

Sustainable Economic Development, Employment and Labour Market

Programm for Access to the Labour Market (PALM)

Background and Objective

The youth in Palestine faces enormous difficulties to access the labour market, either for gaining wage-employment or self-employment. The result of this situation is a high threat of unemployment. Latest studies reveal that around one third of the Palestinian population is between 15 and 29 years of age. The unemployment rate within this age group is close to 40% and it is as high as 60% among university graduates.

“This programme is very important and has come at utmost appropriate time, to enhance the capabilities of Palestinian youth to enter the labour market and to develop their own projects. We strongly believe that this programme is very much in line with the Palestinian government priorities in general and the Ministry of Labour in particular.”

Mr. Samer Salameh, Deputy Minister, MoL

Combined with the impact of the Middle East conflict, this situation leaves a very substantial section of the population frustrated and lacking perspective. Tackling this widespread joblessness is therefore one of the most pressing issues in the Palestinian Territories.



Project name	Programm for Access to the Labour Market (PALM)
Commissioned by	The German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)
Project region	Palestinian Territories (West Bank, Gaza Strip, East Jerusalem)
Partners	Ministry of Labour (MoL)
Duration	April 2019 – March 2022

Although many Palestinians struggle to find jobs, the employers are, at the same time, having problems finding suitable and qualified skilled workers to fill their vacancies. This is mainly because the existing employment services are insufficient to match the labour market demand and supply, labour market information is not tailored and jobseekers are not ready to enter the labour market after completion of training and education.

Moreover, the coordination of private and public stakeholders at local and regional levels is not strong enough to tackle the critical employment challenges of the Palestinian Territories.

The newly designed Program for Access to Labour Market (PALM) corresponds to the Palestinian-German priority area of sustainable economic development.



Interview with companies during a Job Fair in Hebron in 2019

Approach

The programme aims to improve the employment situation through comprehensive measures of active labour market policy. PALM has four major fields of intervention:

- Improvement of information available on evidence-based steering of regional labour markets
- Strengthening capacities of local key stakeholders to offer gender sensitive employment services for wage employment
- Supporting the key regional stakeholders to provide adequate counseling services for self-employment and entrepreneurship.
- Coordinating the active labour market policy process among the relevant multi-stakeholders

Achievements

The programme is foreseen to target 4.000 people seeking employment in the Palestinian Territories and equips them with employment services (e.g. Job Counselling, Placement, Short Term Qualification, Selfemployment Orientation, Entrepreneur Counselling) through the key stakeholders. (One Stop Shops, Career Units and Employment Corners). According to the programme objective, it is anticipated that 55% of the job seekers that have received employment services, have found employment (wage or self-employment) within 6 months upon receipt of the supported services. On the demand side of the labour market, the programme supports companies in the regions to benefit from consulting services addressing recruitment, marketing and planning. As a result, PALM aims at recruiting 750 new workers into these companies.

In 2019, with the support of the programme more than 250 job seekers were successfully placed in the labour market and 18 self employment opportunities were achieved.

Covid-19 Response

For 40 managers from Palestinian labour market institutions, PALM conducted a Webinar with experts from the Palestinian Territories and Germany on “Labour market instruments in Germany in times of Corona” in June 2020.

The experts from Germany presented examples of passive and active labour market instruments in response to the Corona crises with focus on the Brandenburg region. The continuation of active labour market programmes addressing the long-term unemployed, the instrument "short-time work compensation" and measures to support companies' liquidity and subsidies for the self-employed were presented and discussed.

PALM has contributed to the public health outreach of the Ministry of Labour with awareness campaigns including the production of visual materials such as radio & TV spots, videos which were placed in the social media and with posters and graphics.

Vulnerable entrepreneurs, and especially women, are the first who were affected by job and business loss. Therefore, PALM introduced the concept of Innovative Home-Based Business. Those people were given a chance to generate income who were confined to their home and unable to leave their immediate environment to seek employment.

25 beneficiaries in the Westbank were selected and received items they needed to start their business with up to NIS 5,000 per person. The procurement was combined with start-up training and business coaching by experienced entrepreneurs to improve the resilience of the entrepreneurs in the market.

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