

# ○ SUPPORTING ENHANCED PUBLIC EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

## Implementing the Palestinian National Employment Strategy

### ○ Thematic Fiche 03

#### ○ *Background*

Skilled labour is lacking in the Palestinian jobs market, and the Palestinian Authority is committed to supporting employers in finding the skilled manpower they need and to boosting economic growth through decent work. Public employment services are delivered via three different vehicles, each of which lacks the proper linkages and capacity to fully implement the programmes under their purview. These vehicles are as follows:



#### The Palestinian Employment Fund (PEF)

Established in 2003 by a presidential decree, initially as the Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection (PFESP), the PEF is a semi-autonomous body that provides services including business opportunity development, entrepreneurship development via incubators and co-financing, labour training and job placement programmes, and private sector incentive programmes. The cabinet recently transformed the PEF into a national umbrella for all employment and job creation programmes, and entrepreneurship development.



#### Local Education and Training Council

The Local Education and Training Council was established by the Ministry of Labour (MoL), bringing together public and private representatives to promote social dialogue and local employment initiatives. There are now four branch councils operating in Hebron, Nablus, Ramallah, and Bethlehem. These councils will in future operate under the new TVET Commission, established in accordance with Decree-Law No. 4 of 2021.



#### Employment Offices

MoL-supported employment offices/one-stop shops also provide a set of employment services and jobseeker registration. There are 16 employment offices in the West Bank and 5 in Gaza. In the West Bank, employment offices provide job placement and issue certificates of eligibility for free health insurance to the unemployed in the West Bank and Gaza, and Palestinians engaged in short-term employment in the Israeli labour market. The MoL has been using these employment offices to provide a comprehensive set of services.

## ○ Main gaps



### A top priority of the PEF is to promote service delivery

through employment hubs at district employment offices and chambers of commerce. It also seeks to develop a performance measurement system, which would enable monitoring of the PFESP's achievements and assess the impact and effectiveness of its support provided through employment programmes and active labour market policies (ALMPs).



### Despite some capacity-building programmes,

human and logistical capacities at the employment offices remain unable to provide their services as mandated. Key challenges include a shortage of qualified staff, limited communication with employers, inadequate means of transportation, and unclear roles and responsibilities. To date, only few unemployed people have registered at these offices.

## ○ Geography, Gender & Social Inclusion

Palestinian unemployment is highest in Gaza among young men and women, and among highly educated women. The MoL has limited capacity to implement public employment services within Gaza. Employment services targeting the youth, must address the different layers of disadvantage and should comprise of a comprehensive package including basic functional literacy, life skills training, and a set of programmes combining training and work for employment.

## ○ Areas for Development

Effective labour market policies require employment management,



### efficient use of financial resources,

and better targeting and design of ALMPs. This also requires a multilevel system at MoL district directorate offices to better respond to the needs of jobseekers and employers.

This includes providing technical and financial support to employment offices to increase their capacity to design and implement ALMPs and employment services.

To enhance efficiency, decentralized employment services will be invigorated



### through one-stop shops,

which will improve coordination between the Employment Directorate General and PEF, and between the MoL and ministries with functions directly related to business facilitation and registration. Potentially integrating with employment services, ministries include, for instance, the Ministry of National Economy (enterprise registration), Ministry of Agriculture (licensing agricultural enterprises), and agencies providing social protection services to poor households, including the Ministry of Social Development (economic empowerment for the poor).



### This requires a system to measure performance

and monitor the impact of employment services on beneficiaries; a mechanism to provide information on the decentralized delivery of quantity and quality of employment services; and a results-based management system, whereby every employment office determines the employment services it will provide with available financial allocations and those provided by employment programme partners, including PEF.



### Cooperation and coordination should be improved

between ministries and related central and local partners in order to address employment issues. Capacity building will be provided to local labour market institutions and employment boards to design, monitor, and evaluate youth employment interventions to make available the information needed to modify these interventions and relevant policies.

## ○ Risks & Challenges

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The Palestinian National Employment Strategy is premised on principles that aim to ensure that more employment opportunities are provided to jobseekers; employment is as decent as possible; jobseekers enjoy freedom to choose employment; and workers have full access to opportunities for career growth without discrimination. These tenets are critical to preserve remaining stability and prevent further degradation and deterioration of the domestic situation.

## ○ Desired Outcomes

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### **1. Work is underway to develop the PEF and restructure MoL directorates general in order to promote employment services, decent work, and labour relations.**

Against this backdrop, employment measures should take into account that labour market interventions, which aim at addressing multiple disadvantages faced by many youth, need to be developed so as to present a comprehensive package of employment services. This will include components of basic functional literacy, life skills training, and a set of programmes combining training and work for employment.

To promote employment programmes and ALMPs, key issues to be addressed involve weak government financial support to the PEF, the inadequate PEF legal framework, and limited human and financial resources at the MoL Employment Directorate General. To strengthen this capability, a number of responsibilities and roles of district employment offices, particularly in relation to labour market programme management, should be decentralized. Reliable and timely provision of labour market information is a prerequisite for implementing such a system.

### Indicators

- ▶ Number of MoL directorates supported to provide employment services through one-stop shops/multiservice employment offices, in direct coordination with the PEF.
- ▶ Number of jobseekers benefiting from employment services provided by multiservice employment offices (including in collaboration with the PEF) by gender, age, and type of basic service delivery.
- ▶ Number of employers benefiting from alignment services provided by multiservice employment office in collaboration with the PEF.
- ▶ Percentage of beneficiary (jobseeker and employer) satisfaction with employment service received from MoL directorates.

## ○ Priority Investment Needed

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\$500,000



for the development of  
**guidelines,  
manuals, tools  
and checklists,**

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design of business processes  
and workflows and  
integration of databases



\$1,000,000



for piloting  
**matching services,  
covering at least  
4 regions**

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in the West Bank and Gaza.