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i-eval Discovery



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 through Labour Intensive Infrastructure Programme in Jordan (EIIP Phase VI) was implemented between 03 October 2022 and 31 December 2025, funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through KfW. The project aimed to improve the living conditions and socio-economic resilience of vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees in targeted governorates through increased access to income, longer-term employment opportunities, and improved community and environmental infrastructure.

EIIP VI was designed in a post-Covid context characterised by persistent structural unemployment, limited private-sector job creation, fiscal constraints, and pressure on municipal infrastructure and services. Jordan continues to face high unemployment rates, particularly among youth and women, alongside labour-market segmentation affecting Syrian refugees. Economic recovery following COVID-19 remained fragile and was further affected by regional instability and external shocks.

In this context, employment-intensive public works remained a relevant stabilisation instrument, capable of providing short-term income to vulnerable households while addressing local infrastructure and environmental needs. At the same time, the EIIP VI aspired to move beyond earlier humanitarian and cash-for-work models by introducing skills development and entrepreneurship components intended to support transition toward more sustainable employment and livelihood outcomes. This would occur, in part, through the delivery of infrastructure, which itself was a public good.

To this end, the EIIP Phase VI was designed with the following logic model:

Impact:

Improve the living conditions and socio-economic resilience of

	vulnerable Jordanians and Syrian refugees in targeted governorates, through increased access to income, longer-term employment opportunities, and improved community and environmental infrastructure. Outcome 1: Increased short-term income and improved living environment. ▪ Output 1.1: Employment-intensive public works implemented (short-term jobs and workdays generated). ▪ Output 1.2: Community infrastructure created or rehabilitated. ▪ Output 1.3: Environmental and green works implemented (including afforestation). ▪ Output 1.4: Decent work conditions applied in EIIP works. Outcome 2: Improved perspectives for longer-term employment and income. ▪ Output 2.1: Skills development and employability support provided (including vocational training and work-based learning). ▪ Output 2.2: Entrepreneurship development and business support provided (training and start-up grants).
Present situation of the project	EIIP Phase VI concluded on 31 December 2025. All project activities were completed within the approved implementation period. Labour-intensive public works, afforestation activities, municipal infrastructure interventions, and entrepreneurship support components were implemented in line with the agreed design and contractual arrangements. The majority of activities were delivered according to approved technical specifications and financial provisions. An exception concerns Output 2.1 (skills development and employability support), where implementation challenges led to early termination of the contracted service provider.

	At project closure, no further EIIP Phase VI activities were ongoing. Any continuation of benefits, including infrastructure maintenance, enterprise development, or employment transitions, now falls outside the project implementation period, with national stakeholders. The exception was an ongoing Tracer Study for women entrepreneurs.
Purpose, scope and clients of the evaluation	The independent final evaluation of EIIP Phase VI was conducted for accountability and learning purposes, in accordance with ILO evaluation policy and the OECD DAC evaluation criteria. The evaluation assessed the project's performance against the criteria of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and possibility of impact. It gave particular attention to whether EIIP Phase VI functioned as a transition from short-term stabilisation toward development-oriented employment and livelihood outcomes. The evaluation covered the full implementation period from October 2022 to December 2025 and all participating governorates. It encompassed all project components, including labour-intensive public works, afforestation, skills development, work-based learning, and entrepreneurship support. The primary clients of the evaluation were the ILO Country Office in Jordan, the ILO Regional Office for Arab States, the donor (BMZ/KfW), and Jordanian stakeholders at different levels of government (Ministry of Municipal affairs and Municipalities). Findings are also relevant to ILO constituents involved in employment-intensive and livelihood programming.
Methodology of evaluation	The evaluation applied a theory-based, mixed-methods approach. A reconstructed Theory of Change was used as the analytical framework to assess the plausibility of causal pathways linking activities, outputs, outcomes, and intended impact. Performance was assessed against the OECD DAC criteria, and project governance, management, monitoring, and risk arrangements

were benchmarked against the ILO Development Cooperation Internal Governance Manual (2021).

Evidence was generated through systematic triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data sources. Quantitative data were drawn from structured review of project documentation, including the Project Document, Results Matrix, Financing Agreement, and five Semi-Annual Progress Reports covering 2022–2025.

Qualitative data collection included 22 semi-structured interviews with ILO staff, national counterparts, municipal representatives, implementing partners, and technical specialists. Seven focus group discussions were conducted with 74 beneficiaries across multiple governorates, ensuring representation of women, men, Syrian refugees, Jordanians, and persons with disabilities. In addition, in-depth interviews and case studies were undertaken with participants from the skills development and entrepreneurship components. Field visits were conducted to municipal infrastructure and afforestation sites to assess quality, functionality, and implementation conditions.

Data were triangulated to validate performance claims and assess consistency between reported outputs and stakeholder experience. Cross-cutting themes, including gender equality, disability inclusion, labour standards, environmental sustainability, and social cohesion, were integrated throughout the evaluation analysis.

MAIN FINDINGS & CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation validates that EIIP Phase VI successfully and efficiently delivered its planned outputs across all components. Short-term employment targets were met, infrastructure and afforestation works were broadly completed in line with agreed specifications, and skills development and entrepreneurship activities were implemented at scale. Beneficiaries consistently confirmed that temporary wages provided important short-term income stabilisation in a context of limited economic opportunity.

Municipal assets were visibly improved, and supported entrepreneurs established registered businesses.

However, triangulated evidence reveals a consistent structural limitation across both Outcomes. The causal pathways linking outputs to outcomes for sustained employment, livelihood and income were not realised or reliably reported. Results effectively decline at the point where outputs engaged persistent structural challenges, such as low labour market absorption.

Under **Outcome 1**, while short-term employment and infrastructure outputs were effectively delivered, the project did not establish a mechanism through which temporary employment translated into longer-term labour market integration. Income gains were immediate but time-bound.

Under **Outcome 2**, both skills development and entrepreneurship outputs were implemented, yet neither pathway generated durable employment outcomes at scale. The employability component did not succeed in linking training to sustained job placement. Entrepreneurship support produced registered and functioning start-ups, but their long-term viability remains uncertain in the absence of continued technical and financial.

The evaluation, therefore, identifies a pattern: EIIP Phase VI performs effectively as a stabilisation instrument, delivering temporary income support and community assets under decent work conditions. However, when outputs encounter deep structural labour market constraints, usually limited private-sector absorption, fiscal pressures, and weak integration into national institutions, the project's development-oriented ambitions are not realised.

The main limitation was not the project's ability to deliver outputs, but the way it was designed to move from short-term results to longer-term employment outcomes. The mechanisms needed to link temporary jobs, training, and business support to sustained employment were not sufficiently developed or operational.

Without stronger institutional integration, closer alignment with labour market demand, and structured follow-up beyond the project period, EIIP functions effectively as a short-term stabilisation instrument, but not yet as a development model capable of generating sustainable employment and income.

RECOMMENDATIONS, LESSONS LEARNED AND GOOD PRACTICES

Main findings & Conclusions

Synthesis of Evaluation Criteria Results

Relevance was assessed as **Satisfactory**, as EIIP Phase VI effectively responded to urgent income and infrastructure needs in a context of high unemployment, fiscal pressure, and limited labour-market absorption. However, the project's development-oriented ambitions were only partially aligned with structural labour-market and social realities.

Coherence was also rated **Satisfactory**. The intervention was logically structured and formally aligned with national priorities and ILO frameworks. However, operational linkages between short-term employment, skills development, entrepreneurship support, and sustainable employment outcomes were not sufficiently sequenced or institutionalised. Internal coherence, therefore, was constrained.

Effectiveness was assessed as **Partially Satisfactory**. Planned outputs across public works, infrastructure, training, and entrepreneurship were largely delivered. However, the transition from outputs to sustained employment and income was not achieved at scale.

Efficiency was rated **Satisfactory**, reflecting timely implementation, sound financial management, and effective delivery of short-term employment and infrastructure within the approved budget and timeframe.

Sustainability was assessed as **Unsatisfactory**, as institutional integration, labour-market absorption, and structured follow-up mechanisms were insufficient to support durable employment outcomes. Sustainability results may be more positive for public

infrastructure, but contingent on the financial and human capacity of individual municipalities.

The possibility of impact, therefore, was and also **Unsatisfactory**. While short-term stabilisation was achieved, a credible pathway toward sustained socio-economic resilience was not established within the project design and timeframe.

Conclusion

EIIP Phase VI demonstrated strong operational capacity to deliver employment-intensive public works, generate short-term income, and create visible community and environmental assets under decent work conditions. In a context of persistent unemployment and structural economic constraints, the project functioned effectively as a stabilisation instrument, providing temporary income support and contributing to improved local infrastructure. Outputs across public works, training, and entrepreneurship were largely implemented as planned.

However, the project did not establish a functioning bridge from short-term employment and skills support to sustained employment and income. When successful outputs encountered deeper structural labour-market and institutional constraints, the intended development outcomes were not realised.

The limitation was not delivery performance, but the absence of sufficiently defined and operationalised transition mechanisms capable of supporting durable employment and livelihood outcomes. These constraints are rooted in persistent and difficult structural problems, which will require changes to the EIIP model, and a longer-term programme rather than project frame.

Future programming will require clearer strategic positioning and stronger institutional and labour-market integration if EIIP is to evolve from a stabilisation model into an effective development instrument. Addressing these challenges is an opportunity for the ILO. In the ILO's favour, unemployment, household economic resilience and climate change are existential national policy challenges. The ILO has the normative and tripartite mandate in which to structure its efforts.

Strategic Recommendations to the ILO Jordan and the ILO Regional Office for Arab States.

Recommendation 1: Clarify the strategic positioning of EIIP in future programming. The ILO should clearly define whether EIIP is intended primarily as a short-term stabilisation instrument or as a long-term employment development model and align future design accordingly.

Recommendation 2: Institutionalise 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, in agreement with relevant ministries.

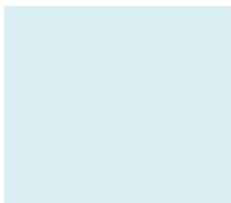
Recommendation 3: Establish structured transition pathways to sustained employment. Future EIIP phases should incorporate formal employer partnerships, apprenticeships, and sequenced support mechanisms to facilitate durable labour market integration.

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.

Operational Recommendations to the ILO Jordan and the ILO Regional Office for Arab States

Recommendation 5: Introduce systematic outcome monitoring and post-project tracking. Future interventions should expand monitoring beyond outputs to include tracer studies, business survival tracking, and structured monitoring of employment and sustainability risks beyond project completion.

Recommendation 6: Ensure full compliance with the ILO Internal Programme Governance framework. Future EIIP and related programmes should fully comply with the Internal Governance Manual, including requirements for theory-based design, results-linked risk management, and performance monitoring, supported by staff training or refresher measures where necessary.



Recommendation 7: Require an explicit and operational Theory of Change for future EIIP phases. All future interventions should articulate clear assumptions, risk models, and causal pathways linking outputs, outcomes, and intended impact as a condition for internal approval.

**Main lessons
learned and
good
practices**

Summary of Lesson Learned and Supporting Insights

Programmes perform better when causal pathways and assumptions are explicit and realistic. Where causal logic was implicit or unrealistic, particularly for transitions from training or enterprise support to employment, effectiveness was constrained and progress could not be credibly assessed. Components with simple, context-aligned causal pathways performed more consistently.

Programmes perform better in a theory-based framework, when performance monitoring tests delivery quality, early outcomes, causal assumptions across the results chain and risk. Output and compliance-focused monitoring did not provide timely information to detect underperformance or support adaptation. Monitoring that fails to test delivery quality and causal progress limits learning and corrective action.

Programme performance depends on a governance process that enables timely decision-making and corrective action. Formal governance arrangements were insufficient on their own to ensure effective oversight. Weak accountability, delayed escalation, and limited use of monitoring evidence reduced the ability to respond adaptively to emerging risks, particularly in outsourced delivery. Performance monitoring is the critical feedback mechanism for effective programme governance.

Labour-market constraints, not beneficiary deficits, are the binding constraint on employment outcomes. In contexts of weak labour demand, limited absorption capacity, and possibly misaligned skills training and enterprise, support did not translate into sustained employment. Much greater emphasis needs to be given to Outcomes and Impact strategies that explicitly address structural constraints, including leveraging the ILO's tripartite mandate.

Summary of Good Practice and Supporting Insights

Operationalising labour-intensive public works through standardised delivery and basic decent work safeguards. Applying standardised wage setting, basic occupational safety measures, and structured worksite supervision enabled consistent delivery of short-term employment under decent work conditions. This operational practice supported predictable income and stabilisation for vulnerable participants in a constrained labour-market context.



Creating inclusive work environments that enabled women and persons with disabilities to participate safely. Attentive supervision, respectful worksite management, and basic adaptations to working arrangements reduced physical and social barriers to participation. These practices enabled safe and dignified access to short-term employment for women and persons with disabilities within labour-intensive public works. This approach had a tangible effect improving confidence.