

Sustainable Economic Development, Employment and Labour Market

Programme for Access to the Labour Market (PALM II)

Background and Objective

High levels of youth unemployment and underemployment present major challenges in the Palestinian territories. With the West Bank having an unemployment rate of 15% and Gaza experiencing a much higher rate of 50%, labour market statistics indicate that nearly half of Palestinian youth between 15 and 29 are unemployed. Additionally, About 7 out of 10 of males participated in the labor force in 2022, compared with about 2 out of 10 of females. With only 17% of women participating in the labor market, this is one of the lowest figures globally.

Combined with the impact of the Middle East conflict, this situation leaves a very substantial section of the population frustrated and lacking perspective. Although many Palestinians struggle to find jobs, the issue employers face is finding suitable and qualified skilled workers to fill their vacancies.

“This programme supports the implementation of the Palestinian National Employment Strategy. It is foreseen to enhance the economic and employment conditions of the Palestinian youth.”

- Mr. Ali Sawi, Deputy Minister, Palestinian Ministry of Labour

Labour market policy is currently unable to find solutions for this difficult employment situation. This is mainly because the existing employment services, such as job placement, job training, and career counseling, to name a few, are insufficient to match the labour market demand and supply.



Project name	Programme for Access to the Labour Market (PALM II)
Commissioned by	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem
Partners	Ministry of Labour (MoL)
Duration	December 2022 – November 2025

Additionally, stakeholders’ coordination within the multidimensional labour sector doesn’t work efficiently due to the lack of labour market information. This hinders the process of evidence-based policy formation and decision making.

Therefore, the objective of the Programme for Access to the Labour Market (PALM II) is to improve the matching of labour market policies and services with the demand of jobseekers and employers.

“I discovered through this work experience that I can manage my time and strengthen my skills. I’m grateful for this internship opportunity and advise every graduate to set a goal and gain as much experience as possible.”

- Amjad Ashour, Beneficiary, TAMHIR Internship programme



The Palestinian National Employment Strategy as visualized by PALM - 2022



Job interview with jobseeker- Hebron Job Fair organized by PALM, 2022

Approach

Since 2019, PALM has targeted people seeking employment through active labour market service providers, who implement a variety of employment measures (Job Counselling, Internship and job placement, self-employment training, coaching, and networking). With a larger focus on labour market services for businesses, PALM II will continue to facilitate access to employment and matching between jobseekers and the private sector, ensuring that labour market services are better geared to the needs of jobseekers and businesses.

PALM II works in three core areas:

1. Strengthening the capacities of the key local institutions to steer active labour market policies
2. Capacitating public institutions and non-public institutions (private sector companies and NGOs) to implement labour market services for jobseekers.
3. Strengthening the capacities of labour market service providers to implement business-related labour market services

The programme will continue to implement interventions in close coordination with the Palestinian Ministry of Labour among other key partners. On the policy level, activities will primarily focus on strengthening the governance capacities of key institutions and supporting them to steer active labour market policies using labour market information, as well as enhance the relevance and quality of employment services for the benefit of jobseekers and businesses alike.

Achievements

Building on the achievements of PALM I by which almost 6,000 Palestinians received employment services and nearly 700 private sector companies were supported from different sectors, PALM II aims to have supported the following measures by November 2025:

- 15 institutions which provide labour market services have fulfilled at least 3 criteria for the enhancement of their performance with one of the criteria specifically targeting women.
- 15 labour market institutions which received support from PALM II have provided labor market services to a total of 3,000 jobseekers, with 1,500 of them being women.
- Out of the 3,000 jobseekers who were reached, 65% have secured new employment or self-employment, including 1,500 women.
- 350 companies were supported to improve their access to skilled workforce in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem

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