

► EIIP in Asia and the Pacific

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Advancing employment and decent work through public investments

This brief

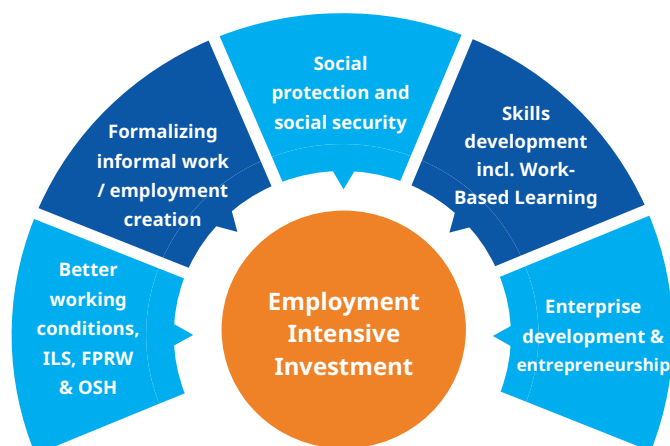
- **Objective:** This brief presents practical information, reference material, and entry points for ILO's Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) regarding public investment policies, programmes, and projects. It is designed to inspire, guide, and catalyse the development of project proposals that maximize the employment potential and advance decent work using EIIP principles while aligning with national and donor priorities.
- **Why EIIP matters:** Asia-Pacific labour markets face compounding challenges from climate vulnerability, youth unemployment, rural informality, crisis shocks, and fiscal constraints. Employment-intensive investments offer a tested, rights-based solution to deliver inclusive jobs through infrastructure and environmental initiatives while advancing international labour standards.

Introduction

The Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) leverages public investments in infrastructure and the environment to create decent jobs, skills, and business opportunities across contexts ranging from long-term development to fragile and emergency situations and applies an integrated approach to implement **international labour standards** and **fundamental principles and rights at work**. Grounded in prevention, crisis response, and resilience-building, EIIP supports the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN). Key areas of intervention span:

- **Policy & procurement:** Advancing employment-intensive investment strategies by advising stakeholders on budget optimization and reforming procurement rules to expand access for MSMEs and women.
- **Institutional capacity & decent work:** Building implementation capacity across public, private, and social sectors while enforcing rigorous labour standards, fair wages, and safe working conditions.

- **Technical support & innovation:** Providing guidance on labour-based infrastructure construction and local-level planning, while supporting pilot demonstrations to generate evidence and scale policy objectives.
- **Resilience & crisis response:** Driving disaster prevention by integrating Nature-based Solutions (NbS) with green works for ecosystem restoration and mobilizing post-crisis recovery and income generation.



EIIP provides entry points for policy reform, decent work, formalization, social protection, skills development and local enterprise growth

Why EIIP

More and better jobs through public investments

The ILO's Employment-Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP)¹ helps Member States tackle unemployment by putting employment and Decent work at the centre of public infrastructure and environmental investments. Backed by over 50 years of experience across 70+ countries, EIIP has earned global trust and built a unique portfolio of resources. A strength of the EIIP approach is its ability to operate across policy, institutional, and local levels. Policy reforms shape institutional practices, while local project execution generates field evidence to inform national strategies.



Alignment with policy frameworks and the HDPN

EIIP drives sustainable job creation by anchoring interventions within Decent Work Country Programmes (DWCPs), national development plans, and UN frameworks. This alignment ensures that employment-intensive public investments link directly to national macroeconomic priorities and long-term development targets. Furthermore, aligned with R205, it anchors the ILO's crisis response across the HDPN, turning short-term relief into long-term development, peace, and institutional stability.

Capacity-building and institutional strengthening

By building capacity for local resource-based (LRB) technologies and promoting decent work principles, the programme strengthens the ability of both public and private sector actors to generate productive employment

and deliver quality infrastructure. To maximize long-term ownership, EIIP promotes an embedded approach – working directly through existing national and local government structures, including TVET institutions, rather than creating parallel delivery systems. This is backed by a long history of supporting decentralization and local-level planning, which empowers local authorities to efficiently manage public assets and drive sustainable local development.

Operationalizing the normative framework

EIIP demonstrates how international labour standards can be applied on the ground in an enabling, practical manner. Unlike conventional infrastructure programmes, it integrates the ILO's normative framework directly into engineering and procurement practices. Embedding specific instruments – such as Conventions Nos 94, 122 and 155 – into national tender documents and worksite protocols operationalizes rights at work, reinforces ILO supervisory mechanisms, and proves that rights-based approaches enhance public investment quality.

Tripartite collaboration and social dialogue

EIIP engages governments, workers' organizations, and employers' organizations across the project cycle. Social dialogue is a strategic and operational mechanism that influences policies, institutions, and projects across the entire EIIP approach and ensures that public investment strategies are designed and implemented with social partner consensus. Ultimately, this collaborative approach improves compliance with international labour standards, supports local contractor development, protects workers' rights, and enhances the overall socioeconomic impact of infrastructure investments.

Social inclusion & labour standards

EIIP explicitly targets vulnerable groups, including women, youth, those in poverty, persons with disabilities, and refugees. Across all operations, the programme embeds FPWR into field protocols. It sets strict minimum requirements for decent working conditions and maintains zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, child labour, and forced labour. Compliance is actively enforced on the ground through a comprehensive environmental and social safeguards protocol, ensuring public investments advance social justice.

¹ EIIP Global Programme Document 2018: <https://www.ilo.org/publications/creating-jobs-through-public-investment>

EIIP thematic product lines

Six thematic product lines

EIIP operates across six core thematic areas to advance employment, decent work and institutional outcomes through public investment:

- **Employment Impact Assessments (EmPIA):** Quantifying the employment potential and impacts of public infrastructure investments using both ex-ante (predictive) and ex-post (evaluative) assessments.
- **Public Employment Programmes (PEPs):** Supporting direct government employment creation and employment guarantee schemes (e.g., India's MGNREGA and South Africa's EPWP) to enhance social protection.
- **Small-scale contractor development:** Strengthening the technical and management capacities of local small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to create a competent local construction industry.
- **Green works:** Creating decent employment through infrastructure projects that offer direct environmental benefits or support climate change adaptation (e.g., irrigation, flood control, and resilient rural transport).
- **Local resource-based approaches & community infrastructure:** Optimizing local materials, technologies, and community contracting to empower local communities and improve physical access.
- **Emergency employment:** Supporting immediate short-term employment for recovery and reconstruction in fragile, conflict, or disaster-affected contexts, while strengthening institutions and promoting long-term labour market inclusion and national development.

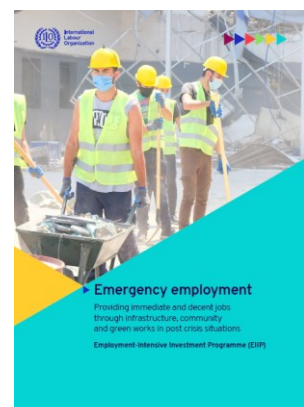
Cross-Cutting Core Values

Integrated across all EIIP interventions are the ILO's fundamental values and decent work outcomes:

- **Gender equality:** Utilizing participatory tools and guidelines to ensure all genders can participate in and benefit from every stage of the project cycle.
- **Reaching vulnerable groups:** Combatting discrimination and promoting rights at work for marginalized groups, including indigenous peoples and seasonal workers.

- **Working conditions:** Promoting social safeguards and OSH and ensuring basic income security as part of the Decent Work Agenda.
- **Environmental considerations:** Applying environmental safeguard frameworks to adhere to international standards.
- **Social dialogue:** Facilitating tripartite consensus and collaboration between governments, employers' organizations, and workers' organizations.

Thematic publications



Practical entry points for EIIP interventions

EIIP bridges infrastructure investment with job creation, local economic development, and social protection. To align with national and local priorities, its design relies on tailored operational entry points. These interventions span multiple strategic levels, ranging from high-level policy reform down to community-level execution.

Policy level

EIIP serves as an entry point for macro-economic planning, budget optimization, and legislative reform. It influences employment targets directly within national development plans, capital investment strategies, and Social Protection Floors. Using comparative studies for conventional construction vs. LRB construction, proposals demonstrate to Finance Ministries and IFIs how shifting procurement toward local resource-based methods maximizes job creation per expenditure. Policy interventions also reform Public Procurement Codes, national wage frameworks, and labour standards to advance gender equity and formalization (R204).

Institutional level

EIIP acts as a catalyst for capacity building, procurement reform, and inter-agency coordination within technical ministries, road authorities, and local governments. Project proposals focus on restructuring these entities to design, tender, manage, and monitor labour-based works. Key entry points include establishing simplified procurement tiers for MSMEs, integrating Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESSF) into tenders, and institutionalizing OSH monitoring. Additionally, it strengthens Social Dialogue through tripartite platforms (government, contractor associations and trade unions) to oversee working conditions, resolve disputes, advance formalization, and link site training with TVET accreditation.

Local level

EIIP operates as an engine for local planning, community empowerment, asset creation, and shock-responsive employment. By leveraging decentralized government structures, CBOs, local contractors, and local workers, it executes high-quality LRB infrastructure. At this level, projects establish local dialogue platforms, enforce robust social and environmental safeguards, provide on-the-job training alongside Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), and link workers to social security registries. Operational

proposals focus on two core entry points: **demonstration projects** designed for institutional upscaling, and **crisis response** delivering immediate jobs across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN, ILO R205).



Specific entry points (often combined)

- **Upstream & policy support:** Positioning EIIP at the macro-policy level transforms technical assistance into a strategic engine that reorients national capital spending to create more jobs. Key policy entry points include generating diagnostic data (*EmpIA*) to justify policy shifts, upgrading safety nets (*PEPs*), driving *Procurement Reform* to unlock market access for local contractors, and using *South-South and Triangular Cooperation (SSTC)* to transfer proven frameworks across global South partner nations.
- **LRB infrastructure delivery:** As the foundational, hands-on entry point, this approach leverages and influences capital budgets to build and maintain public and community assets – such as access roads, irrigation canals, markets, vital ecosystems and watersheds, and cultural heritage sites – using local resource-based technology. Combining local labour, native materials, and Nature-based Solutions with decent work safeguards ensures public funds deliver durable, climate-resilient infrastructure while generating decent local jobs and income.
- **ESSF, OSH & decent work:** Positioning Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESSF) and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) as an operational entry point turns passive compliance into an active on-site management system. Embedding worker safety, fair task rates, gender inclusion, and bio-engineering into project design and procurement unlocks climate finance, prevents project delays, builds social cohesion, and

permanently raises public sector governance standards.

- **Capacity development:** Combining *public institutional strengthening* with *private sector upskilling* targets the core bottleneck in rural infrastructure delivery: weak administrative systems and a shortage of capable local contractors. Embedding LRB bio-engineering standards into ministry workflows, unbundling procurement, and integrating accredited LRB certifications into national TVET curricula builds a certified domestic construction sector that can scale resilient public works independently.
- **Social dialogue, tripartite governance & formalization:** Leveraging tripartite platforms – bringing together government, contractors associations, and trade unions – establishes a rights-based governance framework to enforce labour standards. This entry point uses public contracts as direct leverage to drive formalization: compelling informal MSMEs to register while securing written employment contracts and social security coverage for site workers.
- **Care economy:** Representing a strategic evolution, this entry point bridges physical public works with social infrastructure. It applies LRB engineering to construct climate-resilient, accessible community care facilities while structuring formal, paid public employment for care workers.
- **Just transition:** This entry point turns climate policies into concrete green jobs. Pairing LRB methods and bio-engineering with TVET green-skills training, MSME procurement reform, and decent work safeguards ensures climate investments restore degraded ecosystems and build resilience while creating dignified livelihoods for transition-affected workers.
- **Disaster risk reduction & green works:** Combining DRR, Nature-based Solutions, and Green Works shifts public spending from reactive crisis response to proactive hazard mitigation. Pairing LRB bio-engineering and community hazard mapping with MSME procurement reform constructs protective assets – such as flood defences, slope stabilization and restored watersheds – while injecting local wages that build socio-economic shock resilience. This is particularly relevant for Pacific **Small Island Developing States (SIDS)**.
- **Crisis response:** In fragile settings, EIIP acts as an operational anchor across the HDPN (ILO R205). Using

immediate labour-based infrastructure recovery to establish a field presence, it creates a platform to enforce labour rights, upskill workers through TVET, formalize local MSMEs via simplified contracts, and link vulnerable populations to social protection – turning emergency relief into long-term stability and social cohesion.



Project formulation principal steps

EIIP proposals are initiated via partner requests or strategically with IFIs and donors. For crisis response, refer to the [ILO SOP for crisis response 2021](#)

- **Context analysis:** Assess labour markets, construction sector capacities, socio-economic vulnerabilities, climate risks, and national development frameworks to establish a robust baseline.
- **Stakeholder mapping:** Engage key ministries, local authorities, development partners, and social partners to identify gaps, align priorities, and build consensus.
- **Identify entry points:** Design integrated interventions across policy, institutional, and local levels, ensuring inclusive, gender-responsive design, private sector capacity building, and institutional strengthening.
- **Technical & delivery approach:** Integrate employment objectives and infrastructure targets through LRB methods, appropriate delivery methods, and decent work principles; optimize designs for climate resilience; and embed fundamental principles and rights at work and ESSF into tenders.
- **Monitoring & sustainability:** Establish rigorous results frameworks paired with asset maintenance plans and local ownership structures to secure long-term impact.

Examples of interventions

Below are some examples of EIIP support (and source of funding) at different levels. More on [ILO/EIIP website](https://www.ilo.org/eiip).

Policy level support

- **India (World Bank): MoRD Policy Support for Maintenance & Decent Work** EIIP embedded systematic maintenance frameworks and International Labour Standards into national rural road works. By formalizing National Occupational Standards, OSH protocols, fair wage guidelines, and Performance-Based Maintenance Contracts, the policy work balances large-scale rural employment with infrastructure quality.
- **Pakistan (ILO): Employment Impact and Monitoring** Partnering with the Sindh People's Housing for Flood-Affected (SPHF), the ILO conducted Employment Impact Assessments (EmpIA) demonstrating how a \$2B+ owner-driven reconstruction yields over 1 million green jobs. The ILO integrated OSH, mason skills certification, and labour standards directly into national monitoring frameworks.
- **Inter-Regional (ILO): EIIP SSTC Bangladesh** ILO leverages South-South and Triangular Cooperation to drive policy reform. The Bangladesh EIIP SSTC Forum for Asia-Pacific and the Arab States facilitated peer-learning across the Global South on EIIP strategies and integrating local resource-based infrastructure into national public employment schemes.

Institutional & technical support

- **Timor-Leste (AusAID): Rural Road Management** Through the R4D initiative, the ILO embedded Local Resource-Based (LRB) engineering into Timor-Leste's Ministry of Public Works Rural Roads Master Plan and tendering systems. Tailored for mountainous terrain, the support trained engineers in contract administration and established decentralized maintenance frameworks using local small-scale contractors.
- **Timor-Leste (EU): Contractor Development** Partnering with the Don Bosco Foundation Training Centre, the ILO established a permanent training facility for small-scale civil works contractors under the ERA project. The accredited LRB modules cover business management, labour-based road rehabilitation, maintenance, pavements, OSH, and bidding, creating a self-sustaining national pool of local construction enterprises.

- **Nepal (World Bank): SNRTP Programme** the ILO introduced Group Performance-Based Routine Maintenance across 36 districts, institutionalizing LRB practices that generated millions of workdays for rural women and marginalized groups. Standardized manuals and asset management frameworks shifted local road management from ad-hoc repairs to funded, community-led preventive maintenance.
- **Papua New Guinea (EU):** As the lead transport technical agency in the EU-STREIT Programme, the ILO applied LRB approaches to rehabilitate rural access and market links, training local contractors on e-tendering and organizing community maintenance to ensure asset longevity; this established community-based contracting frameworks and Road Maintenance Groups as a policy blueprint for decentralized transport and asset management.



Local level support/crisis response

- **Afghanistan (STFA/Japan/ILO): Multi Crisis Response** grounded in ILO Recommendation No. 205, the ILO deployed labour-based public works in the HDPN to create jobs by rehabilitating essential rural infrastructure like irrigation canals and access roads coupled with skills and entrepreneurship development while upholding core labour standards in a fragile operational context.
- **Myanmar (Japan): Mandalay Earthquake Response** Following the 2025 earthquake, the ILO deployed emergency EIIP interventions, engaging local committees in debris clearing and asset repair, the programme combined rapid wage income with technical skills training to restore livelihoods and strengthen community resilience.

Key EIIP resources

The Global EIIP Team of more than 100 staff comprises the Core Team (HQ and Regional Advisors) and Project Staff. EIIP has built a unique portfolio of adaptable resource materials that governments, development partners, and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) can use to embed employment generation and social equity directly into infrastructure and climate-resilience investments. A few examples listed below, for further information visit [ILO/EIIP Website](#)

Resources for policy development

- [Public Employment Programmes \(PEPs\) design Frameworks](#) Blueprint for designing scalable public works and job safety nets that balance asset creation with social protection during crises.
- [Employment Intensive Infrastructure Programmes: Labour Policies and Practices](#) Shares strategies to extend national institutional support and basic labour standards to small contractors and informal workers.
- [Guide for Employment Impact Assessments \(EmpIA\) in the Roads Sector](#) Methods to measure direct and indirect job creation in road construction to help prioritize high-employment investments.

OSH and ESSF guidelines

- [Occupational Safety and Health \(OSH\) - Manual for Labour-Based Rural Road Construction and Maintenance](#) Practical manual with checklists and illustrations to guide site safety, hazard control, and labour standards in rural roadwork.
- [EIIP Environmental and Social Safeguards \(ESS\) Guidelines](#) Establishes mandatory OSH and social/environmental protections for public infrastructure to align with UN and IFI standards.

Technical guidelines

- [Guide: Developing the Construction Industry for Employment Intensive Investments](#) Strategies for using local resource-based approaches to build contractor capacity, maintain infrastructure, and create sustainable jobs.
- [Local Investments for Climate Change Adaptation: Green Jobs through Green Works](#) Links climate adaptation to job creation through green public works across irrigation, flood control, forestry, and transport.

- [Illustrated Guidelines for Gender-responsive Employment Intensive Investment Programmes](#) To facilitate the systematic mainstreaming of gender across all stages of the project cycle.

Technical briefs

- [EIIP Inter-regional Forum for Asia and the Arab States](#) Resource material from EIIP SSTC Inter-regional Forum for Asia-Pacific and the Arab States around EIIP strategies.
- [EIIP and the Care Economy brief](#) Examines how employment-intensive investments expand decent work and address the global care crisis while advancing gender equality.
- [EIIP Improving Informal Urban Settlements Brief](#) EIIP activities in urban areas specifically to support the urban poor and promoting productive decent work through local infrastructure development.

Training

- [ILO Guide for Skills Development in Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes](#) Combines vocational training with public works to build certified skills and boost workers' long-term employability.
- [ILO Enhancing Rural Access \(ERA\) Training Modules Suite](#) A nationally accredited training programme developed in Timor-Leste covering road rehabilitation, pavement construction, maintenance, and business management, tailored for small-scale contractors, engineers, supervisors, and client-side personnel.

Procurement

- [ILO Standard Bid Documents: Contracting SOP](#) Standardized procurement templates and legal clauses designed for fair and transparent small-scale public works bidding.
- [Guide on Gender-Responsive Procurement for Employment-Intensive Investment Programmes](#) Step-by-step procurement guidance to remove barriers for female entrepreneurs and ensure equal pay in civil works.

Crisis response

- [Employment and Decent Work in the Human Development Peace Nexus](#) Guidance for restoring and protecting decent work opportunities during crisis, recovery, and fragile transition contexts.

EIIP capacity-building & training

EIIP framework views capacity building, institutional development, and training as a single continuum designed to move countries from short-term emergency projects to nationally owned, sustainable infrastructure policies. EIIP strategy aims to ensure that when external technical support ends, the host government, local contractors, and vocational institutions possess the permanent policies, systems and technical skills to design, fund, and execute employment-intensive infrastructure independently and at scale.

EIIP training with ITC-ILO (Turin)

The International Training Centre of the ILO (ITC-ILO) in Turin collaborates with EIIP to offer high-level courses, learning labs, and diplomas that optimize public investment portfolios for decent work. Course details are on the [ITCILO Courses Platform](#). The primary ITC Turin courses directly relevant to EIIP include:

- **EIIP Learning Hub / Academy on Employment-Intensive Investment:** Equips policymakers and engineers to integrate job creation into national budgets through policy planning, LRB technologies, Employment Impact Assessments (EmpIA), and climate-resilient assets.
- **Creating Jobs Through Inclusive Infrastructure Investments:** Teaches operational LRB approaches to deliver quality urban and rural infrastructure using local labour, materials, and gender/vulnerability targeting.
- **Contracting SMEs for Labour-Based Public Works:** Covers engaging small contractors through adapted tender documents, task quotas, cash-flow risk management, and enforced OSH/labour standards.
- **Designing Public Employment Programmes (PEPs):** Provides end-to-end guidance on leading large-scale public employment schemes, setting fair wages, calculating labour intensity, and creating durable community assets.

- **Green Works and Nature-Based Solutions:** Combines climate adaptation with job creation; training specialists in bio-engineering, slope stabilization, erosion control, and watershed management using local materials.
- **Procurement Management for Works:** Covers the full civil works bidding lifecycle under national and MDB standards, focusing on tender preparation, bid evaluation, FIDIC contract conditions, and quality control.
- **Contracting and Managing Consultants:** Guides public authorities on selecting and supervising engineering firms – from drafting TORs and applying Quality – and Cost-Based Selection (QCBS) to monitoring deliverables.
- **Sustainable Public Procurement:** Teaches procurement officials to embed environmental and social criteria into purchasing, including green specifications, fair wage clauses, and life-cycle costing.
- **Employment and Decent Work for Peace and Resilience (ILO R205):** Grounded in ILO Recommendation No. 205, this course uses employment to address fragility, prevent conflict, and support post-disaster recovery along the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.
- **Jobs for Peace and Resilience (JPR) Flagship Programme:** Tailored for crisis settings, focusing on rapid public employment and infrastructure rehabilitation that integrates displaced persons, youth, and ex-combatants through community contracting.

EIIP-ITC field-level collaboration

- **Global Exchange:** Jointly facilitates peer-learning platforms, inter-regional forums, and technical exchanges across the Global South.
- **On-Site Capacity Building:** Jointly delivers customized, context-specific training directly in the field alongside ILO field offices and EIIP specialists.



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