



Evaluation Summary



International
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Promoting a Decent Work Approach for Syrian Refugees And Host Communities - Final Independent Evaluation (RBSA)

Quick Facts

Countries:	<i>Jordan</i>
Final Evaluation:	<i>June 2017</i>
Evaluation Mode:	<i>Independent</i>
Administrative Office:	<i>Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)</i>
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Donor(s) & Budget:	<i>FCO (US\$ 1,760,000)</i>
Keywords:	<i>Jordan, Syrian refugee crisis, resilience</i>

Background & Context

Summary of the project purpose, logic and structure

Project background

Between August 2013 and December 2016, ILO allocated USD 1.76m of its Regular Budget Supplementary Allocation (RBSA) funding to implement a three-pronged strategy to ‘enhance access to employment opportunities and livelihoods in Jordanian host communities within the framework of the ILO response to the Syrian crisis’ through:

1. Strengthening the knowledge base on the impact of Syrian refugees on the labour market, with a specific focus on the host communities;
2. Strengthening institutional capacity and coordination to combat unacceptable forms of work (including child labour and forced labour);
3. Enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods in host communities.

Context: The Syrian refugee crisis illustrates that while humanitarian support is required, short-term solutions alone will be unable to respond to a refugee presence for the foreseeable future. When Syrian refugees began arriving in Jordan most headed for the cities and tried to find work, even if they had to work illegally. The main reason for this is that refugees want to have a sense of autonomy and community, a sense of dignity, to provide for their families, and restore normality while hoping one day to return to Syria. The scope of the Syrian refugee crisis is beyond the capacity of the international aid community to meet the needs of all those impacted by the crisis.

There is increased debate within the aid community about whether opportunities exist to address a protracted refugee crisis with a long-term vision in mind. A more sustainable solution to the Syrian refugee crisis is to generate jobs for refugees through focusing on initiatives to generate economic development that would be of equal benefit to host communities.

ILO’s response: ILO is contributing to this solution with its mandate to enhance economic and

working conditions for workers and creating greater opportunities for women and men to decent employment and income. ILO's expertise and experience gives it a comparative advantage among the UN agencies and NGOs working to provide humanitarian and development assistance to refugees, and places it in a unique position to work with aid organisations and government

Main Findings

ILO's strategy was implemented through the following interventions:

- addressing some of the knowledge gaps around the effects of Syrian workers on the labour market in Jordan, including women's participation in the labour market and the high prevalence of Syrian child labour;
- as a tripartite structured organisation ILO worked with government, employers, and workers' organisations to advocate for easier access to the labour market and decent work for Syrian workers, most significantly through an innovative approach supporting agricultural cooperatives to apply for agricultural work permits for Syrian workers; and
- at a local level in the governorates most affected by the Syrian refugee presence, Mafraq and Irbid. ILO worked with local governments to identify local economic development opportunities and implemented community level demonstration projects aiming to generate employment opportunities and local economic growth benefiting Syrian refugees and host communities.

Results from the different interventions differ in strength but, overall, the RBSA funding allowed ILO to position itself prior to the London Conference of February 2016, as a

lead UN agency in employment and livelihoods in Jordan in response to the Syrian crisis. This is evidenced by:

- ILO becoming one of the main actors supporting the Ministry of Labour (MoL) through i) the ILO Refugee Response Coordinator being seconded to MoL as an advisor supporting the implementation of the Jordan Compact, and ii) ILO supporting the MoL in chairing the Livelihoods Task Force.
- ILO co-facilitating the Livelihoods task force of the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) with UNDP.
- ILO being mentioned in the Jordan-EU trade agreement as a third-party monitoring body.
- Disbursement-linked indicators of the World Bank Programme of Results reflect ILO concern.
- A strengthened knowledge base within the GoJ on the impact of Syrian refugees on the labour market. The FAFO study was considered by many interlocutors as an important study closing a knowledge gap. To what extent the FAFO study impacted on government policy is not immediately clear, however, it did directly influence the design of ILO's interventions.
- The Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme (EIIP) approach was tested through the RITE pilot project and contributed to funding received from Germany's KfW Development Bank. The EIIP pilot project coincided with the London Conference in February 2016 where employment opportunities and access to the labour market for Syrian refugees were prioritized.
- Strengthened capacity of MoL and local stakeholders in Mafraq and Irbid to regulate integration of the Syrian refugee workers in the labour market.
- Successful piloting of an innovative mechanism supporting the MoL to regulate Syrian workers' access to the labour market by work permits within the agriculture sector

being applied for through agricultural cooperatives. The pilot intervention received support within the MoL and led to funding received from the Foreign Commonwealth Office (FCO).

- The experiences gained under the RBSA funding period led to ILO publishing its Programme of Support to the Jordan Compact, ‘A resilient labour market to drive inclusive economic growth for all’ at the end of 2016. The Programme of Support was built on ILO’s experiences gained from the interventions implemented through the RBSA funding.

Several less successful interventions funded under RBSA include:

- Research around child labour was not finalized and did not result in the development of a pilot project to address this important issue. There is a need for urgent interventions to address child labour. ILO could develop a demonstration project that would assist others to address and integrate the fight against child labour in an effective manner, combining both policy and direct interventions within communities most at risk.
- The recommendations made in the Olive and Tomato Sector value chain analysis and marketing strategies did not receive any follow-up support nor seem to have been integrated in the work of the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA).
- The capacity building support to the Local Economic Development (LED) resulted in the development of a local development strategy but the local governorates were unable to attract funding.

Through its direct interventions and advocacy ILO is now recognised as a key player in livelihoods support for Syrian refugee workers and host communities in Jordan. As a result of the interventions implemented under RBSA, ILO expanded its implementation quickly following

the 2016 London Conference. Another strength of ILO’s work in Jordan has been the combination of advocacy and policy engagement with interventions on the ground, supported by involvement in high-level engagement with the MoL and other government counterparts making ILO’s position unique compared with other actors in the livelihoods sector.

Recommendations

1 Programme design, monitoring, evaluation and reporting: Programme design documents, systematic monitoring, progress and final reports, and work plans should be prepared to allow for identification of issues that require immediate attention, results-based reporting and final evaluation. This is the case for donor funded programmes and equal standards should be applied to RBSA funded interventions.

2 Strengthen RBSA specific design and reporting templates: RBSA guidelines and templates should be strengthened using existing good practices and guidelines to support RBM practices.

3 Systematic implementation: Main interventions should be supported by a work plan and an inception phase clarifying roles and responsibilities of the regional and national office in the implementation, and to allow for proper set-up of programme implementation mechanisms.

Project management structure: Implementation should be supported by clear management and communication structures, and sufficient staffing to cover the needs of quality implementation on the ground. Processes between ILO Jordan office and ILO ROAS should be strengthened to facilitate smooth implementation.

4 Access to Decent Work: Because of ILO’s core mandate programmes should integrate a Decent Work Agenda and document progress and challenges in achieving decent work for target groups.

5 **ILO's comparative advantage:** Be clear on what ILO's comparative advantage is compared with other development actors in the country. ILO has a strong core mandate and technical capacity which makes it stand out from other development actors. Donors look for ILO's Better and Decent Work Agenda support.

6 **Social protection for workers:** ILO should explore ways in which to advocate for social protection for Syrian refugee workers. Social protection is a measure for which ILO should advocate across its programmes.

7 **For its Programme of Support, an M&E framework should be developed providing performance indicators for the outcomes and outputs.** This framework should be updated annually as part of the work review and planning under the Programme of Support.

8 **Assessment of institutional strengthening and advocacy at the Government level:** While this is considered a current strength, ILO should identify ways to monitor and report on progress made.

9 **Demonstration projects and pilot interventions:** Innovative interventions should be further explored but should be strengthened by a concept design, systematic monitoring, documentation of lessons and systematic sharing with other actors.

10 **Well targeted research:** Strengthen knowledge base around access to the labour market for Syrian refugee and vulnerable Jordanian workers. Any research funded should be of the highest quality and be supported by a dissemination strategy.

11 **Better define how support is provided to different target groups:** Be clear on what the programme aims to deliver for the different stakeholders which include Syrian refugees, host communities, camp residents, women and youth. Map the stakeholders in the different regions.

12 **Mainstreaming gender issues:** While it is recognised that gender equality is a cross-cutting issue, development of future strategies or

projects should show systematic inclusion of gender concerns in planning, priority settings, outcomes and outputs.

13 **Identify and operationalize linkages between ILO programmes:** ILO has attracted funding from different donor sources and should ensure that programmes are not implemented in a siloed manner, but also identify how programmes can benefit and support one another.

14 **Make use of synergies and complementary programmes/projects:** An increased number of development actors are becoming involved with livelihoods and employment in Jordan (NGOs and UN agencies: CARE, Mercy Corps, UNHCR, UN Women). ILO should engage with these actors to identify synergies and provide support where needed. This will allow ILO to maintain its leading role in this sector.

15 **Development and humanitarian nexus:** ILO is engaged in both humanitarian and development work in Jordan, with humanitarian action a more recent area of intervention. Resilience focus under humanitarian action ILO's experience should be documented, with good practices and lessons learned shared with other offices.