



International
Labour
Organization

Employment-intensive
Investment Programme



EIIP SSTC

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TECHNICAL BRIEF

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

Key points

► Crises and the Importance of Employment

Interventions: Crises hinder socio-economic development and undermine the livelihoods of households and communities. Common repercussions include damaged workplaces, job losses and reduced income, disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations. In such challenging circumstances, employment plays a crucial role in fostering short-term stability, facilitating reintegration, promoting socio-economic advancement, and establishing sustainable peace by providing individuals and communities with the means for survival and recovery.

- **ILO's Response to Crises:** At the forefront of the ILO's efforts in delivering humanitarian and development assistance during and after crises is the Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP). Within these contexts, EIIPs have been widely implemented by the ILO as crucial tools for achieving employment. They play a vital role in ensuring that "no one is left behind" by supporting vulnerable populations entering the labour market, thereby paving the way to more equitable and peaceful societies.

- **EIIP Approach:** The approach supports countries in Asia and Arab States with immediate, medium-, and long-term interventions through reconstruction and rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure and the improvement of the environment and community assets. It addresses conflict drivers related to the lack of livelihoods and access to infrastructure. Ultimately, this response stimulates the economy, generates local multiplier effects and contributes to inclusive governance, sustainability, resiliency-building, and social cohesion.

- **EIIP Contributes to HDPN:** Through the application of various EIIP country activities, the EIIP approach has proven to be highly effective in integrating the ILO mandate within the framework of Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus (HDPN). This not only brings in the ILO's exceptional and specialized expertise in promoting productive employment and decent work but also supports the operationalization of the nexus. By simultaneously addressing both humanitarian and development needs, it contributes to the attainment of peace and resilience.



Applicability of EIIP Approach in Different Types of Crises

EIIP Approach: Over time, the approach has evolved in various ways in response to crises and shifts in the broader geopolitical contexts. The approach has been applied for:

- **Recovery from War and Post-conflict Contexts:** Addressing economic downturns often leads to significant challenges and limited availability of decent employment opportunities in several countries, resulting in relatively low labour force participation rates, high unemployment and underemployment, and high levels of informality in the labour market. [Afghanistan](#) and [Sri Lanka](#) exemplify countries that have endured decades of internal conflicts, disrupting their economic, political and social landscapes. In response, the ILO implemented EIIP to support these countries with immediate, medium-, and long-term interventions, including the construction of flood protection structures, and the rehabilitation and maintenance of rural roads in Afghanistan, as well as the rehabilitation and de-siltation of water tanks in collaboration with farmers in Sri Lanka.



Afghanistan Tasadi Protection Wall Project
Afghanistan. 8/2024. © EIIP Afghanistan News Brief /ILO

- **Refugee Response:** EIIP supports affected countries in addressing the growing pressures on infrastructure, resources, and labour markets due to the influx of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). EIIP has been especially significant in the Middle East—specifically in [Jordan](#), [Lebanon](#) and [Iraq](#)—where the programme contributed to the recovery efforts following the social and economic upheavals triggered by the Arab Spring. ILO applied EIIP to create immediate job opportunities for refugees, IDPs and host communities in these countries, while simultaneously enhancing local infrastructure and the

environment. Interventions evolved through phases, initially emphasising humanitarian assistance and later focusing on development in both Jordan and Lebanon. This shift included the implementation of regulatory reforms, skills development, and the enhancement of institutional capacities. In [Iraq](#), although the approach addressed both humanitarian and development needs, it prioritized the development needs.

- **Climate Change Adaptation:** EIIP provides a framework for adapting EIIP for “Green Works” in response to emerging demands. They serve as tools for creating climate-resilient infrastructure, restoring ecosystems, and promoting environmental sustainability.
- **Natural Disaster Response:** EIIP supports communities in recovering from disasters, mitigating their impacts, and reducing future risks. For instance, the ILO has implemented EIIP initiatives in response to the floods in [Pakistan](#), generating employment opportunities through the rehabilitation of infrastructure and rural road network. Similarly, in the [Philippines](#), the response to typhoons focused on rebuilding affected areas and cleaning the surrounding environments.



ILO Rapid infrastructure rehabilitation project for the flood-affected people in Hunna Orak, Pakistan. 11/2022 © ILO Emergency Employment in Hunna Orak, Pakistan

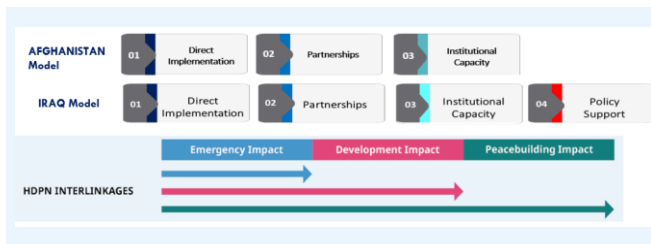
- **Social Cohesion Response:** EIIP is crucial for ensuring that “no one is left behind” by enabling vulnerable populations to enter the labour market. The programme helps address the drivers of conflict and bring people together in dialogues that break communication barriers and reduce negative perceptions between social groups. This is exemplified by the experience of [Jordan](#) which successfully engaged Syrian refugees and Jordanians in collaborative interventions.



Practical Experience Contributing to HDPN derived from EIIP Interventions

The application of the EIIP approach in countries across Asia and the Arab States has demonstrated its contributions to HDPN in varying levels, depending on national and local contexts. This is best illustrated in the two cases below:

- EIIP Model and Approach in Afghanistan:** Despite unprecedented challenges, the EIIP model played a pivotal role in operationalizing the HDPN. It effectively addressed both humanitarian and development needs by working across **three (3) dimensions: direct implementation, fostering partnerships, and strengthening institutional capacity**. With a human-right-based approach, it contributed to social cohesion and resilience. However, there remains a pressing need for EIIP activities at the **policy level** to establish a foundation for sustainable, long-term change. Unfortunately, difficulties in engaging with local government authorities have hindered progress in this area. The diagram illustrates how EIIP contributes to HDPN, with the model applied in Afghanistan and Iraq.



- EIIP Model and Approach in Iraq:** The EIIP model has proven to be highly effective in placing the ILO mandate at the core of HDPN by simultaneously working across **four (4) dimensions: direct implementation, partnerships, institutional capacity, and policy support**. In the recent years, the focus of the EIIP approach has **shifted** towards creating a **holistic model** that can be **upscaled** and adopted by the government. A key result of EIIP's work in Iraq from 2020 to 2024 is the implementation of EIIP public works model at the Governorate level, which will serve as the main feeder for longer-term policy engagement to adopt and implement the **National Public Works Programme** led by the governmental partners.

The differing approaches of the EIIP model in Iraq and Afghanistan are influenced by each country's unique dynamics, economic conditions, security environments, institutional capacities, cultural and political contexts, and environmental factors. These tailored strategies ensure that the EIIP effectively contributes to the Nexus in both settings. The insights from these countries highlight the importance of employment-intensive investments in bridging humanitarian efforts with sustainable development and peacebuilding.

Opportunities for Partnerships for Crisis Response and Recovery

The HDPN promotes a **New Way of Working** that encourages governments, humanitarian and development agencies, and donors to **collaborate** more effectively to meet peoples' needs, mitigate risks and vulnerabilities, and move toward sustainable peace. This approach fosters **partnerships**, enhances collaboration for more effective and **efficient programming**, and transforms how partners and stakeholders anticipate and respond to crises.

The ILO is actively engaged in this space through various initiatives across the regions. In **Iraq**, the ILO through the BEIT Project, is adopting a multi-sectoral approach in collaboration with UN-Habitat and the International Trade Centre (ITC) to generate decent work opportunities for low-income and vulnerable populations, while addressing the urgent need for affordable green housing. Another intervention was the ILO's joint programme response in **Lebanon** following Beirut explosion crises and the recent nationwide conflict. This effort built upon established ILO programmes in the country, namely EIIP, PROSPECTS, and ENABLE. By working closely with its donors, the ILO was able to re-purpose some of the funding to mitigate the impacts of these crises. This included partnerships aimed at creating decent jobs through mobilizing the EIIP for clearing-up operations, rehabilitating buildings and infrastructure.

Another intervention occurred in Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh. This initiative was built on an alliance of active partners who combined their expertise and experiences in refugee protection, skills development, and employment and self-employment. While EIIP typically works with and through government institutions, this approach may not be feasible in crisis situations, where these institutions are often too fragile or entirely lacking. Consequently, EIIP also engages as part of the UN



response, and working alongside implementing partners, social partners, workers' and employers' organisations, who can play an important role in responding to crises.

Lessons Learned and Forward Looking

- **EIIP Approach as Entry Point:** The EIIP approach serves as an entry point for formalization and decent work, acting as a catalyst for collaborative response planning for employment creation at the national level, particularly for vulnerable populations. Ultimately, it can open concrete opportunities for governments, supporting them in fostering job creation and redirecting labour to infrastructure projects through the adoption of public works programme.
- **EIIP Approach and Alignment with HDPN:** The EIIP contributes to HDPN, by integrating its four pillars - implementation, institutional capacity, partnerships, and policy support - working across all dimensions concurrently.
- **Needs to work across the EIIP:** To effectively capitalize on the EIIP, it is essential to strengthen [partnerships](#), optimize resource use through joint programming, engage in solid strategic planning, and improve information sharing. Moreover, enhancing [disasters risk reduction preparedness](#) requires further collaboration with partners, starting with soliciting innovative disaster risk reduction strategies that include early warning systems and identifying strategies where the EIIP can be effectively deployed. Collaboration is also vital in leveraging the EIIP to help communities adapt [to climate change](#). Achieving more significant impact necessitates a deeper understanding of [people's needs](#) and placing them at the forefront. In the context of the Arab States region, there is an urgent need to move beyond a humanitarian response to displacement and adopt a long-term, employment-based strategy. This shift requires [regional cooperation](#), investment in employment programs, and policy

reforms that empower refugees, returnees, IDPs and migrant workers to engage meaningfully in host economies. EIIP can play a crucial role in aiding returnees by providing initial interventions that facilitate their settlement through short-term emergency employment.

- **Overall Direction:** ILO will continue to expand and share its experience to help governments, stakeholders, and communities apply and extend the use of the EIIP approach, contributing to the outcomes of the HDPN. Moreover, the EIIP will consistently embrace innovations to create durable solutions for ongoing challenges while adapting to local contexts.

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