

JORDAN

COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2017-20

2018 UPDATES



Contents

COUNTRY STRATEGY PAPER 2017-20.....	1
A. COUNTRY CONTEXT	3
EU Relations and cooperation	5
B. VET AND SKILLS IN THE COUNTRY: OVERVIEW, PROGRESS AND MID-TERM PRIORITIES ...	5
D. ETF MID-TERM INTERVENTION STRATEGY IN THE COUNTRY	8
E. 2017 ACTION PLAN	10
F. 2018 UPDATES	11

A. COUNTRY CONTEXT

Jordan is a small-sized country with a population of 9,531,712¹ including refugees and migrant workers. The population has almost doubled since the previous census in 2004 when it amounted to 5.1 million. The population growth reflects, in particular, the high migration², which is changing the economy and demography of Jordan, straining its resources and social services, and increasing pressure on the labour market. In addition, Jordan has a very young population, with 55% between 0 and 24 years old (36% 0-14 and 19% 15-24)³. Around 60,000 young people enter the labour market every year, far more than the number of jobs created.

For historic reasons, a large percentage of the population is of Palestinian descent. In addition, around 634,000 registered Palestinian refugees live in Jordan. Moreover, the political unrest in neighbouring countries has resulted in a high influx of refugees from other Arab countries such as Iraq, Syria and Libya. According to the 2015 census, 1,265,000 Syrian⁴ refugees, 130,000 Iraqis, 636,000 Egyptians and 63,000 Syrians from Syria, is imposing a heavy burden on public institutions, which are called on to provide basic services and other services, such as education, jobs and health. The year 2016 saw the organisation of the 'London conference' that brought together world leaders to rise to the challenge of raising the money needed to help millions of people whose lives have been torn apart by the devastating civil war. This conference led to the Jordan Compact which is a holistic approach between Jordan and the International Community to deal with the Syrian Refugee Crisis.

Jordan is an upper middle-income country and is considered an emerging market with an open economy. It has scarce water supplies and limited other natural resources with high-energy import dependency. Due to growing foreign direct investment and foreign trade, Jordan experienced strong economic growth in the last years before the crisis (an average of 8% in the period of 2004-08). However, the GDP growth rate has seriously suffered from the recent economic crisis, declining to 2-3% in (2010-2015), and so did the ranking on doing business (from 80 in 2008 to 96 in 2012 out of 183 countries and 117 in 2015 out of 189 countries)⁵. Jordan has been increasingly becoming a service economy, as services represented 2/3 of GDP in 2014⁶ and 80% of employment, while agriculture has a very minor influence both in the GDP and in employment (lower than 3%). In the recent years, the Government has been promoting investment and innovation in sectors that have potential for growth through exports and for their skill-intensity⁷.

In 2015, the government launched Jordan vision for 2025. Jordan 2025 charts a path for the future and determines the integrated economic and social framework that will govern the economic and social policies based on providing opportunities for all. Its basic principles include promoting the rule of law and equal opportunities, increasing participatory policy making, achieving fiscal sustainability and strengthening institutions. Jordan 2025 is based on identifying a set of goals that Jordan aspires to, how they can be achieved through certain procedures and policies that will be adopted on the sector level according to a flexible timetable that takes into account the developments on the global and regional levels and how to adapt to those changes.

¹ Population and housing census - 2015. Department of statistics, 2016.

² It also reflects the growth of the Jordanian population (rate of 3.1%), although due to the influx of refugees and migrants it is a less dramatic factor.

³ UNDP, the 2015 revision

⁴ A total of 629,627 refugees are registered with UNHCR as of 19 October 2015.

⁵ Doing Business surveys at: www.doingbusiness.org/

⁶ World Bank.

⁷ i.e. ICT, pharmaceuticals, business services, financial services and education and health services for their potential and employment

The private sector is dominated by small and medium size enterprises (SMEs), which represent around 94% of all businesses, are accountable for more than 60% of economic output and employ more than half of the labour force. SMEs face several constraints for their development and growth such as labour market rigidities and poor access to finance⁸.

Informal sector is of a significant size. Government research has estimated, on the basis of a 2010 survey, that informal employment represents 44% of total employment, including children, foreigners, and refugees in the Jordanian economy. The World Bank estimates the informality rate as 21% of GDP.

The working age population in Jordan is currently above 4 million⁹. However, economically active people represent only around 36.7% in 2015¹⁰ of this population. The country also faces one of the lowest female participation rates in the world, with merely 13.3% of women participating in the labour force, in comparison to 60% of men. Along with very low economic activity rates, Jordan has high levels of unemployment. The unemployment rate has been varying over the past decade between 12% and 14% (13% in 2015). Unemployment is particularly high for women – 22.5%- and youth (age group 15–24 years) – 30,8%. Within this age group, youth female unemployment rate was as high as 53.3% in 2015¹¹.

The labour force in Jordan has low skills¹², with around 60% of the population with no schooling or with an ISCED level below 3 in 2015. International skill assessments also show that youth in the country lack basic skills. Jordan ranks among the countries with higher percentage of underperformers in reading, mathematics and science. Besides, and contrary to what happens in other countries in the region with similar skills, there has not been any improvement in the last years, neither in skills of adults (in relation to trends in educational attainment) nor of youth (comparing the results of PISA 2015 with previous years)¹³. In addition, 44% of total employment in the Jordanian economy is affected by informality (UNDP, 2013), which negatively impacts the development of appropriate skills needed by the labour market¹⁴.

The attractiveness of VET has decreased sharply in recent years, both in terms of the percentage of students that participate in vocational streams in upper secondary education (12,3% in 2012) and in the number of students that go to VET in the very same level of education, with a decrease of around 40% from 2000 to 2011. Gender and the high appealing of general education (particularly for tertiary education) explain some patterns of the labour market in the country. The unemployment rate is higher among graduates of tertiary education than among lower skilled, which could increase the mismatch since graduates might compete for jobs below their level of formal qualification. The influence of gender on the labour market is visible in the low activity rates of women and high unemployment rates (driven by the high rate of tertiary graduates)¹⁵. The transition of youth from school to the labour market in Jordan is very difficult; while males mainly go on to employment and some to unemployment, for women (particularly with lower skills) the transition is mainly to inactivity. One in three young women aged 15-24 is not in employment nor in education or training (NEET).

⁸ Government of Jordan, National Employment Strategy, 2012

⁹ Population and housing census - 2015. Department of statistics, 2016.

¹⁰ Source: Department of Statistics Jordan (on line database - employment and unemployment)

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Educational attainment is frequently used as a proxy measure of the skills associated with a given level of education and available in the population, and to the labour force. Higher levels of educational attainment are associated with several positive individual and social outcomes (see also OECD *Education at a Glance*, 2015)

¹³ Only in higher education the % of adults is higher in 2015 compared to 2011, while for PISA the results are slightly better in 2015 compared to previous years (although the difference are tiny and not statistically significant).

¹⁴ In general, informal companies are more reluctant to prioritise the skills development of their own employees, employers' organisation do not represent informal companies, and active labour market policies typically exclude informal workers.

¹⁵ Part of the reason for this higher unemployment rate among females lies on the fact that women with low skills are mainly inactive, and only from post-secondary levels the rate of activity increases (e.g. 3.2% for women with less than secondary, 4.6% in secondary, 28% in intermediate diploma (ISCED 4), and 56% in ISCED 5-6, DOS-2015)

EU Relations and cooperation

Jordan has been a frontrunner among Mediterranean partners to embark on new association ties with the EU. The **EU-Jordan Association Agreement**, which entered into force in May 2002, forms the legal basis of the relations between the EU and Jordan. Based on the good implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan, advanced status was granted to Jordan in 2010 to reflect the new character of the partnership and to further expand the areas of co-operation between Jordan and the EU. The **EU-Jordan Mobility Partnership** was signed in October 2014.

The current strategy and priorities for EU assistance are set out in the **Single Support Framework 2014-2020** that have identified three sectors of intervention. These are:

- Reinforcing the rule of law for enhanced accountability and equity in public service delivery;
- Employment and private sector development; and
- Renewable energies and energy efficiency. The indicative allocation for the period 2014-2020 will be €567,000,000 – €693,000,000.

In relation to the Syrian refugee crisis, at the London conference on ‘Supporting Syria and the region’, the EU pledged €1 billion for Jordan and Lebanon together for the years 2016 and 2017. Jordan is expected to receive significant additional support in tackling the refugee crisis. Overall, the European Commission has allocated more than €754 million in assistance to refugees and vulnerable communities in Jordan.

Moreover, during the 10th EU-Jordan Association Committee, held last July, the EU and Jordan agreed to amend the rules of origin protocol to the EU-Jordan Association Agreement. This will allow producers in Jordan to use an alternative, more relaxed set of rules of origin for exports to the EU provided a number of conditions are met. The new scheme will apply to 52 product groups for ten years and will cover a wide range of manufactured products. In addition, it will be available to producers in 18 specified industrial areas and development zones that employ a minimum percentage of Syrian refugees. With this agreement, the EU takes forward the implementation of the commitment made at the London Conference to support Jordan's resilience and job creation for Jordanians and Syrians.

B. VET AND SKILLS IN THE COUNTRY: OVERVIEW, PROGRESS AND MID-TERM PRIORITIES

TVET in Jordan is mainly delivered in the initial education system and the large majority of training provision is public. Three types of education coexist:

- **Secondary vocational education** (grades 11-12) provided in comprehensive upper secondary schools under the Ministry of Education (30,000 students). *Some 197 vocational schools were operating in Jordan with a total number of 29,150 students during school year 2014/2015. The Ministry does not conduct regular tracer studies or labour market needs assessments*
- **Non-formal and formal vocational education and training** provided by the Vocational Training Centre (VTC), a semi-autonomous agency under the Ministry of Labour that offers vocational training and apprenticeship programs at semi-skilled, skilled and craftsman levels in various sectors (10,000 students); and

- **Technical education** by 42¹⁶ public and private community colleges offering two-year programmes (grades 13-14) leading to a 'diploma', operating under the umbrella of Al Balqa Applied University (BAU). In total, 22,529 students were registered in these colleges in 2015-2016.

The total participation in TVET has declined as a percentage of all enrolment in education and training¹⁷. In 2012, students in vocational programmes represented 12.3% of total upper secondary students..

In addition, a semi-public body, the National Employment and Training Company (NET), established in 2007 provides a one-year vocational training programme. Initially, training was in the construction sector, but now covers other sectors. Since its establishment, 15,000 people have graduated from NET schools.

Vocational training and jobs are less valued than academic study and vocational training initiatives are generally under developed. Public sector jobs are considered more prestigious but opportunities are governed largely by patronage and personal connections and are unlikely to continue to absorb a large share of the workforce, also in light of budget restrictions. More generally, job opportunities do not match the expectations of the growing proportion of highly educated young individuals and this has resulted in 'voluntary unemployment', emigration to the Gulf and a reliance on foreign workers to do low paid service jobs. (UNESCO, National situational report: Jordan, 2015).

Labour market and human resource information sources are fragmented preventing education and training from becoming more demand-driven and meeting labour market needs. The Department of Statistics collects labour market data by conducting different surveys, such as unemployment surveys, surveys of employment in establishments and the household expenditure and income surveys. In addition, the National Centre for Human Resources Development is undertaking several sectoral studies for analysing skill requirements in the main economic sectors (three in 2013, six in 2014, and three in 2015). The different sources of skills related information, however, are not connected and data are not transparently available. This impedes a proper use of evidence for improving education, training and labour market policies.

Developing and using labour market intelligence, methodologies and tools as an input to its employment and TVET policy-making is one of the most important mid-term priorities for Jordan.

The ETVET system is fragmented, and many of its players operate in isolation, although legislation and agreements among stakeholders exist to promote coordination. At the government level, various ministries and agencies have legally defined management roles and responsibilities in ETVET: the ministries of Education, Higher Education and Labour (MoL), the VTC, BAU, the National Employment and Training Company, the National Centre for Human Resources Development, the Civil Service Bureau, and the Higher Education Accreditation Commission (HEAC). Each is governed by different laws, with a high degree of overlap in their mandates. Accordingly, each of these entities sets its own strategy. Currently, coordination is done through ad-hoc mechanisms, in which non-state providers and stakeholders have no legally defined roles or responsibilities.

The ETVET Council, set up years ago to ensure coordination, has failed to play this role, and it is going under a major reform to improve its effectiveness. A new law has been prepared and should be adopted by the Council before the end of 2016.

In September 2016, the Cabinet adopted a new HRD which is much more comprehensive as it covers the whole HRD sector and provides clear interactions between the sub-sectors of the education and training. The HRD calls for increasing the quality of TVET through consistent training requirements for TVET instructors, aligning standards and quality assurance for all institutions and closer coordination with private sector, putting in place clear governance structures to ensure accountability across sectors, diversifying the

16 There are 12 public colleges under the direct responsibility of BAU, 5 operating under other ministries, 2 UNRWA's colleges, 6 military colleges and 16 private.

17 World Bank (2013b)

source of funding to TVET, promoting and establishing TVET as an attractive learning opportunity. The new HRD strategy builds actually on the pillars of the ETVET strategy (2014-2020), which are the following:

- Governance to overcome fragmentation,
- Relevance of Education and Training for Employability,
- Inclusiveness of the TVET System,
- Performance measurement and
- Sustainable and effective funding.

The Torino Process has confirmed the two mentioned priorities. Indeed, the Torino process 2016 came out with 4 recommendations, 2 of them are tackled in this CSP. The 4 recommendations are the following: the governance of the system, quality assurance, financing and funding to sustain sources of funding and introduce funding mechanisms that support quality, and development of a labour market information system.

C. EU and other donors support in VET and skills

Regarding the ETVET sector, the European Union remains the major contributor to the reform through a Sector Reform Contract signed on November 2015. The programme on 'Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion is composed of EUR 43M as budget support and EUR 9M as complementary support. The programme aims to:

- Support policy making, planning and financial resource allocation in a coordinated way across different ministries,
- Improve the relevance, quality effectiveness and attractiveness of TVET for employability; and
- Increase the number of beneficiaries of Active Labour Market Measures.

Jordan was part of the Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean (GEMM) which is a regional project funded by the European Union and implemented by the European Training Foundation, with the aim of improving the employability of young people and enhancing the governance of vocational education and training (VET) systems in nine countries of the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region. As part of the project, governance of the ETVET system was analysed and local partnership in the governorate of Zarqa was piloted.

The **World Bank** is supporting a number of development projects in different sectors including ETVET sector, in particular a project named 'Support to Building Active Labour Market Program'. The overall objective is 'to increase access to career guidance, job search, and on the job training among targeted youth'. The project has three components:

- School to work transition;
- Job search and matching; and
- Job readiness and placement.

The project implementation started in 2013 and will continue until June 2017. The total budget is USD 4.75 million. As part of its support to the implementation of the Jordan Resilience Plan, the World Bank is also providing an interest-free loan to the value of USD 300 million. It will consist on Budget support and one of its component is dealing with TVET.

The Jordan Workforce Development Project (WFD) is one of the primary initiatives by United States Department of International Aid (USAID) to address workforce issues in Jordan. The goal of the project is to create a competitive, demand-driven workforce development system that leads to increased private sector

employment, especially for women, youth and those living at or below the poverty line. The project focuses on six regions outside Amman: East Amman, Zarqa, Irbid, Tafila, Ma'an and Aqaba. In each region, Jordan WFD establishes offices that work directly with local authorities and businesses to support sustainable training leading to jobs. The five-year project, launched in 2014 with an overall budget of USD 40 million, intends to improve technical and vocational training, provide career counselling, mentoring, and job placement assistance, change workplace safety regulations, facilitate family-friendly work environments, and certify and accredit educational institutions. The project aims to provide 25,000 new or improved jobs over its five-year lifespan, and to upgrade the institutional capacity of 12 vocational training in its first year.

D. ETF MID-TERM INTERVENTION STRATEGY IN THE COUNTRY

The priority of ETF's mid-term intervention strategy is to help Jordan implement its strategy in the sector, which is backed by an EUR 52 million EU Budget Support programme (Sector Reform Contract; SRC), in **the strategically important areas of governance and labour market information**.

The ETF intervention strategy has been drawn up on the assumption of continuity in

- the priority given to the country in terms of EU external assistance,
- the level of political, economic and social stability,
- the high level of commitment in the country among key stakeholder from the national and regional authorities and among civil society to take forward the reform process in line with the national vision and strategy for human capital reform in particular in the selected areas of intervention
- engagement and ownership of the country in the ETF Torino Process and according to the principles of evidence based, participatory, holistic policy making.

Particular assumptions, or conditions for the achievement of impact from ETF interventions where relevant are included under the specific objectives below.

Specific objective 1: To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the *Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion* programme through providing support to the EU Delegation in the monitoring and policy dialogue of the new EU budget support programme (Sector Reform Contract-SRC).

Rationale: The ETF has been requested by the EUD to support this main EU intervention in the field of ETVET. The financial agreement signed between the EU and Jordan by which the EU agreed to finance the budget support action related to skills for employment and social inclusion specifies that 'the progress monitoring and evaluation of the programme in view of the disbursement of the budget support will be conducted by the EC through the mobilisation of independent and qualified expert in cooperation with the ETF'. For its support, ETF will build on its intelligence on the country (via the Torino Process and the Projecting Reform Impact (PRIME) exercise). In particular regarding the policy dialogue on governance the results of governance mapping carried out by the EU-funded GEMM project will

Expected results of the ETF support by 2020:

- EU Delegation advised on the capacities of the relevant national stakeholder institutions to comply with the SRC commitments.
- EUD advised on the technical achievement of the specific disbursement conditions.
- Enhanced policy dialogue related to the SRC on VET governance in particular social partnership

Result 3 will built on the work done by the GEMM project and extend the mapping to all ETVET functions with a view to proposing a cooperation framework for ETVET governance and an action plan for the implementation of the new governance arrangements once adopted by all the relevant ETVET stakeholders.

Specific objective 2: To support Jordan to develop and use labour market intelligence, methodologies and tools as an input to its employment and TVET policy making.

Rationale: Over the past years, the EU has supported Jordan to design and implement improved employment policies, based on reliable skills needs analysis and statistics. In particular, lots of efforts have been devoted in setting up a comprehensive system to analyse skills needs, including a Labour Market Information System (LMIS) mainly through technical assistance provided as part of the EU Sector Policy Support Programme to the Employment and TVET Reforms (2010-2015). The evaluation of this component carried out by the ETF showed that even though a substantial effort has been made, a comprehensive labour market information system is still missing. There are several databases that are not interconnected and the various institutions involved in labour market data production do not cooperate. The support provided in recent years to Jordan in this field has focused on improving the existing database without questioning its relevance and interconnectedness. For this reason, an ETF intervention in this area will aim to support the policy dialogue to reach a common vision of a LMIS and build the capacity of key stakeholders in using labour market information to better shape VET policies.

Jordan's ETVET strategy partially addresses this issue under pillar 3: 'increase the Inclusiveness of TVET' through improving the National Electronic Employment System, which has limited capacity to provide sound information about the labour market. The Draft Declaration of the Union for the Mediterranean Ministerial Conference on Employment and Labour also calls for 'the development of evidence-based policies thanks to investing in reliable labour market information systems as well as promoting a culture of evaluation, monitoring and transparency'.

The assumption for the success of this intervention is the commitment of different stakeholders to cooperate and openly share information.

Expected results of the ETF support by 2020:

- A common vision for LMIS is reached and the respective roles and responsibilities with various institutions involved in skills needs analysis identified,
- Capacity of the various institutions to define and analyse skills needs, including the use of comprehensive LMIS, to shape education, training and labour market policies enhanced.

Other areas of intervention

In addition to activities related to the specific objective of the ETF mid-term intervention strategy, the ETF will implement **regular transversal activities upon request from the EUD or** such as the delivery of an annual country fiche to DG Employment, monitor the EU ENP Action Plan for the education and skills components, inputs to the mobility partnership dialogue and monitoring, replying to ad hoc requests by EUD or the European Commission (EC) related to ETF areas of expertise.

In the context of the **corporate initiatives**, the ETF will continue involving Jordan in the Torino Process: the system wide policy analysis and monitoring progress exercise implemented by the ETF on a periodic basis. The 2017-2020 period will cover the closure of the 2016 round and the implementation of the 5th round in 2019. The specific modalities for national implementation in 2019 will be agreed according to the 2016 results and the specific development of the monitoring processes in the country. In between the two rounds, the ETF will continue the policy dialogue with all countries on policy analysis and system wide progress monitoring through VET monitoring forums at regional and international levels.

In the period 2017-2020, the ETF will continue to support the EC (DG GROW) with analysis and reporting on the country's progress on the human capital pillars of the Small Business Act for Europe (SBA). In 2017, an update of the SBA assessment will focus on policy framework for entrepreneurial learning, training for women's entrepreneurship and SME skills intelligence, with the country asked to identify good practice in all three areas. A report from the SBA assessments and dissemination will follow in 2018-2019. Follow-up of the reports' recommendations could feature in ETF support 2018-2020.

Jordan will also participate in ETF regional actions, such as the ETF Forum for Quality Assurance in VET.

E. 2017 ACTION PLAN

Specific objective 1: To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the *Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion* programme by providing support to the EU Delegation in the monitoring and policy dialogue of the new EU Sector Reform Contract

A pre-assessment is done by the ETF upon request from the EUD the planned and mechanisms put in place by the relevant institutions to take appropriate and timely decisions. The likeliness of achieving the specific disbursement indicators is also assessed.

Regarding policy dialogue and under a request from the EUD, it will focus on the field of governance and in particular on the role of social partners at system and provider level. The uncertainty brought by the new HRD strategy and the proposal to establish a new skills corporation prevents from proposing clear activities until there is clarity on the news governance arrangements. At provider level and in cooperation with the SRC technical assistance, ETF will identify good practices of PPP in the region and at European level to feed into the SRC policy dialogue.

Specific objective 2: To support Jordan to develop and use labour market intelligence, methodologies and tools as an input to its employment and TVET policy making.

In 2017, the ETF will work with national stakeholders to map existing information sources', analyse how they connect to each other, identify the gaps and propose a vision for a LMIS in Jordan. A series of capacity building activities and stakeholders policy dialogue will be facilitated by the ETF and specific expertise will be made available for the gap analyses.

In this regards, the Migrant Support Measures for the perspective of Employment and Skills (MISMES) inventory being carried out currently in Jordan will serve as an input for the policy dialogue on employment and employability. ETF will disseminate the results in Jordan and in the framework of the mobility partnership dialogue.

F. 2018 UPDATES

1. Short update on key country developments in the field of VET and skills and on EU and donor cooperation

As indicated above, Jordan adopted in September 2016 a National Strategy for Human Resource development that covers the whole education sector (primary, secondary, TVET and university). As for the TVET sector, it calls for the establishment of a new model of governance that gives a prominent role to the private sector, through the establishment of a Skills Development Corporation, a private led body to govern.

In May 2017, the Ministry of Labour presented a general framework for reforming the TVET sector. This framework is presented as a response to national strategies related directly or indirectly to the TVET but with no implementation plans or mechanisms. Its success will be measured upon its capacity to increase enrolment and employability of graduates, and improve the overall satisfaction of employers and its capacity to attract more women in non-traditional occupation. For all these indicators, the framework sets up clear targets.

While the HRD strategy calls for introducing profound changes in the TVET system and its governance, the general framework for reforming the TVET sector seems to be less ambitious. Instead of the Skills Development Corporation (private-led) proposed by the HRD strategy, the framework calls for the establishment of a new Council, the TVET Council that will replace the current ETVET Council. The composition of this council does not reflect the analyses carried out in the framework (and in the HRD strategy) that point out to the need to get the private sector playing a bigger role in the governance of the system. Indeed, the Council is largely dominated by the public sector, the private sector will be represented by two members only (one from the chamber of industry and one from the chamber of commerce, 5 experts are selected for their expertise, but they are chosen for their expertise) out of 14. Trade unions are no longer members of this new council. A draft law on the establishment of this council, its composition and its mandate has been submitted to the Cabinet for adoption and it is expected that it will be approved before the end of the year (its approval is one of the targets of the current SRC).

The new TVET Council will supervise the ETVET Fund, the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance and the National Centre for Training of Teachers and Trainers. The Ministry of Labour will host a TVET Council implementation Unit.

The framework calls for the establishment of employer-led sector councils in order (a) to define the requirements of the private sector in terms of skills, (b) contribute to the design of the curricula, (c) facilitate the placement of students on the job training, (d) participate in the design and implementation of tests, (e) facilitate the job training of instructors, and (f) review the performance of TVET training centres.

As part of the reforms intended by the framework is the growing role of CAQA as the centre will take over the responsibility for all TVET competency standards, and accreditation of TVET programmes (for vocational training and vocational education). The framework establishes rules for the revision of the standards, as they have to be revised after a maximum of five years in consultation with the private sector.

The framework calls as well for the establishment of a National Apprenticeship Framework that will set parameters for apprenticeship programmes. They will include the following: (a) the agreement between a training provider, an employer and an apprentice around a competency based programme to be implemented as a dual system (on the job and in class); (b) the direct involvement of the apprentice in the production process of the host company; (c) a system of monitoring that takes stock of progress along the agreed competencies; (d) in line with ILO standards, the acknowledgement of the apprentice status as a worker with adequate protection (occupational safety and health and social security); (e) payment as an agreed share of the minimum wage; (f) testing and certification for knowledge and skills.

Finally, the framework calls for the creation of eight centres of excellence in various governorates covering different specialisations such as agricultural machines and equipment, furniture industry and garments professions, programming and computers etc. For each of the centres an “international party” with advanced experience in a given specialisation has been identified. The total estimated cost of the establishment of these centres is of US \$ 90 million. It is interesting to notice that the Board will directly supervise these centres while one would have expected that they operate under the vocational training corporation as this is the case for the current 3 centres of excellence.

In August 2017, the Cabinet adopted a National Qualifications Framework that covers the whole qualification system and gives a mandate to the Higher Education Accreditation Commission to manage the system. This is a major development in Jordan as the Higher Education sector has been for a long time reluctant to embark in a NQF.

Finally, the government adopted last spring a 5-year employment programme (2017-2021) with three components: replacement of foreign workers through the provision of training to Jordanians, job creation for skilled Jordanians, and a specific programme targeting kinder gardens. The overall budget allocated to this programme is estimated at 110 M€ and it is expected that the programme will generate 35,000 jobs.

On the EU support to the ETVET sector, a Sector Reform Contract was signed on November 2015 (43 M€ budget support plus 9 M€ complementary support). The fixed tranche of 10 M€ has been released in 2016 while an assessment for the disbursement of the first variable tranche has been carried out in 2017. No decision has been yet made on the percentage of disbursement. As for the complementary measures, the Technical assistance component will be launched mid-October 2017, and will be implemented by the GIZ.

The EU-Jordan mobility partnership is being implemented with the involvement of several EU Member States (Germany, Italy) and the ETF which carried out a study on Migrant Support Measures from Employment and Skills Perspective.

As for other donors’ interventions, it is to notice that the Jordan Workforce Development Project has been suspended.

In late 2016, the GIZ launched a new project on “Employment Promotion”. The project is part of a special initiative designed to stabilise and promote development in MENA. It aims “to help 4,000 people who have attended one of its job creation schemes into work for self-employment”. A further objective is to improve the employability of at least 60% of all workers who have accessed employment services – such as skills development or recruitment schemes – supported by the project. The project has 3 components: monitoring and evaluation of information on labour market which seems linked to a LMIS, job creation with a focus on local employment initiatives, and female employment. The total budget is 1.9 M€.

2. Assessment of the progress towards achievement of ETF mid-term objectives and results with horizon 2020

Specific objective 1: To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the *Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion* programme by providing support to the EU Delegation in the monitoring and policy dialogue of the new EU Sector Reform Contract

A pre-assessment mission of the SRC has been conducted during the first half of September, and the main findings of the report will support the policy dialogue between the EU Delegation and the government. The first pre-assessment mission and report of 2016 had arisen up to the level of Prime Minister which resulted in a much better preparedness of the key stakeholder institutions for the 2017 pre-assessment.

Specific objective 2: To support Jordan to develop and use labour market intelligence, methodologies and tools as an input to its employment and TVET policy making.

This objective was set up following a specific request from the Ministry of Labour (MoL) and as bridging activity with the current *Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion* programme.

In line with MoL request, ETF made a proposal submitted through the EUD in Jordan. The proposal consisted on organising a capacity-building targeting the representatives from the relevant institutions dealing with data collection, analysis and use of labour market information. The Overall objective of capacity-building training is to improve participants' theoretical and practical knowledge on LMIS and its functions, the information produced by different actors, the institutional setup, and the use of skills needs information for guiding education, VET and employment policies. The capacity-building was intended to be complimented by a 'mapping of existing data sources, quality of their content, and their input into the LMIS system in Jordan. Finally, a local was to be hired to collect missing information.

The main assumptions underpinning this objective are the full engagement of the MoL and the timing of the intervention designed as a bridging activity with the long-term technical assistance as part of the complementary measures of the current sector reform contract. However, considering the lack of response from the MoL and the imminent starting of the TA, this objective has been dropped and no achievements are therefore to be reported.

3. 2018 Action Plan

Specific objective 1: To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the *Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion* programme by providing support to the EU Delegation in the monitoring and policy dialogue of the new EU Sector Reform Contract

A pre-assessment is done by the ETF as requested by the EU Delegation in 2016 for the whole duration of the SRC on the operational plans and mechanisms put in place by the relevant institutions to take appropriate and timely decisions. The likeliness of achieving the specific disbursement indicators is also assessed. Taken into consideration the effect of the first pre-assessment in 2016, the exercise could become more developmental taking place earlier in 2018 and bringing together all the key stakeholder institutions including MoPIC and MoF to present and discuss plans of each institutions to reach the 2018 targets.

Under request from the EU Delegation, the ETF will provide methodological advice to the EU Delegation in the implementation of the complementary measures of the SRC. Support is in particular expected for advising on the implementation of the components of the technical assistance related to social partnership and labour market and possibly in the areas of continuous professional development and qualifications. Support might be expected as well in the implementation of the grant schemes targeting civil society and business associations.

Upon requests from the European Commission or the EU Delegation the ETF will provide support to the EU-Jordan bilateral policy dialogue:

- Inputs to monitoring of the ENP Action Plans;
- Inputs to relevant bilateral sub-committee meetings;
- Delivery of annual country fiches to DG Employment;
- Follow-up of the Mobility Partnership.

Other areas of intervention

The ETF will continue its support in the area of evidence-based policy analysis and system wide progress monitoring. All countries will be invited in early 2018 to kick off preparations for the 5th Round of the Torino

process, with the scope of agreeing on terms of implementation by end of 2018. The preparation phase will involve countries primarily through online consultations and capacity building activities involving appointed national coordinators and key working group members. All countries will be invited to join the kick-off meeting which will take place in Q4 of 2018 in Turin, Italy. Countries aiming at implementing the Torino process at sub-national level too will be followed by specific activities in 2018 in view of preparing regions and cities for the round of analysis. A new national data collection exercise aimed at acquiring more in depth data, mapping gaps and sources and recurrence of data collection in the area of VET and Skills will be launched in 2018.

Also as part of evidence based policy analysis, the results from the 2017 SBA assessment which addressed entrepreneurship promotion in VET, women's entrepreneurship training and skills for SME internationalisation, will be published and disseminated in 2018 through a ministerial meeting and ETF networks.

Jordan will also participate in the ETF regional actions, such as the ETF Forum for Quality Assurance in VET and the follow-up actions to the joint UNESCO-ETF review of Work based learning policies and programmes for young people in the region.