

Quick Facts

► Cluster Independent Project Evaluation of “Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme” in Jordan

► Date: September 2021

► About the evaluation:

This is a cluster independent evaluation, which serves as a final evaluation for Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme Phase (EIIP) III and IV and mid-term for Phase V. The purpose of this evaluation was to assess programme progress towards the achievement of key results and document key lessons learned and provide practical guidance and recommendations to improve programme implementation for the remainder of the implementation period and into a possible new phase.

► Evaluated topic:

The Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programme is funded by German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank to provide immediate employment opportunities for Syrian refugees as well as Jordanians. The programme commenced in 2016 and has had five phases as of 2021. Phases III and IV focus on job creation within local municipalities and public works, whereas Phase V opened opportunities for the participation of workers in labour market oriented vocational training for longer-term employment.



Evaluation methodology:

The evaluation was primarily qualitative in nature. Key methods included:

-  A desk review of available documents
-  An initial briefing with the EIIP team
-  Key informant interviews (KII) with key stakeholders
-  Focus group discussions (FGDs) with beneficiaries and contractors
-  Data analysis and synthesis

KEY FINDINGS

- 1.** The programme remains relevant to address the needs of supporting Syrian refugees. Relevance has also been heightened with the outbreak of COVID-19 which affects not only Syrian refugees but the broader Jordanian population as well.
- 2.** The programme has reached and, in some cases, exceeded targets. This is a significant achievement as demonstrates sound progress in terms of implementation and management. However, the lack of formal outcome statements and associated methodology to assess higher level impacts and change is an area that requires attention.
- 3.** There is evidence of the programme contributing positively to sustainability. COVID-19 has severely hampered national and municipal budgets and funds are scarce for on-going service-delivery type programs. The programme has filled an important gap in supporting the CfW program that help maintain employment and income distribution.
- 4.** Overall, the programme has achieved a relatively high degree of efficiency. The number and scope of contracts across the three phases have provided opportunities to improve livelihoods on an on-going manner. The focus on core areas of work (i.e. work sectors) enables programme to achieve a degree of economies of scale in the work.
- 5.** The programme has made a tangible contribution to improvements in job creation and broader capacity development support with contractors and government officials. The short-term nature of work and contracts makes it difficult to influence long-term changes.
- 6.** Despite the challenges of COVID-19 and associated restrictions, the programme has continued to meet and serve the needs of workers. A key achievement has been the development and approval of a COVID-19 safety plan. This plan has been applied across the EIIP and has been recognised and picked-up by other donors and NGOs working in the CfW space.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS



Phase VI should focus on asset creation and infrastructure enhancements in line with the strategic intent of EIIP while reducing the focus on CfW in a staged and coordinated manner in close consultation with municipal authorities.



As part of Phase VI, the programme should review the development objective and set clear outcomes with associated outputs. This will also involve developing a detailed ToC that will underpin implementation and management arrangements going forward.



Options should be considered to lengthen employment contracts beyond the current 40-days. The 50-50 split between Jordanian and Syrian workers should be maintained but reviewed over time to ensure on-going relevance and appropriateness.



In light of a focus towards more longer-term employment, the programme should explore further opportunities to support more in-depth vocational training and job placement strategies with external training service providers.

KEY LESSONS LEARNED & GOOD PRACTICES:

The programme has maintained a strong focus on institutional capacity and support. The support is not just on supporting programme implementation but also introduces systems and processes that support the government to respond to current future crises.

Work permits are on-going issues for the project. Any support to help facilitate and streamline the process of approvals is welcomed and warranted. The programme's strategic shift to embed advisers within the Ministry of Labour is important as it builds relationships and helps speed up processes. There is also scope to broaden institutional support from this example.

The EIIP has invested considerable effort to promote appropriate social safeguards to guide programme implementation and management. Social safeguards are a critical component of decent work and also for safety measures. It is also critical with regards to social distancing measures as a result of COVID-19.

The short duration of phases does not correspond to go development outcomes and focuses efforts on short-term results and simple head counts of jobs linked to a specific methodology. By promoting longer phases, the EIIP allows time for better implementation and management and also supports better engagement and the promotion of other outcomes.

Decisions to potentially shift away from CfW into more longer-term employment and asset creation, requires an evidence base. If longer phases are introduced, there is an opportunity to plan for more detailed evaluative efforts.



QUOTES

► Constituent

"The project is strengthening the relationship between citizens and municipalities. The project has contributed to positive relations between stakeholders and in lifting some of the financial burden of people and communities. A lot had been shouldered by the program which was normally facilitated by government. We are grateful but we also need to plan as well."

► ILO staff

"The project does require forward thinking. The project needs to consider how do we continue this journey with CfW and what are the long-term changes we are seeking. Training is a good initiative, but how do we ensure the training has an employment outcome? How do we engage with the private sector to transition workers?"