as planned, with clear roles, effective coordination, and smoothly functioning procurement and payment processes. Beneficiaries confirmed timely wage and stipend payments, supporting participation and trust. Municipal partnerships and accredited training mechanisms were mobilised effectively within the available budget and timeframe. A no-cost extension was required to complete TVET and enterprise

	components but was managed without additional funding and mainly reflected contextual factors. Overall, outputs were delivered within budget, demonstrating reasonable value for money, though the limited duration constrained longer-term labour market impact.
Sustainability Unsatisfactory	Sustainability is the weakest dimension of the project's performance, and assessed as Unsatisfactory. While the design included continuity measures, such as accredited training, enterprise mentoring, and green infrastructure investments, the durability of outcomes remains uncertain. Infrastructure works were generally completed to good standards and in use, but maintenance of green elements varies and depends on municipal fiscal capacity. Although partnerships supported implementation, EIIP methodologies have not been fully integrated into routine municipal systems or supported by systematic post-project monitoring. Sustained employment and business viability depend on stronger labour market absorption and enabling conditions, without which benefits risk remaining short term.
Possibility of Impact Cannot Be Determined with available information	The possibility of impact is closely linked to sustainability and remains uncertain. The project generated clear short-term stabilising effects, including temporary income support, improved infrastructure, strengthened technical capacity, and enhanced skills and confidence among beneficiaries, including women and persons with disabilities. However, sustained employment, durable income growth, and systemic labour market transformation were not yet observable within the project timeframe.

	Most beneficiaries had not transitioned into stable employment, enterprise activities were at an early stage, and institutional embedding of EIIP methodologies remains incomplete. Achieving long-term impact would require stronger rural labour market absorption, structured private sector engagement, improved access to capital, regulatory facilitation, sustained municipal maintenance funding, and deeper institutional integration. Without these enabling conditions, the trajectory toward durable improvements in living conditions and resilience remains weak.
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RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Main findings & Conclusions

Conclusions and the way forward

The evaluation concludes that EIIP Phase II delivered short-term employment, strengthened technical capacities, and generated green municipal infrastructure. However, the project's Theory of Change exposed a structural break between short-term stabilisation and durable employment outcomes, leaving sustainability uncertain. A future phase should therefore prioritise redesign rather than replication, with a clear focus on strengthening the causal pathways required for long-term viability.

A revised EIIP should institutionalise labour-intensive green methodologies within national and municipal systems through formal integration into budgeting, procurement, and professional development frameworks, supported by sustained partnerships. This approach reflects evolving conditions in Jordan, including potential shifts related to the Syrian refugee context.

In parallel, the ILO should establish a clearer and sequenced pathway from training to sustained labour market integration, linking infrastructure investments to structured employment transition mechanisms. Stronger institutionalisation and improved labour market alignment will increase the likelihood that

employment generation and skills development translate into durable livelihood outcome.

Recommendations

The following recommendations target the critical weaknesses identified in the causal logic and performance conditions of the project, to ensure it meets its Outcome and Impact objectives. Collectively, they contribute to bridging the upgrading mechanism and targeted better result.

Addressed to:	Priority	Implementation	Level of Resources
ILO Jordan	High	Short-term	Low
Recommendation 1: Clarify the strategic positioning of EIIP for future programming. The ILO should clearly define whether EIIP is intended primarily as a short-term stabilisation instrument or a long-term employment development model and align design accordingly.			

Addressed to:	Priority	Implementation	Level of Resources
ILO Jordan	High	Medium Term	Medium
Recommendation 2: Prior to future design, agree with MoLA on institutionalising EIIP methodologies within municipal and national systems. Labour-intensive green approaches should be formally integrated into municipal budgeting, procurement systems, and national professional development frameworks. Success will require deepening engagement with MOLA.			

Addressed to:	Priority	Implementation	Level of Resources
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ILO Jordan in	High	Medium Term	Medium
Recommendation 3: Into future EIIP design and based in ILO's tripartite mandate, establish structured transition pathways from public works and training to sustained employment. Future EIIP phases should incorporate formal employer partnerships, apprenticeships, and sequenced support mechanisms to facilitate durable labour market integration. These should be institutionalised in trusted partnerships, with a long-term perspective.			

Addressed to:	Priority	Implementation	Level of Resources
ILO Jordan	High	Medium Term	Medium
Recommendation 4: Strengthen demand-driven design and private sector engagement. Skills development and enterprise support should be aligned with demonstrated labour market demand and supported by structured employer engagement and job placement mechanisms. Success requires market assessment and partnerships.			

Addressed to:	Priority	Implementation	Level of Resources
ILO Jordan	High	Medium	Low
Recommendation 5: Introduce systematic project and post-project outcome monitoring and risk tracking. Future interventions should expand monitoring to the Outcome level and institutionalise post-project monitoring of results (tracer studies, business survival tracking), and structured monitoring of employment and sustainability risks beyond project completion.			

**Main lessons
learned and
good practices**

The evaluation provides lessons learned, derived from triangulated findings across data, interviews, and focus groups. These observations are provided in addition to the lesson documented in the ILO template. They reflect operational and strategic insights relevant to adaptive management, future design, and potential scale-up of similar interventions. They should inform the Theory of Change, adaptation of delivery models, and formulation of recommendations.



Template 4.1: Lessons Learned

**LESSON LEARNED
ELEMENT**

Training, skills development and enterprise support require structured linkage to the formal labour market to ensure a complete causal pathway.

**Brief description of
lessons learned**

Training interventions must be embedded within a complete and functioning transition pathway, from training to labour market access or business support. Structured follow-up mechanisms, including employer partnerships, mentoring, job placement support, post-training incentives or microfinance for small enterprise, are necessary to move beneficiaries from skills acquisition to sustained employment. Without these linkages, improvements in employability may not translate into durable labour market outcomes, particularly in contexts characterised by weak demand and structural barriers.

**Context and any
related
preconditions**

The project targeted vulnerable groups, including women, persons with disabilities, Syrian refugees, and low-income Jordanians, in rural

	areas with limited labour market absorption and regulatory constraints. While training components were well designed and implemented, broader enabling conditions, including strong private sector engagement and supportive market access mechanisms, were only partially in place and did not function.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	The 186 trainees, 181 completed the training in both VT and OJT, where 106 beneficiaries completed the OJT and 75 completed VT, with 5 dropouts in this training track. 16 of them were hired and 70 businesses established for women lately.
Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors	Training duration was relatively short, and structured transition mechanisms linking trainees to stable employment were not systematically established. Post-training support for businesses was time-bound, and broader labour market constraints limited absorption capacity.
Success / Positive Issues -Causal factors	Training quality was positively perceived by beneficiaries and institutional partners, and accreditation through national bodies strengthened technical credibility. Municipal engineers reported enhanced supervisory capacity and expressed interest in continued engagement with labour-intensive methodologies.
ILO Administrative Issues	Administrative systems should function not only as compliance mechanisms but also as operational tools that support adaptive management, learning, and performance monitoring throughout implementation.

 International Labour Organization Evaluation Office  ► Template 4.1: Lessons Learned	
LESSON LEARNED ELEMENT	Sustainable infrastructure outcomes require clear municipal maintenance commitments and accountability mechanisms, particularly for green components.
Brief description of lessons learned	While infrastructure works were completed in line with project design and delivered useful public assets, sustainability of green components such as tree planting was uneven. In several locations, protective measures were absent, and some planted trees were reportedly removed or damaged. This indicates that infrastructure investments must be accompanied by clearly defined maintenance responsibilities, protective measures, and budget allocations to ensure long-term preservation of assets.
Context and any related preconditions	The project aimed to generate decent green employment while strengthening local capacity to design and supervise environmentally sustainable public works. Infrastructure investments were implemented in partnership with municipalities, with the expectation that assets would continue to serve communities beyond the project cycle.
Targeted users / Beneficiaries	Five municipality in north of Jordan (Irbid and Mafraq), benefiting the communities at large.

Challenges /negative lessons - Causal factors

Maintenance planning and accountability mechanisms were not consistently formalised, and municipal fiscal constraints limited follow-up care for green components. Delays in coordination and funding limitations further affected completion and sustainability of certain works.

Success / Positive Issues - Causal factors

Infrastructure interventions were aligned with municipal priorities and received institutional endorsement. Stakeholder engagement remained strong, creating opportunities for improved maintenance arrangements in future phases.

ILO Administrative Issues

Monitoring systems focused primarily on construction completion and did not systematically track post-completion maintenance responsibilities or long-term asset condition. Such monitoring should involve the municipal authority.

Emerging Good Practices



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Template 4.2: Emerging good practices

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GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENT

Creating safe, inclusive, and socially acceptable work environments that enabled meaningful participation of women and persons with disabilities

Relevant conditions and Context: limitations or advice in terms of

This practice is applicable in contexts where social norms, physical demands, or safety concerns typically restrict participation by women and persons with disabilities. It depends on active site-level supervision,

	applicability and replicability	acceptance of differentiated participation, and enforcement of basic safety and conduct standards adding the lack of opportunity for the person with disability to have any chance to be employed and some stated that ILO programme are the only chance for them to participate and be effective. This practice is particularly relevant in contexts where social norms, safety concerns, or physical demands limit participation of women and persons with disabilities. Successful replication depends on active site-level supervision, clear inclusion objectives, differentiated task allocation, and enforcement of conduct and safety standards. It also requires awareness of structural barriers faced by persons with disabilities and proactive mitigation measures.
	Establish a clear cause- effect relationship	Supportive supervision and inclusive worksite management reduced physical and social barriers, enabling vulnerable groups to participate in income-generating activities. This contributed to increased confidence, family acceptance, and sustained engagement during the project period.
	Indicate measurable impact and targeted beneficiaries	The practice resulted in measurable participation of women and persons with disabilities across project components. Qualitative evidence indicates that beneficiaries experienced the work environment as safe, respectful, and empowering. Direct beneficiaries included women entrepreneurs, female public works participants, and persons with disabilities engaged in short-term employment.

	Potential for replication and by whom	This approach represents a replicable good practice for ILO-supported programmes and partner organisations implementing labour-intensive works, particularly where inclusion objectives are clearly articulated and supervisors are adequately trained and held accountable for ensuring safe, dignified, and inclusive work environments. In parallel, the <i>Women Do Business</i> methodology has demonstrated positive impacts on the lives of many women by strengthening their entrepreneurial skills, increasing confidence, and supporting income generation, thereby contributing to improved economic participation and household resilience.
	Upward links to higher ILO Goals	ILO Decent Work Country Programme The practice aligns with ILO commitments to equality, non-discrimination, and inclusive employment under the Decent Work Agenda.