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► Thematic Area 2: EIIP for Immediate Response: During And Immediately After Crises Event

EIIP SSTC

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for Asia and the Arab States

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► **Thematic Area 2: EIIP for
Immediate Response: During And
Immediately After Crises Event**



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1. Applicability of EIIP In Different Types of Crises

Employment Intensive Investment (EIIP) approaches have transitioned with time in various ways in response to crises and corresponding shifts in the broader geopolitical contexts. These are explored in the sub-sections and country examples below from Asia and Arab States:

► EIIP in Conflict and Economic Downturn Response

The **Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP)** have been used for **recovery from wars** and **post-conflict contexts** as well as addressing **economic recessions**, when economies are only growing slowly and few formal jobs are being created, in both rich and poor countries, and in rural and urban settings.

In these contexts, what EIIP initiatives all have in common is that they deploy public investments to either **stimulate job creation or directly create jobs**, while also introducing appropriate technologies for the construction of both **productive infrastructure** – which included rural access roads, irrigation canals, minor dams, terracing, watershed and environment protection etc.– and also **social infrastructure**, including schools, health centres, water supply and drainage. Its work in these contexts is intended to supply immediate relief through income, skills for employability, the repair of assets, and the restoration of services in other sectors, such as agriculture, transport and trade. The initial short-term emergency employment, then transitions into a more integrated medium- to long-term approach, support to recover from and be better prepared for future crises.



IRAQ

EIIP Case

Iraq has been affected by **conflict, insecurity, and instability** for decades, which all led to significant challenges and limited availability of decent employment opportunities in the country, which, together with other factors, resulted in a relatively **low labour force participation rate** (particularly for women and youth), high **unemployment and underemployment**, and high levels of **informality** in the labour market.

In 2020, under the framework of the DWCP programme, the ILO began implementing the **EIIP approach in Iraq**, to play a key role in meeting both humanitarian and development needs by contributing to *irrigation rehabilitation, solid waste management, afforestation, and cultural heritage conservation*. Besides supporting the **direct creation of immediate income opportunities** targeting vulnerable youth and women among refugee, IDP and host community populations, workers learn **new skills on the job** as a means of supporting their access to other livelihood opportunities. Particular attention is also paid to the **quality of the work**, focusing as the EIIP does on enhancing productivity and decent working conditions, such as equal pay for work of equal value, prevention of child labour, OSH etc. This is anticipated to reduce unemployment and underemployment and be a major contributing factor in achieving short-term stability, reintegration, socio-economic progress, and in defusing tensions in targeted areas.



Photo 1: Repairing and cleaning 50 KM of water irrigation channels in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq



Photo 2: Kwashe Sorting Plant for waste segregation in Dohuk Iraq



AFGHANISTAN

STFA funded EIIP Projects

Afghanistan has witnessed decades of **internal conflict**, **political uncertainty**, and a severe **humanitarian emergency**, with around 24.4 million in need in 2022 out of a population of 32.2 million, the highest number of people in need in the world. This all led to significant challenges and **limited** availability of decent **employment opportunities** in the country. And after Taliban took over control of the country in 2021 and announced **restrictions banning women employment and participation in social and public life**. Living circumstances, employment opportunities, income, and female employment levels have all been stifled.



Photo 3: EIIP Afghanistan Tasadi protection wall project



Photo 4: Khalid bin Waleed Road rehabilitation project

Despite the restrictions prohibiting women employment, the ILO introduced the application of EI approaches from early 2022 to **engage women** and to support the country with immediate to medium- and long-term interventions through **development and maintenance of priority infrastructure and community assets**. This mainly encompasses the construction of stone masonry **flood protection** structures and focuses on **rural roads rehabilitation and maintenance**. Under EIIPs, strategies are devised to **involve women and increase their participation** without exposing them to any risks, through several measures as enforcing **minimum quotas** in employment, assigning **relevant tasks**, applying conditions for **protection from harassment and violence**, entrepreneurship **training** for women etc. Additionally, EIIP Afghanistan was able to motivate **innovative approaches and practices** when women got restricted from working on sites, such as enabling women to **produce construction materials at home**. Work has so far generated **6,045 jobs** for vulnerable workers, **464** of whom are women and **76 PWDs** through **14** labor-intensive projects.



SRI LANKA

EIIP READS (Rural Employment and Agricultural Development)

In 2009, Sri Lanka emerged from three-decades of **civil conflict** that had caused economic, political and social disruptions. The impact of the conflict can still be observed in terms of regional disparities and marginalisation of rural communities in terms of livelihoods, **inequalities** in living standards and hidden pockets of **poverty**.

Recently, Sri Lanka has been experiencing its worst **economic crisis** which exacerbated by spill overs from the Ukraine conflict, macroeconomic and structural imbalances, and Covid-19 and resulted in 5.7 million people in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

Accordingly, a Humanitarian Priority and Needs plan was launched by the United Nations system in June 2022 covering food security and livelihoods, health, and protection. The ILO contributed to this UN plan by repurposing existing project funding to improve the livelihoods and resilience of **vulnerable farmers and fisherfolk** through providing **short-term jobs**, upgrading **community infrastructure assets** and enhancing **agriculture and aquaculture productivity**. Because of the economic crisis and the consequent hike in the cost of construction materials, most construction works have been put on hold and unskilled laborers have lost their jobs and struggle to continue their day-to-day life. A comprehensive EIIP proposal was prepared to provide **short-term employment** to boost to their income in a time of crisis. **Jobs** would be created through contracts for the rehabilitation and maintenance of community assets with *Farmers or Fisheries Cooperative Societies*. For farming communities affected by drought and climate change impacts, water tank rehabilitation and de-siltation would **improve agricultural productivity**.

► EIIP in Refugee Response

Thirteen years after the outbreak of the Syrian crisis, nearly 6.8 million Syrians continue to be hosted as refugees across the region, which include Jordan, Lebanon, Türkiye, Iraq and Egypt. Accordingly, ILO's support to the planning and implementation of EIIPs was particularly important in the **Middle East** (Jordan, Lebanon and Iraq), where it played a role in the recovery following the social and economic disruptions resulting from the Arab Spring. This included supporting governments in creating **immediate job opportunities** for both **Syrian refugees and members of their host communities**, while also **improving local infrastructure and the environment**. These interventions were specifically aligned with the UN Regional Refugee Response and Resilience Plans (3RP) for Syria in both Jordan and Lebanon.

REGIONAL APPROACH

through EIIPs in Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq



Photo 5: Stone pavement for a rural road in alKoora Municipality under EIIP Jordan Phase I

The refugee influx has placed growing pressure on the hosting countries' infrastructure and resources. It also affected the labour markets in terms of downward pressure on wages, increase in child labour, displacement effects etc. Thirteen years into the Syria conflict, the situation continues to exacerbate on the economy, institutions, and people across the hosting countries in the region. For example, Lebanon continues to **host the largest number of refugees** per capita and per square kilometre worldwide (1.5 million Syrians).

To complicate the context even more, Lebanon and Iraq faced multi-layered crises. Where since 2019, Lebanon faced an unprecedented economic, financial, social, and health crisis, severely affecting the residents of Lebanon nation-wide. With the current free fall of the economy and skyrocketing inflation, the crisis in Lebanon is most likely to be ranked among the 3 most severe crises episodes globally since the mid-nineteenth century. In addition, Iraq is host to around 2 million Iraqi IDPs who have suffered multiple adverse shocks, including the loss of most of their assets, wealth and jobs or businesses due to the conflict for decades.

As a response, EIIP started activities in **Jordan and Lebanon** in 2016, with funding from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), through the German Development Bank (KfW). While the ILO began implementation of the EIIP approach in **Iraq** in 2020, under the framework of the DWCP programme.

The project has played a critical role as an **entry point** in facilitating access to **decent short-term job opportunities** and helped enhance overall employability. It focused on improving livelihoods by providing short income opportunities for thousands of vulnerable host communities citizens as well as Syrian refugees who contributed to the improvement of local infrastructure. This focused on the **maintenance and cleaning of roads and highways, and municipal buildings and facilities, green works and agroforestry, and cultural heritage development** in **Jordan**, the **rehabilitation of agricultural roads, construction of markets and irrigation networks, and the maintenance and spot improvement of secondary roads** in **Lebanon**, while in **Iraq** EIIPs interventions contributed to **irrigation rehabilitation, solid waste management, afforestation, public facilities construction including youth centres and vocational training centres, and cultural heritage conservation**.



Photo 6: Agroforestry under EIIP Jordan Phase IV

In [Jordan](#), EIIPs interventions are now in **Phase VI** and while all the previous phases were focusing on humanitarian support, now in Phase VI the project is moving from humanitarian to development by entailing: ***TVET and entrepreneurship programmes*** to EIIP beneficiaries, ***regulatory reforms for work permits*** through government relaxation of requirements and ***facilitation of more than 322,000 work permits since 2016***, ***extension of labour laws*** to uncovered sectors and ***extension of social protection*** and inclusive coverage to refugees and vulnerable host community members through tailored outreach and a subsidized contribution model. In addition to ***capacity building of Ministries, municipal governments and contractors***.

In [Lebanon](#), EIIPs got extended into **5 phases** of implementation covering the most vulnerable locations of the country hosting the most deprived Lebanese and Syrian refugees. The **infrastructure** measures were complemented by working with the Ministry of Labour to promote the **development of simplified work permit procedures** for Syrian refugees allowing them to legally and formally take up employment. In addition to other **support at institutional level** including the *development of operational guidelines, trainings on employment-intensive methods for private contractors, and capacity building for public institutions and communities, etc.*



Photo 7: Building storm water drains in Mount Lebanon Area

In [Iraq](#), and while the EIIP approach played a key role in meeting both **humanitarian and development needs** by enhancing the socio-economic participation of vulnerable groups (Iraqi IDPs, Syrian refugees and HCs members), it focused more on the development needs. This was through providing opportunities for **skills acquisition and engagement of young people through work-based learning opportunities** in addition to other measures as will be detailed under section 2 of Iraq case.

In the recent years, the EIIP approach focus shifted towards creating a holistic model that can be upscaled and adopted by the government. The key result of the EIIP works in Iraq from 2020 to 2024 is the implementation of EIIP public works model at the Governorate level, which will be the main feeder to **longer-term policy engagement** to adopt and implement **National Public Works Programme** led by the governmental partners.

In result,

the project has created **24,728 jobs** and almost **1,500,000 working days** in [Jordan](#) since 2016 and ensured that the beneficiaries include 50% Jordanians and 50% Syrians, with 30% being women and 5% persons with disabilities. In [Lebanon](#), this created so far **more than 1 million working days** for **26,800 beneficiaries**, including 22% of women and 2% of people with disabilities. While in [Iraq](#), EIIP supported in creating over **58,000 worker days** out of which 22% were created for Syrian refugees.

► EIIP in Climate Change Adaptation Response

The increasingly evident consequences of environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change have elevated environmental concerns within the global development agenda since the Rio conference in 1992, but it was the 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change that brought them centre stage highlighting the need for **enormous investments in climate change mitigation and adaptation measures**. This had important implications for the future of EIIPs and provided a framework for adapting programming for “**Green Works-Green EIIP activity**” in response to the emerging demands, and as a tool for the creation of climate resilient infrastructure, the restoration of ecosystems, and the promotion of environmental sustainability. EIIP involves reducing risks and vulnerabilities, while seeking out opportunities and building the affected communities’ capacities to cope with the effects. EIIP’s focus on climate change adaptation includes five subsectors: *irrigation, soil and water conservation, flood control, rural transport and forestry*.



YEMEN

*Asset Creation and Decent Work Promotion
in support of Recovery and Climate Change
Adaptation through EIIP*

Yemen is ranked among the countries least prepared for climate shocks and among the most vulnerable to climate change, at 174 of 185 ranked countries according to Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index in 2021.



Photo 8: Social Fund for Development maintenance and pavement to rural roads to combat climate change in Yemen

One of the most important effects resulting from climate change is a change in temperature, as well as a change in the amount and intensity of rain and the agricultural seasons. This negative impact of climate change leaves communities vulnerable to poverty and hunger as a result, due to the absence of vital resources, especially for rural women who depend almost entirely on natural and agricultural resources as a main source of food and livelihood. It also exacerbates needs, isolates remote rural areas, and perpetuates cycles of violence and forced displacement.

As the situation in Yemen is getting worse, because of this severe damage caused by the climate change, efforts and resources are mobilized under a **proposed intervention** to enhance **Yemen Social Fund for Development’s capacity in developing and implementing a large scale EIIP**. This will be under the full support of ILO, with an ultimate vision of achieving a **gradual shift from straightforward cash for work to more of an EIIP approach** to expand the EIIP application and thus the impact and quality of the existing SFD’s programmes as a forward-looking step, towards **national recovery and reconstruction**.

The priority of EIIP interventions will be directed towards **strengthening climate change mitigation through labour-based works** including **protecting 1,250 hectares** of agricultural lands, **reclaiming 1,600 hectares** of land, **pasture rehabilitation** of **250 hectares** of land, **harvesting rainwater** in tanks of **35,700 m³** capacity, and rehabilitating and extending **71,400 m** of **irrigation channels**. All of this will lead to enhance mobility and access to markets, restore service provision, create job opportunities for 83,333 of the most vulnerable, especially in rural areas suffering from poverty, women and girls, youth, IDPs, and PWDs. And improve future employability of workers through on-the-job training and vocational trainings.

The project will engage **small contractors** to enhance their capacities in implementing EIIPs, **Ministry of Public Works** and **local authorities** as part of the institutional capacity strengthening for job creation and asset management using the EI approach and decent work practices, and other **implementers of CFW** (CSOs and UN agencies) to learn how to mainstream the EI approach in their operations.

EIIP in Natural Disasters Response

EIIP have been used for **recovery from natural disasters and severe shocks** such as tsunamis, storms, floodings, earthquakes, cyclones, droughts, etc. It mobilizes communities to build up resilience and restore livelihoods through reconstruction and investments in infrastructure to help affected communities to recover, mitigate the impacts of disasters and reduce upcoming disasters' risk.



PAKISTAN

ILO Pakistan Flood Response

Between June and August 2022, torrential rains and a combination of **riverine, urban, and flash flooding** led to an unprecedented disaster in Pakistan. According to the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), one-third of the country has been **under water**, around

33 million people have been **affected** by the floods including nearly 8 million **displaced** and around 4.3 million have faced **disruption or loss of employment**.

The ILO has joined the combined UN effort to support Pakistan in the wake of the most severe flooding in the country's recent history. The short to medium term strategy was linked to the long-term strategy articulated in the Decent Work Country Programme 2023-2027.

ILO supported the Government in collaboration with development partners to conduct **Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)** to assess loss and damage through several sectorial consultations and engagement of federal line ministries/ provincial departments. And similar exhaustive consultative process was followed to develop the **Resilient Recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Framework (4RF)**, more generally known as Disaster Recovery Framework (DRF), which helps with preparation of a broad recovery plan at the country level. And given the gaps identified in employment and livelihoods needs of workers during and after crises and disasters, the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OPHRD) has requested the ILO to support them in developing a **World of Work Strategy to respond to disaster or crisis situations** effectively and proactively. This included the development of the **guidance framework** and **action plan** and **advocating** with national and development stakeholders responsible for crisis response to acknowledge role of the WOW stakeholders.

The ILO Emergency response and early recovery was linked to a **job-rich inclusive strategy for reconstruction and resilience and to long-term socio-economic development**. This phased multitrack strategy included **employment generation in reconstruction**, skills development, enterprise support and social dialogue, that helps build peace and resilience.

Thus, labour-based techniques have been recommended for the **rehabilitation of infrastructure and rural road network**, and to provide people with cash through work and support social cohesion and community resilience.



Photo 9: ILO Rapid infrastructure rehabilitation project for the flood-affected people in Hunna Orak, Pakistan



THE PHILIPPINES

Experience with Natural Calamities and ILO Response

In a country frequently ravaged by typhoons and other natural calamities (and considered to be the 3rd riskiest country in the world in terms of natural calamities), vulnerable communities are often left crippled after the destruction. More often, it is a struggle to help people get back on their feet.

Three main Typhoons hit the Philippines in December 2011, December 2012 and December 2013. EIIP helped the country to develop a response programme to these disasters and carried out a series of projects funded by different donors to create jobs and rebuild areas devastated. This covered several projects such as *clearing and cleaning of surroundings* and *de-clogging of drainage canals*, to medium- to long-term benefits for affected communities through *repair and reconstruction of damaged public infrastructures and assets*, *environmental protection*, *social development*, livelihood recovery, and disaster preparedness and risk reduction.

Through the **Livelihood Cluster**, ILO EIIP works with national government agencies, local governments, the private sector, NGOs, and community-based organisations to optimize the planning and implementation of projects. EIIP Philippines has also introduced the **community contracting**, where community members were encouraged to organise themselves into a corporate entity (legal personality) to enter into contracts to do small infrastructure projects and generate jobs for its members. This has proven to be effective tool for both disaster preparedness as well as during relief, recovery and reconstruction works. Additionally, under EIIPs several **tools and guidelines** were developed for infrastructure works that have proven to be highly relevant to crisis response works in the Philippines such as *training material related to infrastructure reconstruction* in post crisis situations, *training material on disaster preparedness* with an emphasis on building local capacity to deal with future possible natural disasters, and *a training course for local agencies* (both public and private sector) to mainstream employment creation in disaster risk reduction and disaster response.



SYRIA

ILO Response to the Earthquakes in Syria 2023-2024

Described as “one of the biggest natural disasters of our times” the **multiple earthquakes** which struck Türkiye and northern Syria on 6 February 2023 have resulted in the **death and injury** of tens of thousands of people, and have caused extensive **damage to buildings and infrastructure**

across both countries. Disasters such as the earthquake have severe implications on the world of work. **Jobs and livelihoods are destroyed**, businesses interrupted, and workplaces damaged, worsening existing work deficits. In this context, ILO applied the **Employment Intensive (EI) approach** to address these challenges. Following the earthquake, ILO aimed to **rehabilitate infrastructure** while **creating decent jobs**, with a long-term focus on skills development and improving working conditions.

Phase 1, from May to July 2023, cleared **29 sites**, removed **5,400 cubic meters of debris**, and created **114 jobs**. Phase 2, from September to November 2023, generated **239 additional jobs** for continued debris removal, **road repairs**, and the **maintenance of sewage** and drainage systems. The ILO also rehabilitated **5 schools**, engaged 310 workers, and generated 7,442 workdays, alongside **contractor training** in EI engineering alternatives. As part of ongoing efforts, between May and November 2024, the new EIIP project created **142 short-term jobs**, contributing 11,223 workdays. This progress included **cleaning** 1,941 points, **maintaining** 335 points, **installing** 22 **manhole** covers, and removing 678.458 cubic meters of debris along 13.413 kilometres of **sewage** networks. Infrastructure work involved 718 cubic meters of levelling, 1,839 meters of sidewalk installation, and 1,206 square meters of concrete casting. Additional efforts included **agricultural work**, **metal fence maintenance**, and improvements to **47 streets**. **Debris recycling produced** 10,935 tiles, 8,815 blocks, and 7,308 sidewalk units.

► EIIP in Social Cohesion Response

EIIPs are crucial means for ensuring that “**no one is left behind**”. They enable the vulnerable or marginalized to be brought into the labour market. At the same time, these labour-based programmes make a significant contribution to the **peace process** by addressing the drivers of conflict and bringing working-age people together in dialogues that break communication barriers and help lessen negative perceptions between social groups. The jobs created provide socio-economic opportunities that encourage continued participation in EIIP activities, which in turn strengthens **social cohesion** and helps to foster a more harmonious environment.



JORDAN

Experience of EIIPs in Social Cohesion

Engaging Jordanians and Syrians together through EI approach to deliver services, rehabilitate existing facilities, and perform some landscaping, forestry, and construction works in 28 municipalities affected by the Syrian refugee crises had a very **positive effect on the relationship** between the two communities. This is reflected by a significant increase in **interaction** and relationships that also seem to be lasting after EIIP contracts completion, **changes in common perceptions** towards each other, increase in **sense of belonging** and building **trust** among individuals. Moreover, a positive effect was perceived on **social cohesion in the wider community** as reflected by many positive responses from the public on the participants' contribution in improving the community infrastructure and environment. And thus, EIIPs supported in responding to drivers of social tensions caused by the local impact of the influx of Syrian refugees at the municipal level, through enhancements in the relevance and quality of municipal services.

Besides, EIIPs entailed several **interventions that fostered collaboration and social cohesion** including the *50/50 split ratio in covering both nationalities in all groups and activities combined with equal pay for work of equal value, transparent workers' recruitment mechanism, gender equality and promotion of female employment, workers' rotation, team building activities, vocational trainings, youth engagement, inclusion of PWDs, setting up monitoring mechanisms and following up a participatory approach in orienting project implementation.*



AFGHANISTAN

Experience of EIIPs in Social Dialogue and contribution to Social Cohesion

EIIPs in Afghanistan contribute to social cohesion through a variety of channels. Starting by **engaging IDPs, refugees, and host communities** in EIIPs, adopting a ‘**do-no-harm Approach**’ to ensure inclusivity, and a ‘**Community-Based Approach**’ while designing and implementing the funded EIIP projects to help ensure communities' buy-in, enhance the sense of ownership, and minimize the risks of miscommunication and misinformation. The community is engaged with from the beginning through regular meetings, sensitization and outreach sessions, and established community development committees and leaders to understand well the challenges faced by the community, the need for the intervention, and the potential impact of the intervention upon the affected population.

Social dialogue is also informed by **feedback and grievance mechanisms**, where a complaint procedure is set up in place to ensure that the concerns of workers and communities are adequately addressed in EIIP projects.

Eventually, the **tension and mistrust** between social groups gradually thus eases, paving the way for mutual **trust, cooperation, collaboration, and friendships**, contributing to **social cohesion**.

2. Practical Experience Contributing to HDPN derived from EIIP Interventions with focus on Afghanistan Case from Asia and Iraq Case from Arab States

Importance of Employment and the work across the HDPN Approach

The **Decent Work Agenda** is an essential element of the triple Nexus where **employment**, **decent working conditions** and **social dialogue** can contribute to peace and resilience. In collaboration with Member States, tripartite constituents, international and national partners, and with the direct involvement of local populations and stakeholders, a two-fold approach to crisis response can allow for an immediate response centred on **employment** which will simultaneously stimulate and assist long-term socio-economic development in an inclusive and rights-based manner. By doing so, decent work and social justice are promoted as key drivers of resilience and peace.

After confirming its commitments towards working across Nexus in 2016, the ILO adopted in 2017 *Recommendation No. 205 on Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience*. Since then, the ILO has been working towards putting the HDPN into practice; notably focusing on employment and decent work contributions to peace. To do so, ILO's **DWCP** aims at systematically ensuring that all interventions are implemented through peace-responsive approaches. This is achieved by strengthening and empowering national institutions to create an enabling environment for socio-economic recovery and development through the adoption of policies that promote decent work in parallel with initiatives that deliver immediate short-term peace dividends, such as creating jobs and providing opportunities for skills acquisition, and helping to strengthen resilience and social cohesion.

In a nutshell, **employment is a major contributing factor in achieving short-term stability, reintegration, socio-economic progress, and sustainable peace** in post-conflict situations as it provides communities and individuals with the means of survival and recovery.

The EIIP Model and Humanitarian, Development and Peace Response

Within this context, **EIIPs have been widely implemented by the ILO as crucial means for achieving employment**, contributing as they do to ensuring that “no one is left behind” by supporting vulnerable populations into the labour market to pave the way to more equal, and peaceful societies.

At the same time, these programmes have important economic, social, and environmental impacts by creating and maintaining the very assets that can increase productivity and strengthen resilience.

The EIIP activities aim at addressing humanitarian and development needs and demonstrate how the ILO Decent Work Agenda contributes to the attainment of peace and resilience in crisis- and conflict-affected areas.

Thus, the application of the EIIP approach in countries in Asia and the Middle East was able to illustrate its **contributions to HDPN in varying levels depending on local contexts**, this is best illustrated in the two cases below:

▶ AFGHANISTAN CASE

The **EIIP model and approach in Afghanistan** was able to function within a **context facing unprecedented challenges**, where providing equal access for all young women and men to decent and productive employment opportunities as well as quality training and development will always remain a key priority for the future of the Afghan economy and society. This **EII approach has proven to be very effective** in bringing in ILO's longstanding and specialized expertise in promoting productive employment and decent work. EIIP is also found playing a key role in operationalizing the HDPN by addressing simultaneously both humanitarian and development needs and working across 3 dimensions: **direct implementation**, fostering **partnerships**, and **strengthening institutional capacity** while having a human-right based approach and contributing to the attainment of social cohesion and resilience. However, EIIP activities at policy level are still needed to build a foundation for longer-term change, but due to the challenge in engaging with the local government (De facto Authorities), this has not been possible.

Humanitarian activities under EIIPs Afghanistan start with the emergency employment that provides **immediate income opportunities** targeting the most vulnerable youth and women among refugee, IDP, returnee, and host community populations. Work is mostly carried out on public assets and community infrastructure addressing the immediate economic, social, and environmental needs of those affected. In addition to the **basic income security** granted for the vulnerable workers employed, EIIPs' participants are also provided with **personal accident insurance** and **work-related injuries insurance** during participation, and **social protection** in the form of seed money saved for skills training and stimulating an economic activity after the project completion. The contribution to **development**, is characterized by EIIPs support to longer-term employment outcomes in the form of:

- ✓ **transfer of technical skills** to workers either on-the-job or through entrepreneurship training (especially for women with skill to start a small business and women-owned micro enterprises to scale up their business models),
- ✓ **institutional strengthening, and capacity building of Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment and its local chapter, private sector contractors, and humanitarian and development partners** to plan, lead, employ and monitor similar EIIP interventions within similar construction activities while applying decent work conditions as a step towards extending the use of the EII approach, till reaching to **local economic development** by rehabilitating rural roads and providing easier and faster access to markets and basic services.

Together with the humanitarian and development outcomes, EIIP actions in Afghanistan also contribute to **peacebuilding**. EIIP interventions **bring people** of different backgrounds **together**, establish **contact** and encourage people to engage in **social dialogue** through a **community-based approach** that helps break the communication barrier to address the **grievances** expressed during the dialogue in addition to **mainstreaming gender and disability** through different strategies. Ultimately, this enhances the sense of belonging, ownership, protection, gives the disadvantaged groups a voice and builds mutual trust and thus contributes to **social cohesion**. EIIPs Afghanistan streamline a group of **cross cutting themes** reflecting ILO's core values and principles as **gender equality and non-discrimination**, the **fundamental principles and rights at work**, in addition to **environmental**

protection and climate change adaptation through adopting *climate resilient construction standards* and *monitoring measures* to ensure compliance.



IRAQ CASE

Through the application of EIIPs in Iraq, **the operationalization of the HDPN is being supported by addressing simultaneously both humanitarian and development needs while contributing to the attainment of peace and resilience**. This EIIP approach has proven to be very **effective** in putting ILO mandate at the heart of HDPN by working simultaneously across four dimensions: Direct Implementation, Partnerships, Institutional Capacity, and Policy Support.

Humanitarian activities start with the emergency employment that provides immediate income to workers, while in parallel contributing to public infrastructure and services that support longer-term social, environmental, and economic development, including secondary employment effects. In addition to the basic **income** security granted for the vulnerable workers employed, EIIPs' participants are also provided with **personal and car accident insurance, paid sick leaves and paid holidays** during participation, and access to **social security** for private sector workers. The contribution to **development**, is characterized by EIIPs support to longer-term employment outcomes in the form of:

- ✓ **transfer of technical skills** to workers either on-the-job or through vocational training on cultural resource management and EI approaches in collaboration with academia (Erbil Polytechnic University,
- ✓ **institutional reform, and capacity building of public and private sectors** to plan, lead, and manage similar EIIP interventions while applying decent work conditions. This entailed several measures as mainstreaming **national employment services** in recruitment, **involving workers organizations** on the ground to **create quality jobs**, engaging **Trade Unions** in monitoring decent work principles during EIIP interventions and using **technology and digital tools** for monitoring the application of social/ environmental safeguards at sites,
- ✓ **capacity building of humanitarian and development partners** to streamline the EIIP methodology into their existing programmes' framework,
- ✓ **policy, and sustainability support** to build a foundation for longer-term change and aid the ongoing shift from emergency cash-based activities towards more employment-intensive approaches through *SOPs for EIIP approach*, and supporting the Government of Iraq in its efforts to adopt a *National Public Works Programme*,
- ✓ **till reaching to local economic development** by restoring destroyed infrastructure and improving the natural environment and community assets.

Together with the humanitarian and development outcomes, EIIP actions in Iraq also contribute to **peacebuilding**. EIIP interventions **bring people** of different backgrounds **together**, establish **contact** and encourage people to engage in **social dialogue** through *technical committees* set of representatives of the local directorates, trade unions, and some worker representatives from amongst youth, women, FDPs, and PWDs in addition to *support to feedback and grievance* mechanisms. Tension and mistrust between social groups gradually ease and pave the way for mutual trust, cooperation, friendships, and thus contribute to **social cohesion**. **Cross-cutting issues** of gender equality and non-discrimination, workers' rights, and environmental protection are streamlined and promoted at all levels of the EIIP approach.

3. Opportunities for Partnerships for Crises Response and Recovery

The HDPN calls for a **New Way of Working** (NWOW) as an approach for governments, humanitarian and development agencies, and donors to **work together** to meet peoples' needs more effectively, mitigate risks and vulnerabilities, and move toward sustainable peace. This new way of working **supports partnerships**, promotes more effective and efficient programming and working collaboratively over multi-year timeframes toward **collective outcomes based on leveraging respective comparative advantage** and strategic learning, supports policy development and implementation, and thus transforms the way partners and other stakeholders anticipate and respond to crises. ILO is engaged in this space as per the following examples from the region:

► Building Equitable and Inclusive Transformation (BEIT) Project-Towards Decent Work and Affordable Housing in Iraq

The BEIT joint project is funded by the European Union (EU) and implemented by ILO in partnership with United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT) and International Trade Centre (ITC). It aims to stimulate decent work opportunities, generate quality jobs for young women and men especially for lower income and vulnerable people in Iraq, while addressing urgent need for affordable green housing. This will be done by the ILO component through the introduction of national public work programme using EIP approach and labour governance reforms that promote decent work. The ILO whose mandate and vision is to promote decent work and social justice for all workers regardless of where they work, will be complementing and synergizing in a multi-sectoral approach with interventions of UN-HABITAT and ITC by seeking the following interventions:



International
Labour
Organization

► Support Government of Iraq to Establish a **National Public Works Programme**

► Address **Child Labour** with a Focus on the Brick Industry

► Enhance **Labour Governance** including OSH within the Housing Sector

*Integration, Inclusiveness,
Tripartite Mechanism and
Social Dialogue*



UN-HABITAT

► Increase **awareness and capacities** of local, provincial, and national government staff on **affordable housing planning and policy** and its **regulatory and legal framework**

► Improve availability of **financial tools** and models for affordable housing

► Increase **awareness** of housing **environmental footprint and urban development** among population

Coordination



International
Trade
Centre

► Design & implement a green sustainable **construction sector development strategy**

► Strengthen **capacities** of MSMEs businesses and entrepreneurs for **greening processes**

► Improve **regulatory and legal framework** for construction and housing services & **investment** in the sector

*Quality, affordability,
climate adaptation*

While **setting the roadmap for the National Public Works Program in Iraq** to guide the design, piloting, and implementation of the NPWP, ILO provided technical support including reviewing good practices to contribute to the development of this roadmap and build on the experience of successful NPWPs in different parts of the globe. The **Indian example MGNREGA** (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act) was undertaken as **a case for benchmark**, since it is a national scheme enacted in law and the most ambitious of its kind today, providing work and income to more than 50 million households each year. **Its review helped in understanding how this example has led to generating employment, promoting decent work, creating sustainable and resilient productive assets.**

Furthermore, a **study visit is being explored to India or other places** within the region for knowledge sharing.

► Partnerships under (EIIP) in Lebanon

Building on the established programmes in the country, the ILO through the **EIIP swiftly mobilized its resources on the ground** (both financial and human resources) to immediately respond to two immense recent crises:

Firstly, after the explosion that devastated parts of the Lebanese capital Beirut on August 4th, 2020, and while the city was already struggling with a collapsing economy, breakdown of public services and COVID-19, the ILO mobilized its **EIIP to create short-term decent jobs** for Lebanese nationals and Syrian refugees to **clear debris and rubble** from the streets of Beirut affected by the explosion. The EIIP Lebanon, funded by Germany through the German Development Bank (KfW), was supported by **PROSPECTS project**, which is funded by the Government of the Netherlands, to address the consequences of the explosion and partnered to create decent jobs through mobilizing the EIIP for clearing-up operations, rehabilitating buildings and infrastructure in Beirut.

Secondly, in September 2024, security situation escalated quickly resulting in a nation-wide war all over the country and leading to a sudden IDP influx in some areas. The ILO through the EIIP swiftly mobilized its resources to immediately respond through interventions aimed at improving the living conditions in and around selected collective centres in accessible parts of the country (namely Tripoli, Aley and Mount Lebanon). With support from the donors (**BMZ through the KfW Development Bank**), the ILO was able to promptly **repurpose the funds** previously allocated to inaccessible conflict areas (i.e. Bekaa Valley and Southern region), to **create short term decent work jobs** and **provide shelter** living units within public schools and technical training colleges. Specific activities **included rehabilitation of shower units, toilets, doors, windows and heating system as well as installing fire safety measures, and solar panels** (through **PROSPECTS programme**). Thereby providing sustainability for the educational facilities that were run down due to the various multi-faceted crises that affected Lebanon over the years. Additionally, the selected centres became the locations for joint response resulting in comprehensive interventions. At the end, the ILO response during these crises in Lebanon was an **exemplary intervention of a joint programme response involving different projects within the ILO** (namely EIIP, PROSPECTS, and ENABLE) and **collaborating with its donors to the development cooperation portfolio to re-purpose some of the funding.**

► Improving Skills and Economic Opportunities for the Women and Youth in (Cox's Bazar) Project in Bangladesh

This project came as a major initiative by the [Department of Youth Development](#) in the Cox Bazar district to give women, youth, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities skills and competencies that will increase their participation in the labour market, especially in non-traditional sectors and occupations. This was launched in 2023 by the [Ministry of Youth and Sports](#) and funded by the [Governments of Canada and the Netherlands](#). **The project was built on an alliance of active partners that combined their expertise and experiences in refugee protection, skills development, employment and self-employment for efficient results, while at the same time taking a lead role for the harmonisation of practices in these fields** as part of the Joint Response Plan (JRP) for Rohingya Humanitarian Crisis. This included technical and vocational educational training (TVET) [institutions](#), working in partnership with the learning centers of [BRAC](#), [A2i](#), and [ILO](#) sister UN agencies [UNDP](#), [UNHCR](#) and [FAO](#).

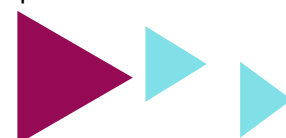
The ILO worked together with the Government and partners on the economic empowerment of the Bangladeshi host community and the Rohingya refugees in Cox's Bazar district as well as Bhasan Char of Bangladesh through **self-reliance activities in the camps and employment and self-employment** in growth sectors for **the host communities**. The project promoted peace through dialogue and leaving no one behind. And entailed the involvement of multi-level stakeholders relevant to the skills development and employment generation in the target areas.

► Partnerships in Disaster Response

Disasters hamper socio-economic development and undermine the livelihoods of households and communities. Damaged workplaces, lost jobs and diminished income are the typical consequences of a disaster and affect disproportionately the poor and most vulnerable.

While EIIPs traditionally work with and through government institutions, this is not always possible in crisis where institutions may be too weak or even absent. Therefore, EIIPs also work as **part of the UN response**, with **implementing partners**, with **ILOs social partners, Workers and Employers Organisations** who indeed can play an important role in crisis response. The [ILO](#) is a partner of the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction ([UNDRR](#)) and works in partnership with other UN and multilateral agencies, such as the UN Disaster Assessment and Coordination ([UNDAC](#)), the UN for Coordination and Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)), the [EU](#) and [World Bank](#), in **disaster response**. By mobilizing relevant actors for reconstruction, crises can **open a window of opportunity to promote decent work** for a better future. And the coordination not only **reduces duplication** of those response efforts, but also ensures the **aid delivered is predictable and prioritized** according to needs.

Accordingly, analysis of crisis situation is also produced in collaboration with all actors, through **post-disaster needs assessment (PDNA)** and peace and conflict analysis (PCA), to provide a comprehensive picture of overall needs and consequently develop a collective plan for the response. The ILO provides direct support to governments and social partners in undertaking the (PDNA) in the 'Employment, Livelihoods and Social Protection' (ELSP) sector. The ILO also works to develop the capacity of key institutions, such as economic and labour ministries, workers' and employers' organizations to support quick recovery in the aftermath of disasters focusing on employment creation, income generation, protection of vulnerable livelihoods and promotion of sustainable local development.



4. Lessons Learned, Vision and Way Forward

A series of lessons learned have emerged from the experience of implementing EIIPs in Asia and Arab States so far:

► **EIIP Approach:** The EIIP approach is an **entry point for formalization and decent work** and **can be the catalyst** for collaborative response planning for **employment creation at the national level** - particularly for vulnerable people including those from low-income households, those on low pay, or the unemployed – and thus support the Governments to foster job creation and redirecting labour to infrastructure projects through the adoption of a public works programme.

At the end, it could be a tool to **open-up concrete windows of opportunities** for Governments in several areas and streams.

► **EIIP Approach and Alignment with HDPN:** The EIIP approach contributes to HDPN, presented by **bringing in HDPN's three pillars all together**, working across all dimensions concurrently (implementation, partnerships, policy etc.), and putting ILO mandate at the heart of HDPN. Through the application of EIIPs, the operationalization of the HDPN is being supported by addressing simultaneously both humanitarian and development needs while contributing to the attainment of peace and resilience.

► **Partnerships:** capitalizing upon EIIP will require **strengthening collaboration with several actors** at national, local, and international levels, optimizing the use of resources through **joint programming, solid strategic planning**, better **sharing of information**, and **coordination** of resource mobilization for collective outcomes.

► **Regional Approach for Refugee Response:** the Arab States region is home to some of the world's largest displaced populations, including over 15 million refugees and IDPs. While humanitarian responses have provided basic needs, long-term employment solutions are lacking. Many displaced individuals face legal barriers to work, informality, exploitative conditions, and lack of social protection. Similarly, returnees struggle to reintegrate due to damaged economies, high unemployment, and weak institutions. This underscores the urgent need to **move beyond a humanitarian response** to displacement and **adopt a long-term, employment-based strategy**.

This requires **regional cooperation**, investment in employment programs, and policy reforms that enable refugees, returnees, IDPs and migrant workers to participate meaningfully in host economies. The **humanitarian, development and peace actors should mobilize financial and technical resources to support these efforts**. Governments, employers, and trade unions must commit to creating inclusive labour markets that protect the rights of displaced and migrant workers while benefiting national economies.

A **regional labour mobility framework** is essential to ensure displaced populations and labour migration can contribute productively to host economies while maintaining social cohesion and economic stability.

Establishing a **regional hub** is essential to facilitate **mobility among the affected countries and to assist in the development of labour market policies and support mechanisms for all**.

EIIPs can continue to play a vital role in assisting returnees as an initial intervention to facilitate their settlement in these countries through initial short-term emergency employment that provides immediate income opportunities targeting the most vulnerable youth and women among refugees, IDPs, returnees, and host community populations. Following this, efforts should be directed towards advocating for additional policies and legislations aimed at enhancing reintegration, improving labour conditions, and expanding social security coverage, among other critical areas.

► **Importance of early warning systems in disaster risk reduction** that enable preparedness action as well as a rapid response from workers, employers, and national or local authorities, and can therefore save many lives and reduce damage by 30% if activated 24 hours before the event. Moreover, the implementation of such systems can also contribute to building resilience, as enhancing preparedness strengthens the capacity to recover rapidly, and reduces vulnerability. Thus, this is an area that **needs further work and collaboration with partners** starting by soliciting innovative **disaster risk reduction strategies** that could embed working on the early warning systems and also emphasize strategies where EIIP can be deployed.

► **Contribution to Social Cohesion** requires various mechanisms and interventions throughout EIIPs for bringing the different groups together and enhancing interaction. However, social cohesion should be applied holistically by being **mainstreamed** in programmes' strategy, design, operations, and monitoring.

► **Skills Development** is the vital step towards enhancing **long-term employability** especially with impactful upskilling and certification packages. Skills can also **transform gender relations** and promote inclusion, equal learning opportunities, and social cohesion in classroom. However, skills development should always be informed by comprehensive **assessments of the current and future needs of the labour market**.

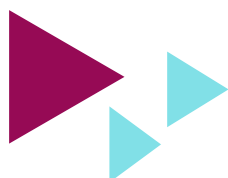
► **Climate change adaptation** necessitates the **integration of the EIIP model in any climate change response** to generate jobs that conserve the environment and to support the ecosystem to withstand and adapt to climate change. This is crucial, especially that the world is highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change, thus, utilizing EIIP to helping communities to adapt to climate change is an area that needs further work and collaboration with partners.

► **Achieving impact:** placing **people at the forefront**, by fostering a deeper **understanding of their needs** concerning infrastructure and services and actively involving them in the implementation process, always **leads to greater impact**. Thus, people's insights and needs should be integral to the selection of EIIP projects, regardless of their size or budget, to maximize the positive impact on beneficiaries.

Consequently,

ILO will continue **expanding and sharing its experience** to help the government, stakeholders, and communities **apply and extend the use of the EIIP approach** and contribute to the Humanitarian, Development and Peace Nexus outcomes.

Moreover, **innovativeness** will be always embraced within EIIPs to create effective solutions for ongoing challenges while adapting to local contexts.



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