

**THE ILO RESPONSE TO THE
SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS**

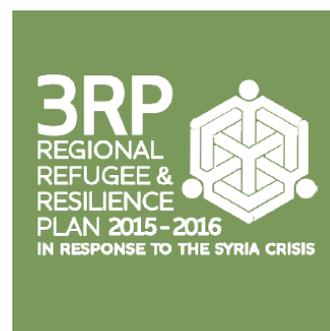
(FEBRUARY 2016 UPDATE)

CONTEXT

Almost five years into the Syrian conflict, the ensuing refugee crisis remains one of the largest, most protracted and complex humanitarian emergencies of modern times. According to UNHCR registration data, more than 4.1 million Syrians have now fled their country. Jordan – with its population of 6.4 million – has an expanding Syrian refugee population of more than 620,000 women, men and their families. In Lebanon the refugee influx has taken on dramatic proportions: in October 2015 it was estimated that close to 1.1 million registered Syrian refugees lived in Lebanon.¹ To this, hundreds of thousands unregistered refugees may have to be added: refugees now account for one in four people living in Lebanon. In Turkey there are nearly 2.1 million officially registered Syrian refugees; in Egypt 130,000; and in Iraq almost 250,000.²

The effects of the Syrian refugee crisis are increasingly spilling over into the economic and social spheres – leading to stalled economic activity, loss of income, and shrinking access to quality public services in host countries that already had to contend with difficult socioeconomic conditions before the crisis began. Today, and in many ways, the crisis can be seen as a test for the accomplishment of the ambitious and transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – and its accompanying goals.

Against this backdrop, the Regional Refugee Response and Resilience Plan (3RP) in response to the Syria crisis was launched by the United Nations in December 2014. The 3RP is a country-driven, regionally coherent plan to address refugee protection and humanitarian needs, build the resilience of vulnerable people and impacted host communities and strengthen the capacity of national delivery systems in the five most affected countries neighbouring Syria. The 3RP is central to the impact and sustainability of the response going forward and its success demands much more effective and efficient collaboration between UN agencies and international organizations. This Plan integrates and is aligned with existing and emerging national plans, including the Jordan Response Plan (JRP) 2015, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP), the Iraq Strategic Response Plan (SRP), and country responses in Turkey and Egypt.



The International Labour Organization's (ILO) response to the Syrian refugee crisis, which is reflected in this document, is fully aligned with the 3RP, in addition to the National Emergency Plans, as mentioned above. The ILO's response to the Syrian refugee crisis is also aligned with the Decent Work Agenda for the Arab States,³ and other affected countries, which promotes decent work as a key component of national development strategies and organizes ILO knowledge, instruments, advocacy and cooperation at the service of tripartite constituents in a results-based framework in order to give decent work opportunities to all women and men.

IMPACT OF THE CRISIS ON THE LABOUR MARKET

The Syrian conflict has had a discernible impact on the labour markets of recipient refugee countries, such as Jordan and Lebanon – countries that were already experiencing difficult economic conditions

¹ Since 6 May 2015, UNHCR Lebanon has temporarily suspended new registration in accordance with the Government's instructions. Women, men, girls and boys awaiting registration are hence no longer included.

² For up to date UNHCR figures on Syria Regional Refugee Response, please see:

<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/regional.php>

³ Please see: <http://www.ilo.org/beirut/country/lang--en/index.htm>.

before the refugee crisis began. Recipient countries face dramatic increases in the labour supply – putting considerable pressure on their fragile labour markets and aggravating pre-existing economic difficulties. While the socio-economic and labour market situations of the affected countries differ in many ways, the refugee crisis has had the following consequences:

- Rising unemployment, with a considerable impact on young people and unskilled workers
- Competition, pressure on wages and deteriorating working conditions, with an increase in informal employment
- Worst forms of child labour among refugees are on the rise, with evidence of forced labour emerging
- The depletion of livelihoods in host community economies
- Weak labour market governance and capacity of governments to adequately respond to the situation

THE ILO STRATEGY

A large portion of the international community's response to the ongoing Syrian crisis has overwhelmingly focused on humanitarian aspects, and the livelihoods component of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015 - 2016 (3RP) has so far received the least attention. Should a greater inward investment in decent work and livelihoods not be mobilized, the negative consequences of the crisis will continue and deepen. Livelihoods must be linked to local economic development plans, while engaging the private sector in a more meaningful manner.

More recently, however, and due to the protracted nature of the crisis, the focus has indeed been shifting towards a more integrated approach that brings together both the humanitarian and development aspects of the crisis under one framework. The resilience agenda emanating from this approach and clearly articulated in the 3RP represents efforts by a wide range of national and international partners towards a more effective and sustainable response which strengthens the resilience and stability of countries and communities affected by the crisis.

To this end, the ILO strategy⁴ is development-focused and employment-driven in its support to host communities and refugees so as to maintain and reinforce the social and economic stability of the affected neighbouring countries.

The multi-faceted nature of the crisis cuts across many of the ILO's interventions and new initiatives that complement existing country programmes, which are already focused on expanding decent work opportunities, addressing child labour, extending social protection and enhancing employment for young women and men.

The ILO strategy builds on its core mandate to promote employment, social dialogue, social protection and rights at work. It consists of three key pillars:

1. Supporting evidence-based policy development to ensure an employment-rich national response, embedded in the principles of decent work;

⁴ For more information, including multimedia products on the ILO's response to the Syria crisis, please see: <http://www.ilo.org/beirut/areasofwork/syrian-refugee-crisis/lang-en/index.htm>

2. Contributing to building the resilience of host communities by enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods;
3. Strengthening institutional capacities and coordination to combat unacceptable forms of work, with a focus on child labour.

In implementing this strategy, the ILO works closely with other UN agencies and Bretton Woods institutions, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the World Bank.

Within this context, the ILO organized a high-level regional dialogue (Istanbul, Turkey, 28-29 July 2015) which brought together representatives from the five principal host countries (Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Egypt and Iraq) and a range of international partners – with a view to assessing the effects of the refugee influx on national and local labour markets and exchanging experiences on appropriate responses and the mechanisms being applied by different host countries to Syrian refugees' access to work. This meeting served as a key means of strengthening coordination between tripartite constituents (workers, employers and governments) for better analysis and better responses to the crisis – at national and regional levels.

By virtue of this dialogue, a range of forward-looking recommendations aimed at informing policy formulation, programme development, and continual dialogue were articulated, cementing the ILO's role in this response. These recommendations also suggested the roles that affected governments, social partners and the international community could play to contribute to the livelihoods component of the Regional Plan (3RP) and offer decent work opportunities to all women and men in the affected countries.⁵

The ILO strategy is centred on the following approaches:

- Investing in the capacity and ownership of local actors in the identification of and support to local economic development, including value chain development and income generation projects in crisis affected areas, which can benefit both host communities and the refugees.
- Implementing projects in selected sectors and governorates by enhancing employment services, and supporting business development and livelihoods projects, which leads to tangible short-term employment opportunities with longer-term prospects. These projects will have the potential to be scaled up and handed over to national and local entities for longer-term gains. A practical example is the Employment Intensive Investment Programmes (EIIP) approach, which includes implementing specific labour-intensive works to increase public asset value and improve the general economic situation.
- Helping improve the regulation of the presence of Syrian workers in the labour market by introducing job placement mechanisms and promoting measures preventing unacceptable working conditions (in terms of wages, occupational safety and health, etc.), including through negotiated social monitoring among host and refugee communities and enhanced labour inspection capacity. The ILO will also explore the application of the ILO's Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204) to the context of the Syrian

⁵ For more information about the high-level regional dialogue, please see: http://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_408999/lang--en/index.htm

crisis, as well as the wider application of the ILO's normative framework, particularly core labour standards.

- Promoting better linkages between national and humanitarian responses to Syrian child labour by ensuring stronger coherence and more effective coordination with the National Frameworks and Plans to combat child labour, especially in its worst forms.
- Providing policy development support to governments and national or international partners on active labour market programmes, as well as entrepreneurship development and the identification of employment opportunities available in national labour markets, including those created by the “aid economy”. To this end, the ILO leverages experience and expertise in vocational education and accreditation frameworks that can support the labour mobility of refugee and national workers. Through this initiative, the ILO also ensures linkages and complementarity with existing development plans, such as the National Employment Strategy in Jordan.
- Fostering social dialogue focusing on refugees' access to employment and labour markets and collective representation. To this end, the ILO has been in regular dialogue with national policy makers, social partners, and development partners on how to provide access to work for Syrian refugees and creating a win-win situation that yields social and economic dividends for the host economies. For instance, together with UNHCR and UNDP, it is now engaged in preparing a white paper on access to labour markets in Jordan.
- Stimulating regional cooperation between the most affected countries and the international community, including the UN system. To this end, the ILO convened the regional dialogue on the labour market impact of the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq and Egypt (Istanbul, July 2015 – see above).
- Promoting “resilience inside Syria”, in line with the international community's new approach. The ILO is exploring ways to reactivate its development cooperation programme in Syria as a means of providing livelihoods and social protection to vulnerable members of the population, in particular displaced persons. Recently, the ILO has been engaged in a dialogue with constituents on possible entry points for reengagement, particularly in the areas of employment policy and labour market information, emergency employment and livelihood recovery, workers' protection, and social security, as well as child and forced labour.

The following pages of this document give an overview of the appeals and programme outlines for Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt – all of which encapsulate the ILO's response to the Syrian refugee crisis.

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME PROPOSALS 2016-18

(ALL FIGURES IN USD M)

JORDAN

Area of intervention	Project	Key themes	Cost	ILO contributions	Other available funds	Funding gap
Supporting evidence-based policy development and advocacy to ensure an employment-rich national response embedded in the principles of decent work	Promoting right to work for Syrian refugees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Economic governance framework ✓ Refugee cooperative for advocacy and work 	4.9	0.4	-	4.5
Enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods for crisis-affected communities	Improved labour market for Syrian refugees and host communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One stop shop for employment services ✓ Joint business ventures 	14.5	0.1	-	14.1
	Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) in Mafraq and Irbid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Labour intensive infrastructure works ✓ Job creation 	14.3	0.3	-	14
	Green jobs for crisis-affected communities in Mafraq and Irbid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Skills ✓ Entrepreneurship development 	3.3	-	-	3.3
	Jordan Integrated SME Support Programme for areas affected by the Syrian Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Private sector development ✓ SME support 	5	-	-	5
	Jobs and Skills in crisis-affected communities in Northern Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sector based value chain development ✓ Local Economic Development (LED) ✓ Skills development ✓ Entrepreneurship development 	17.1	1.3	-	15.8
Combating the increasing incidence of child labour	Reducing Child Labour in Jordan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Child labour 	4	0.3	0.4	3.3

LEBANON

Area of intervention	Project	Key themes	Cost	ILO contributions	Other available funds	Funding gap
Supporting evidence-based policy development to ensure an employment-rich national response embedded in the principles of decent work	Enhancing the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to develop strategies for labour market policies, data collection, and analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Labour inspection ✓ Labour market assessments and analysis ✓ Labour market strategy 	6.3	-	3.8	2.5
Enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods for crisis-affected communities	Agricultural Livelihoods, Employment and Income for Vulnerable People in Rural Lebanon affected by the Syrian Conflict	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Value chain development ✓ Agricultural skills development 	4.5	1.1	0.4	3
	Creating decent work opportunities for Syrian refugees and Lebanese job seekers through infrastructure improvement: a win-win approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ EIIP/Labour intensive infrastructure works ✓ Institutional capacity building for government partners, including Ministry of Labour ✓ Labour inspection ✓ Job creation 	45	-	-	45
Combating the increasing incidence of child labour	Reducing Child Labour in Lebanon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Child labour 	3.8	-	0.3	3.5

TURKEY

Programme	Costs	ILO contributions	Other available funds	Funding gap
Strengthening local and national capacities to deal with the refugee crisis in Turkey and support an employment-rich response	2	0.2	-	1.8
Improving the knowledge base on the Syrian refugee crisis and its impact on the labour market and child labour	2	0.2	-	1.8
Improve livelihoods and living conditions at the local level, including better and decent working conditions for both Syrians and host communities	6	0.2	0.5	5.3
Awareness raising among refugees, host communities and other stakeholders on the new legislative measures and their implications for the labour market	1	0,1	-	0.9

EGYPT

Programme	Costs	ILO contributions	Other available funds	Funding gap
Food sector promotion for urban refugees: Value chain development in Greater Cairo's food services sector	2	-	-	2
Improving and sustaining basic needs of the most vulnerable men, women, children and youth	2.1	-	-	2.1

PROGRAMME OUTLINE: JORDAN

By January 2016 the number of registered Syrian refugees in Jordan had exceeded 635,000.⁶ While around 20 per cent of refugees currently live in designated camps in Jordan, the rest have found shelter in cities and rural areas across the Kingdom. Amman and the northern governorates of Irbid and Mafraq alone host more than 73 per cent of the total number of Syrian refugees in the country.⁷ As the conflict approaches its fifth year, a number of studies have revealed the crisis' significant impact on the Jordanian labour market. There are strong concerns about the effects on wage levels, working conditions, child labour and informal work, and rising social tension over job competition.

According to a 2015 ILO survey only 51 per cent of Syrian men (and 7 per cent of women) who live outside refugee camps participate in the Jordanian labour market with an unemployment rate as high as 57 per cent. 90 per cent of Syrian refugees working outside camps do not have work permits and are as such employed in the informal economy and outside the bounds of Jordanian labour law. This reinforces the current trend towards the expansion of Jordanian informal employment, which is characterised by low and declining wages, long working days, and poor working conditions and regulations, including lack of proper work contracts.⁸ Child labour also disproportionately affects Syrian children living outside camps. Only 1.6 per cent of Jordanian boys in the age group 9-15 are economically active, compared to more than 8 per cent of Syrian boys in the same age group. These figures rise to 37 per cent of Syrian boys, compared to 17 per cent of Jordanian boys, for the age group 15-18.

The ILO response

As part of the wider UN response to the Syrian refugee crisis in Jordan, the ILO initiated a series of pilot projects in 2013, working closely with local stakeholders in the two most affected governorates – Mafraq and Irbid – to support enhanced access to employment opportunities and livelihoods in host communities. The multi-faceted nature of this crisis cuts across existing interventions in Jordan.

⁶ ILO (2014) The Impact of the Syrian Refugee Crisis on the Labour market in Jordan: a Preliminary Analysis (http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_242021.pdf)
For more information, see also: <http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=107>.

⁷ These estimates are based on UNHCR statistics of Syrian refugees in Jordan (<http://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=107>) and DoS Population Statistics for 2011, (http://www.dos.gov.jo/dos_home_e/main/).

⁸ ILO/Fafo/DOS (2015) Impact of the influx of Syrian refugees on the Jordanian labour market: findings from the governorates of Amman, Irbid and Magraq. (See: http://www.ilo.org/beirut/publications/WCMS_364162/lang--en/index.htm)

The ILO has adapted its crisis response to fit the objectives of the Jordan Response Plan 2016-2018 through three interlinked programmes:⁹

Supporting evidence-based policy development to ensure an employment-rich national response embedded in the principles of decent work

Project: Promoting right to work for Syrian refugees

Overall objective

Syrian refugees benefit from improved regulatory environment and economic governance that permit them to temporarily work in targeted sectors, thereby reducing their aid-dependency and enhancing their self-reliance.

Brief Description

It is proposed to establish a refugee-operated cooperative to undertake advocacy work for improved regulatory environment and for providing job matching services for temporary jobs in targeted sectors. On the one hand, the project will develop a complete Economic Governance Framework (EGF) including its implementation strategy. An EGF will provide the consensus based rules and regulations for the implementation of livelihood interventions in the camps. It will build on the existing Standard Operating procedures (for cash for work, for instance), and expand to include all livelihood interventions. On the other hand, the cooperatives will have the following functions:

1. Hiring refugees and negotiating their work permits, as well as proposing their services for temporary employment to employers in selected sectors (for instance agriculture where activities are seasonal);
2. Channelling the possible subsidies for working permits that may come from some donors / UN agencies;
3. Easing the work permits processes by disseminating clear instructions to the Labour directorates in the field around the Kingdom and specific guidelines within refugee communities;
4. Advocating for a change of working permits requirements by linking work permits to the Ministry of Interior's identity cards instead of Syrian passports; delinking the work permit applications from specific employers; and reducing the cost of work permits (to encourage refugees to apply);
5. Facilitating the process of establishing equivalencies between Syrian and Jordanian certificates for targeted occupations, and accrediting testing centres with the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance, and the Vocational Training Corporation, for Recognition of Prior Learning for targeted occupations at semi-skilled and skilled level (for refugees who do not have certificates).

⁹ These programmes correspond to the three pillars of the ILO Syria crisis response strategy and fit in two sectors of the JRP 2016-2018, namely: livelihoods and food security, and social protection.

Enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods for crisis-affected communities

Project: Improved labour market for Syrian refugees and host communities

Overall objective

Syrian refugees and Jordanian host communities in Mafraq benefit from improved economic development through job-matching services and joint business ventures.

Brief Description

The project aims at creating productive opportunities for Syrian refugees to support self-reliance opportunities in and around Zaatari camp and Mafraq host community. Firstly, it will establish One Stop Shop services to which refugees have access for employment guidance and skills development services. It will also raise their awareness on the new rules and regulations that will govern their participation in the labour market, and provide referral services to all livelihood interventions available. The One Stop Shop aims during the project to register an estimated 30,000 women and men refugees, or about 12 per cent of the current camp population. Secondly, it will establish Joint Business Ventures (JBV) between Mafraq host community members and Syrian refugees. These joint ventures, benefitting from technical support as and when required, will allow for local business owners to expand their outreach within the camps and for the refugees to find markets outside the camps. Subsidies to start these joint ventures will be provided based on a competition for the best business plans. Finally, the project will increase the income generation for Syrian refugees through improving farm-related infrastructure at host communities around the Zaatari camp. This will involve the construction of water cisterns, terracing of slopes, linking treated waste water to arable land and rehabilitating agricultural feeder roads.

Project: Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) in Mafraq and Irbid

Overall objective

Immediate jobs created for both Syrian refugees and host communities through employment intensive programme in affected governorates, by:

1. Improving the infrastructure around the development zones and facilitating investment;
2. Building, rehabilitating and maintaining existing schools, hospitals and training centres; and,
3. Rehabilitating and maintaining existing roads, with the aim to improve sanitation, upkeep and access.

Brief Description

Work opportunities for Syrian refugees and Jordanian job seekers will be achieved by implementing infrastructure projects using the ILO's Employment Intensive Investment Programme (EIIP) Approach. The project engages in rural infrastructure augmentation (public, agricultural and environmental), using a Local Resource Based Approach to implement works.

Three specific components are included:

1. Agricultural Feeder Roads: This initiative aims to develop periodic and routine maintenance for Jordan's extensive network of rural roads, which will improve their condition and create long-term jobs.
2. Water Catchment: In order to remedy chronic water scarcity and increase crop production, this initiative aims to build water catchment systems for small farms in Jordan.
3. Terracing and Land Reclamation: This initiative aims to carry out terracing in order to create arable land, protect slopes and counter erosion.

Labour shall only be used in those cases where it is cost effective versus machinery, or where donor, contractor and government agree that, from a humanitarian perspective, labour shall be used to provide income. In all cases, asset creation and asset value improvement stands at the heart of choice of projects.

The project will be implemented in partnership with a variety of stake holders including the Ministries of Labour, Public Work and Agriculture. In order to ensure the long term sustainability of the project, a key emphasis will be placed on building the capacities of local partners, particularly relating to Local Resource Based Technology. A specialised team will oversee and advice project management on social issues, including gender balancing and worker protection, and engage in policy level dialogue with the Ministry of Labour and National Contractors Associations to formalize Decent Work Principles in the recruitment and contracting of labour for Jordanian and foreign workers including refugees.

Project: Green jobs for crisis-affected communities in Mafraq and Irbid

Overall objective

More and better jobs and sustainable livelihood opportunities created for crisis-affected communities in Mafraq and Irbid in green sectors, namely energy and water-efficiency, through:

1. Implementation of pilot projects;
2. Support packages in eco-entrepreneurship;
3. Skills development;
4. Job placement; and
5. Capacity development of Local Economic Committees and other local institutions in value chain interventions.

Brief Description

The proposed action will increase employment among women, men and youth in green jobs in the energy and water-efficiency sectors by combining awareness raising, capacity building and demonstration activities. It will provide funds for six environmentally sustainable pilot projects in public infrastructure. These projects will be implemented in close collaboration with local institutions or through public-private partnerships (PPP) to ensure a balanced provision of work to targeted job-seekers.

In order to engage the private sector and stimulate a market for energy and water solutions, the capacities of Business Development Service providers, Vocational Training Corporation and Microfinance institutions will be built. Through the provision of financial, business and technical skills training to start-ups and existing businesses, the action will create employment opportunities in the private sector. A green business plan competition will be conducted. A well-established network of certified Master Trainers and the adoption of proven tools such as Start and Improve Your Business (SIYB) will ensure a successful intervention.

Short term skills upgrading training courses will be offered to job seekers for at least five occupations. Graduates from these courses will be linked with employers through the public employment services. These employers will in turn benefit from technical and equipment support to improve their productivity, and Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) situation. The ILO Work Improvement in Small Enterprises (WISE) Programme will be adapted for this purpose. Coaching and equipment support, will be implemented along with directions for improvements agreed with the employers.

Project: Jordan Integrated SME Support Project for areas affected by the Syrian Crisis

Overall objective

Enhanced economic development and sustainable job creation for crisis affected communities in Mafraq and Irbid through integrated private sector support interventions in the manufacturing and agriculture sectors. More specifically, the project will provide Business Development Services (BDS), financial support and entrepreneurship education services through:

1. Creating and supporting innovative start-ups including access to finance;
2. Increasing competitiveness of existing MSMEs for local and export market production with focus on value chain creation and development (VCD); and,
3. Developing and Enhancing Entrepreneurial culture.

Brief Description

The project aims at enhancing local economic development through private sector support leading to the creation and support of sustainable, innovative and competitive enterprises. In particular, the goal is to grow wealth and opportunity in the areas most acutely affected by the influx of Syrian refugees, compensating for the strain that the crisis has put on local resources. This means leveraging business development services and linking them to innovation drivers in the local community; supporting potential ideas waiting to be turned into start up enterprises or existing enterprises that are making quick innovative progress and supporting such transformations while forestalling dangers associated with quick expansion. Additionally, the plan seeks to capitalize on existing institutions, namely local universities, as robust interlocutors with the affected communities. The following three objectives will be achieved:

1. New, innovative, high potential enterprises created (start-ups) and supported through an integrated approach of business services, financial capital, access to technology and expansion support, allowing them to generate sustainable employment and act as a role model for their community;
2. The competitiveness, innovation and growth of enterprises in Irbid and Mafraq is enhanced through the sectoral and value-chain-development for decent work (VCD) approach targeting manufacturing, services and agriculture MSMEs and giving them a better share of the local and international markets; and
3. The overall enabling entrepreneurial culture in the region is enhanced, allowing for more people to consider entrepreneurship as a way to enhance individual and community welfare and wellbeing.

Project: Jobs and Skills in crisis-affected communities in Northern Jordan

Overall objective

Vulnerable, crisis-affected communities in Irbid and Mafraq engage in Decent Work and benefit from socially and environmentally sustainable livelihood creation.

Brief Description

The programme will make a significant contribution to mitigating the adverse impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the livelihoods of vulnerable people in the most affected governorates, Mafraq and Irbid, in Northern Jordan. The programme builds on the on-going work of the ILO in the Governorates, where existing structures and partnerships will be used to massively scale-up the response to reach significant numbers of beneficiaries. The programme has a two-pronged approach:

1. Jobs: to create immediate job opportunities for vulnerable groups as well as medium term economic and employment opportunities through i) sector based value chain development

- (in agro-business, renewable energy, tourism and solid waste management, as agreed with the local stakeholders) and ii) entrepreneurship development; and
2. Skills: to stimulate the employability of vulnerable people, especially youth, through skills development and improved employment services.

The programme will be implemented for a period of four years, with a strong local focus in the governorates. The ILO and its partners will bring to bear their knowledge, expertise and tools that are already in use in Jordan. Local capacities will be mobilised and enhanced, local stakeholders empowered to take action towards improving their situation. The result of the programme will be more and better jobs for those affected by the refugee crisis as well as better working conditions, among both host and refugee populations.

Combating the increasing incidence of child labour

Project: Reducing Child Labour in Jordan

Overall objective

Contribute to the elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms, among Syrian refugees and host communities in Jordan.

Brief Description

The project will endeavour to provide a robust response to child labour on the ground, targeting Syrian, Jordanian as well as other children. Its objectives are the following:

1. 500 Children in target areas withdrawn or prevented from involvement in child labour, through the strengthening and upgrading of two child support centres, enabling them to provide a comprehensive package of services to children involved in or at risk of child labour.
2. National Framework on Child Labour (NFCL) effectively applied to all children in Jordan. This objective will include the addition of all child labour cases, including Syrian refugee children, into a national Database, through which Child Labour cases will be regularly referred to appropriate services.
3. Capacity of duty bearers and stakeholders built in addressing child labour. This objective will be reached through the training of 1,200 teachers and school counsellors as well as 150 social workers on preventing and addressing Child Labour, as well as the rolling of the 'Guidelines to Prevent School Drop Outs and Child Labour'. Activities to address child labour will be integrated in the activities of municipal authorities with 150 Municipal officials trained. 70 Inspectors and employer representatives will be trained on the 'Indicators of Hazardous Labour' (manual). Essential equipment to enhance the capacity of key stakeholders will be provided.
4. Awareness on child labour raised with a focus on change in behaviour and attitude, through a Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey on Child Labour to identify gaps and the development of a child labour awareness strategy.
5. Child/youth volunteers attached to local authorities, Community-Based Organisations and NGOs trained and mobilized to address child labour.

PROGRAMME OUTLINE: LEBANON

In December 2015 it was estimated that 1,069,111 Syrian refugees live in Lebanon, which is more than a quarter of Lebanon's estimated 4.3 million native residents.¹⁰ The sheer scale of the influx vis-à-vis Lebanon's population has severely affected the country's socioeconomic situation. The crisis has also resulted in unprecedented restrictions on Syrians entering Lebanon in late 2014. Pre-existing labour market challenges have been exacerbated by the crisis, doubling the number of unemployed in Lebanon, and increasing the informality rate of the country by 10 per cent.¹¹ Young Lebanese women and men are disproportionately affected by the refugee crisis.¹² A large proportion of young people who work do so informally and in insecure working conditions.¹³ The overall unemployment rate is estimated to be at 12 per cent.¹⁴

While poverty in Lebanon has, so far, been primarily concentrated in small pockets in suburbs of large towns, poverty in rural areas has remained particularly acute,¹⁵ where Syrian refugees now reside. At present, Syrian refugees have to sign a 'pledge not to work' when renewing their residency status, making any kind of income generation activity illegal for them. 70 per cent of displaced Syrians now live below the poverty line, an increase of 20 percentage points in one year, and 50 per cent do not have the income needed to afford the "Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket" (SMEB). This is particularly severe in the Bekaa, Akkar and Tripoli areas where these proportions are at 70-80 per cent.¹⁶ Those Syrian refugees who work do so in low skilled activities, primarily in services (36 per cent) and the traditional sectors using Syrian labour, i.e. agriculture (28 per cent) and construction (12 per cent).¹⁷ Syrian refugees rely, almost exclusively, on temporary and informal work, with a monthly income of less than USD 300, on average.¹⁸

The ILO response

In order to provide an appropriate response to the Syrian refugee crisis in the Lebanese context, the ILO Regional Office for the Arab States implements a strategy, as a partner, under the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-16.¹⁹ This builds on existing programmes in Lebanon through three inter-related components:

1. Assessing the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon on decent work
2. Enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods in host communities
3. Combating the worst forms of child labour and unacceptable forms of work

¹⁰ Please see: <http://www.data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/country.php?id=122>.

¹¹ ILO. 2015, Towards Decent Work in Lebanon: Issues and Challenges in Light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis

¹² World Bank. 2015, Lebanon: Promoting Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity. A Systemic Country Diagnostic.

¹³ ILO. 2015, Towards Decent Work in Lebanon: Issues and Challenges in Light of the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

¹⁴ The World Bank (See: the World Bank. 2013. Economic and Social Impact Assessment of the Syrian Conflict) estimated that the unemployment rate would reach 20 per cent by the end of 2014. A revision of this assessment is necessary due to the fact that the demographic shock of the crisis was not as high as expected.

¹⁵ World Bank. 2015, Lebanon: Promoting Poverty Reduction and Shared Prosperity. A Systemic Country Diagnostic.

¹⁶ VaSyr 2015. Preliminary results.

¹⁷ ILO. 2014. Assessment of the Impact of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile.

¹⁸ ILO. 2014. Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their Employment Profile, and OCHA-REACH-UNICEF. 2015. Defining Community Vulnerability in Lebanon.

¹⁹ The LCRP is Lebanon's country plan part of the Regional Refugee and Resilience Plan 2015-16. For more information, please see: <http://www.unocha.org/cap/appeals/lebanon-crisis-response-plan-2015-2016>.

At present, the ILO contributes to realizing the objectives of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2015-16 through three interlinked programmes, as described below.

Supporting evidence-based policy development to ensure an employment-rich national response embedded in the principles of decent work

Project: Enhancing the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to develop strategies for labour market policies, data collection, and analysis

Overall objective

Ministry of Labour and National Employment Office have enhanced institutional and technical capacity to develop strategies for labour market policies, data collection, and analysis.

Brief Description

In order to cope with the adverse economic effects of the crisis, the Government of Lebanon has initiated policy reforms to spur job creation, particularly in refugee host communities. In support of this policy, the ILO has initiated three complementary projects:

1. Strengthening labour administration and inspection: based on a technical needs assessment of the Labour Administration Office of Lebanon's Ministry of Labour, several recommendations have been made to ensure good governance of labour-related matters and national systems of labour administration with the aim of social and economic development. Future ILO measures will focus on the implementation of priority recommendations for the effective delivery of services by the MOL within the context of the Syrian refugee crisis.
2. Reforming the National Employment Office: The ILO has conducted a legal review and helped draft a decree to restructure the National Employment Office and refine its mandate to collect labour market statistics, contribute to labour market analysis, and monitor and coordinate the operations of private employment services in Lebanon.
3. Implementing a labour force and living conditions survey: The ILO and the Central Administration for Statistics (CAS), Lebanon's official statistics body, have launched a project entitled the "Labour Force and Households Living Conditions Survey" (LFH LCS). The survey will be the first to produce estimates at the national, governorate, and district levels to highlight regional disparities and characteristics. Such indicators will inform policy-making and the labour market information systems that are instrumental to human development planning aiming to address the effects of the Syrian refugee crisis on the Lebanese labour market.

Enhancing access to employment opportunities and livelihoods for crisis-affected communities

Project: Agricultural Livelihoods, Employment and Income for Vulnerable People in Rural Lebanon affected by the Syrian Conflict

Overall objective

Improved productive employment and decent work opportunities through the promotion of sustainable enterprises and by strengthening the employability of vulnerable groups.

Brief Description

The project aims to promote the employment and livelihoods of vulnerable groups affected by the Syria crisis through two distinct but interlinked components: enhancing the employability of youth in agriculture and improving agricultural income and employment through value chain development embedded in an inclusive LED approach. Firstly, it will expand on its existing collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture in enhancing and strengthening the agricultural vocational training programme provided by the ministry through collaboration with the private sector in order to increase the employability of the youth. This will be carried out by converting the current Baccaureate Technique into a Dual System, a system that integrates learning outcomes to be attained through apprenticeships. The second component consists of an expansion of a current ILO project which aims at enhancing the resilience of entrepreneurs including farmers and workers affected by the Syria crisis in Lebanon in rural areas focusing on Akkar – an area that has the highest poverty incidence and hosts very high numbers of refugees. The project interventions are based on the results and recommendations of the value chains analysis of two agriculture sub-sectors (potato and leafy greens) in 2014/2015. It strengthens the effectiveness of key market actors and institutions in addressing and improving market underperformance, developing and sustaining local economic opportunities along the value chains, as well as reducing decent work gap in the two value chains.

Project: Creating decent work opportunities for Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon through infrastructure improvement: a win-win approach

Overall objective

1) Jobs for Lebanese unemployed as well as legal work opportunities for a minimum of 25,000 Syrian refugees created, leading to immediate and long-term economic development gains; and 2) the Ministry of Labour has a strengthened role in improving the functioning of the Lebanese labour market.

Brief Description

Legal work opportunities for 25,000 Syrian refugees will be achieved in three ways:

1. Moving towards formalizing unskilled and semi-skilled jobs currently illegally done by Syrian refugees by engaging with employers and contractor organizations, ensuring application of national labour standards and inclusion of decent work principles.
2. Developing work opportunities for Syrian refugees and Lebanese job seekers through the implementation of infrastructure projects using the Employment intensive investment Programme (EIIP) approach. The components included are:
 - a. Agricultural Feeder Roads: This initiative aims to develop periodic maintenance for Lebanon's network of rural roads, which will improve their condition and create long-term jobs.
 - b. Water Catchment: In order to address the lack of a standardized water management system, this initiative aims to build water catchment systems for small farms in Lebanon.
 - c. Terracing and Land Reclamation: This initiative aims to carry out terracing in order to create arable land, protect slopes and counter erosion.
3. Engaging in policy level dialogue with the Ministry of Labour and National Contractors Associations to formalize Decent Work Principles in the recruitment and contracting of labour for Lebanese and foreign workers including refugees.

Labour shall only be used in those cases where it is cost effective versus machinery, or where donor, contractor and government agree that, from a humanitarian perspective, labour shall be used to

provide income. The project will be implemented in partnership with stake holders including the Ministries of Labour, Public Work and Agriculture. An emphasis will be placed on building the capacities of local partners. A specialised team will oversee and advice project management on social issues, including gender balancing and worker protection. Institutional Experts will build the capacity of the Ministry of Labour to conduct labour inspection, skills forecasting and formulating a Labour Market Strategy.

Combating the increasing incidence of child labour

Project: Reducing Child Labour in Lebanon

Overall objective

To contribute to the elimination of child labour, especially its worst forms, among Syrian refugees and host communities in Lebanon.

Brief Description

The project will endeavour to provide a robust response to child labour on the ground, targeting Syrian, Lebanese as well as other children. Its objectives are the following:

1. 500 Children in target areas withdrawn or prevented from involvement in child labour, through the strengthening and upgrading of two child support centres, enabling them to provide a comprehensive package of services to children involved in or at risk of child labour.
2. Capacity of duty bearers and stakeholders built in addressing child labour. This objective will be reached through the training of 1,200 teachers and school counsellors as well as 150 social workers on preventing and addressing Child Labour, as well as the rolling of the 'Guidelines to Prevent School Drop Outs and Child Labour'. Activities to address child labour will be integrated in the activities of municipal authorities with 150 Municipal officials trained. 70 Inspectors and employer representatives will be trained on the 'Indicators of Hazardous Labour' (manual). Essential equipment to enhance the capacity of key stakeholders will be provided.
3. Awareness on child labour raised with a focus on change in behaviour and attitude, through a Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey on Child Labour to identify gaps and the development of a child labour awareness strategy.
4. Child/youth volunteers attached to local authorities, Community-Based Organisations and NGOs trained and mobilized to address child labour.

PROGRAMME OUTLINE: TURKEY

Turkey has, since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in 2011, provided an effective emergency response and declared a temporary protection regime for Syrian refugees, ensuring both protection and assistance in 23 camps set up by the Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (AFAD). As of 2 October 2015, Turkey hosts almost 2.1 million registered Syrian refugees. Around 250,000 refugees reside in camps, while over 1.5 million live within host communities. Most camp refugees live in the south (Adana, Hatay, Osmaniye, and Kahramanmaraş) and south-east (Adıyaman, Gaziantep, Kilis, Mardin, Şanlıurfa) of Turkey. Other major cities such as Istanbul, Konya and Mersin have seen an increase in the number of Syrians. 74 of 81 provinces in Turkey currently host Syrian refugees.

As the conflict approaches its fifth year, the influx can be seen to have had a significant impact on the Turkish labour market. There is no systematic assessment of the impact of the crisis on the socio-economic situation at national and local levels, but only limited sample-based information exists on the income levels of the Syrian refugees in and outside camps, based on a study carried out by AFAD.²⁰ According to this report, over half of the refugees who live and work in Turkish communities earn less than USD 250 a month, far less than the minimum wage in Turkey. Limited information is available on the working conditions of Syrian workers currently making their living through informal jobs. The pressure on the local economy and on the Government to provide jobs and services has grown, causing discontent among the host communities. Competition between Syrians and Turkish nationals has increased, especially for low-skilled jobs, and this creates downward pressure on wages. Syrian workers tend to work in poor working conditions where core labour and social rights are not observed, in seasonal agricultural and low-skilled jobs. Local level consultations show that wages and fees have dropped to one-fifth of their previous levels, causing the working conditions of the most vulnerable groups from both communities to deteriorate, including children not in school.

The Government of Turkey has taken swift action to accommodate Syrian refugees. The “Law on Foreigners and International Protection” was adopted in April 2013, followed by the adoption of a “Temporary Protection Regulation” (TP) in 2014, which provides the legal and administrative framework for the protection and assistance of persons in need of international protection. The regulation provides Syrian refugees with rights and duties, and a framework for access to health care, education, the labour market and social assistance. The TP enables refugees’ access to the labour market, as it allows for registered and documented Syrian refugees to apply for work permits in defined sectors, professions and geographical areas. For this purpose a second set of regulations to govern working conditions for Syrian refugees has been prepared by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security (MoLSS) and submitted to the Council of Ministers for approval.

The ILO response

The ILO is committed to support the crisis response in Turkey through field studies and analysis, the identification of employment and training opportunities, and the promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work – for both refugees and host communities affected by the crisis. With this aim the ILO Office for Turkey has intensified its efforts to provide ILO inputs to a UN-wide proposal (in particular on the issues of livelihoods, protection and education) and has been working on social integration and inclusion issues that involve the elimination of child labour, women’s empowerment, and youth employment endeavours, etc.

²⁰ AFAD 2013 report, Syrian Refugees in Turkey. For more information, see: <https://www.afad.gov.tr/en/IcerikDetay1.aspx?ID=16&IcerikID=747>.

The ILO will use its own resources in Turkey for the initial work, which focuses on three interlinked components: capacity building, improving the knowledge base and local economic development. Together, these will provide the necessary groundwork and an enabling environment for extended technical support to medium- and long-term programmes, using the same components and drawing on wider communication and development partnership opportunities.

Strengthening local and national capacities to deal with the refugee crisis in Turkey and support an employment-rich response

The ILO will contribute to local and national capacity building through information sharing, training, and other investments in human and institutional capacities. Establishing a basis for tackling the social, economic and financial impact of refugees on communities through a “resilience development-based approach” is of key importance to this end.

Technical support will accordingly be provided to the implementation of legislation on work permits for Syrian refugees; the identification of capacity development needs for the Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR) and the respective General Directorates of MoLSS in dealing with Syrian refugees in the labour market; and the provision of on-the-job training. Consideration will be given to the preparation, implementation and evaluation of targeted training programmes to be developed on the basis of the assessment.

The ILO will also facilitate tripartite consultations, both at the local and national levels, to support an employment-rich response to the crisis. The consultation process will ensure the exchange of quality information between the headquarters and field bodies of employers’ and workers’ organizations and government institutions. There are plans to contribute to the establishment of local level action committees in collaboration with constituents and local stakeholders in the most affected locations.

The capacity development needs of local government institutions (Municipalities and Governorates) within the most affected provinces and districts will also be identified, and the necessary support will be provided for this purpose. Consideration is also being given to the establishment of a Central Level Steering Committee on the Syrian influx into the labour market in Turkey, in cooperation with the MoLSS and the Directorate-General of Migration Management (DGMM), which would provide a platform for the discussion of policy matters.

Improving the knowledge base on the Syrian refugee crisis and its impact on the labour market and child labour

There is a lack of reliable data on the impact of the Syrian influx on the Turkish labour market, which is crucial to the provision of an effective response. The ILO will help improve the knowledge base through local and national level assessments and research, to be carried out collectively with the National Statistics Institution (TURKSTAT), the Turkish Employment Organization (İŞKUR), universities, and possibly through partnerships with other specialized national and international institutions and agencies. An assessment of labour market needs at the local level, a database of skills and businesses, and referrals for job placement, will be covered by this component.

The ILO will carry out a situation analysis of child labour at provincial level, with a specific focus on Syrian refugee children, and will discuss innovative protection and prevention mechanisms to combat the worst forms of child labour in the most affected provinces, with the MoLSS and social partners. In addition, field research will be conducted on the demand side of the labour market among the Syrian

labour force, together with a desk review based on existing and ongoing studies of the impact of the Syrian refugee crisis on the labour market.

The ILO will also contribute to a nationwide labour market assessment by making its experience available as part of a broader socio-economic impact assessment to be conducted by the World Bank.

Improve livelihoods and living conditions at the local level, including better and decent working conditions for both Syrians and host communities

The ILO will actively help promote the labour market integration of both Syrian refugees and host communities in order to increase the incomes of refugee women and men (both in camp and off camp) and of host communities. The ILO Office for Turkey will initially conduct small-scale activities for both refugees and host communities to increase the employability of target groups and to facilitate their employment in decent jobs in order to promote livelihoods and enhance social harmony between the host communities and refugees. This work will be done in collaboration with local actors and the Turkish Employment Agency.

The ILO also plans to adopt a comprehensive programme for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour (WFCL) within the most affected provinces. The ILO Office for Turkey has extensive experience in combating child labour, and has proven expertise in partnering with, motivating, and mobilizing its constituents to ensure targeted action to eliminate the WFCL. It is hence planned to draw on the ILO's existing strengths in combating the worst forms of child labour, with a special focus on the Syrian influx.

The ILO will give attention to livelihood and social protection models such as cash for work and conditional cash transfers, as well as short-term grants to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), designed to respond to the short-term needs of the host communities directly affected by the need to host Syrian families. Larger-scale livelihood initiatives focusing on improved value chains and business development for SMEs with financing components are needed to address the loss of livelihoods and the provision of social and public services. ILO measures will also include supporting the acquisition of vocational skills to better respond to labour market demands, employment support measures, local labour force analyses, support for the establishment of new socio-economic facilities and the expansion of existing ones through new investments.

Awareness raising among refugees, host communities and other stakeholders on the new legislative measures and their implications for the labour market

All the above components would be supported by developing and implementing an inclusive communication and advocacy campaign targeting both Syrian workers and host communities. This will include raising awareness of the application of the Temporary Protection Regulation, as mentioned above, and the dissemination of information to a wide audience on its provisions. This means providing detailed and easy-to-understand information on working conditions, labour rights and responsibilities of Syrian workers, as well as the establishment of communication channels between host communities and refugees through a variety of advocacy tools.

PROGRAMME OUTLINE: EGYPT

Despite the absence of a common border with Syria, Egypt has admitted a high number of Syrian refugees. In September 2015, it was estimated that the number of officially registered Syrian refugees in Egypt reached 128,000 women, men and children and that an equal number of Syrians live unregistered in the country. Although the number of Syrian refugees in Egypt is relatively small compared with countries bordering Syria, the concentration of refugees in certain governorates (Giza, Greater Cairo, Alexandria and Qalyubia) has placed additional pressure on the delivery of basic services and calls for targeted assistance in relation to food, health, education, livelihoods and basic needs.

The ILO response

An area-based approach is foreseen to support both Syrian refugees and local residents in the Egyptian communities affected so as to improve basic delivery systems, income-generating activities and social cohesion. The means in which this will be done are described below.

Food sector promotion for urban refugees: Value chain development in Greater Cairo's food services sector

Recognizing the need to understand the employment and economic potential of Syrian refugees in Egypt, and as part of an overall cooperation agreement between the ILO and UNHCR, a project to assess the economic sectors and subsectors of high employment potential for Syrians in Egypt was implemented by the ILO in the period 1 December 2013—31 March 2014. This project used a participatory and gender-sensitive value chain analysis approach, the results of which were disseminated and shared with all stakeholders through a national workshop. The study showed that the food sector absorbs large numbers of Syrians and has potential for economic value addition for both Egyptian nationals and Syrians.

Based on the results of this analysis, the ILO has developed a project proposal to strengthen and upgrade the food sector value chain in the most vulnerable and impacted communities. This will entail:

1. Setting up an information database providing information on suppliers, business tools and services, standards, local policies, and other relevant market information
2. Establishing a call centre to facilitate home delivery
3. Organizing a training programme with a specific focus on marketing in Egypt's food sector. It is foreseen that these activities will help build a stronger business development services market that responds to the most pressing needs in terms of services to the target groups
4. A start-up programme for small restaurants and food stands that selects participants with potential and adapts a start-up training package for this target audience

These activities will lead to more and better jobs and livelihoods for both Syrian refugees and Egyptians working in the food sector. The project aims to reach at least 5,000 market actors, of whom at least 50 per cent are refugees. By not focusing exclusively on Syrians, the project aims to show that the interventions are contributing to the overall growth of the food services sector in major urban centres in Egypt with shared benefits. As the UNHCR and the ILO plan to engage in more pilot projects in other regions, lessons learned from this project will inform the planning and development of interventions in similar projects as well.

Improving and sustaining basic needs of the most vulnerable men, women, children and youth

In addition, the ILO has been actively engaged with other UN organizations in the design of Egypt's country response to reduce vulnerability and improve livelihoods for Egyptians and Syrians in host communities. This also falls under the 3RP umbrella and overall aims are as follows:

1. Building the capacity of national and local partners to improve the delivery systems for social protection
 2. Promoting job creation through enterprise development
 3. Improving matchmaking activities to facilitate young people's transition to work
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