TRACING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION GRADUATES IN PALESTINE*

Graduates of GIZ and Enabel programmes: 2018 tracer study results

* This designation shall not be construed as recognition of a State of Palestine and is without prejudice to the individual position of the Member States on this issue, hereinafter ‘Palestine’.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

The Palestinian economy continues to be defined by the Israeli occupation, where political and economic restrictions prevent sustainable socio-economic development in the West Bank and especially the Gaza Strip. Under these conditions, the opportunities for growth and private sector development remain limited. Moreover, the deteriorating situation combined with continuing population growth has led to increased unemployment, which reached 30.8% (for age range 15+) in 2018 which is 2.4% higher than in 2017 (PCBS, 2019). The increase is due to a significant jump in Gaza where 52% of those in the labour force were unemployed in 2018 compared to 44.4% in 2017 (World Bank, 2019).

While there are various reasons for these high unemployment rates, one of the most prominent causes is the significant mismatch that still exists between the labour market needs and the qualifications of Palestinian graduates. Young people are often encouraged to pursue academic degrees for which there is a relatively low labour market demand compared to technical and vocational education and training (TVET). For this reason, national and international stakeholders in Palestine are making strong efforts to improve the effectiveness of the TVET sector, with the aim to increase its attractiveness and improve the skills matching and transition from school to work.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the interventions in the TVET sector, the European Training Foundation (ETF), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Belgian Development Agency (Enabel) have been working together since 2015, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of the TVET system in Palestine. This resulted in the establishment of a national monitoring framework that was approved in 2017.

In the annual monitoring and evaluation report of the Education Development Strategy Plan (EDSP III 2014–2019), issued by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, limited information on the employment status of TVET graduates can be found. Since one of the main purposes of TVET is addressing the needs of the private sector and the creation of employment opportunities, it is essential to observe the employment situation of TVET graduates over time. The creation of employment and self-employment in Palestine is essential for economic growth in the region, tackling poverty and the frustrations of young people in Palestine, and increasing the resilience of Palestinian society by promoting peace and stability. To understand the employment effects of the activities implemented in the TVET sector, it is necessary to carry out tracer studies on a regular basis. The ETF, GIZ and Enabel launched the idea to carry out a joint tracer study which took place in 2018. GIZ is planning to redo the tracer study, using the same sample to measure the long-term impact of training activities and further understand the career path of its beneficiaries.

The Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) conducts regular surveys of the Palestinian labour force and publishes reports on their findings on an annual basis. These extensive data collection activities reach up to 30,000 households and follow the International Labour Organisation’s (ILO) standards and definitions. However, these reports, as well as the statistical yearbook of Palestine, do not provide accurate information on the relevance of the TVET sector in relation to the labour market needs. As a result, many TVET training providers and training institutions conduct their own tracer studies by using different methodologies which makes it impossible to compare results and measure real impact.
This tracer study looks at TVET graduates from GIZ’s TVET and Employment Promotion (TEP) programme and More Job Opportunities (MJO) programme, and Enabel’s Work-Based Learning (WBL) programme and Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET) programme. The study looks at the situation of the graduates at a specific moment in time, namely six months after their graduation.
1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the tracer study are:

- to collect quantitative and qualitative information on the employment situation of TVET graduates to better understand:
  - the differences in the quality of employment and employment rate in general by level, gender, specialisation, region and type of training; and
  - qualitative aspects of the transition to work, including time needed to find a job, methods of finding a job, type of employment and sustainability of employment;
- to better understand the needs and absorption capabilities of the private sector;
- to reflect on the challenges of carrying out tracer studies in Palestine; and
- to create a baseline for further activities and analysis.
2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Target groups and sample

A total of 788 graduates of a sample of 1,440 (including a 100% oversample) have been traced, meaning a response rate of 55%. The target group mainly included young people between the ages of 15 and 29. This sample was drawn from the total of 3,645 graduates from the TEP, MJO, WBL and CVET training programmes. See Annex 1 for more details on the sampling procedure.

The creation of a quantitative dataset, as the basis for analysis of the impact of training activities across Palestine, represented a challenge for the research group. Graduates had to be called six months after graduation to give them enough time to go through the process of finding employment. Due to problems concerning the reachability of graduates six months after graduation, a sample approach was selected to secure representative results. This solution had already been put into practice in the TEP programme, which has benefited from project experience in countries with similar security restrictions and conflict dynamics.

A one-stage, systematic random stratified sample was used to select the participants. The sample size was estimated to be 720 participants with a margin of error less than 6% on the overall level and a confidence interval of 95%. The following equation was used to calculate the estimation of the sample size:

\[ n = \frac{t^2 \times s^2}{e^2} \]

\[ n = \frac{1.96^2 \times (p) \times (1 - p)}{0.10^2} \]

\[ n = \frac{1.96^2 \times (0.5) \times (1 - 0.5)}{0.10^2} \]

\[ n = 89 \times 8 \. strata = 720 \]

The following strata were used during the sampling:

- region (Gaza, West Bank),
- gender (male, female),
- refugee status (refugee, non-refugee, not stated),
- programme (CVET, initial training, short-term course, WBL).

Due to the experiences of previous tracer activities, an oversample of 100% was created to ensure a sufficient response rate. This enlarged the overall sample to 1,440 graduates, of which 787 graduates were successfully traced.

2.2 Timing

To ensure an equal chance for each graduate to become part of the Palestinian workforce, it was agreed to contact the graduates between six months after graduation. The cases were separated into two cohorts to harmonise the tracing process. The first cohort of selected graduates were contacted in February 2018. The interviewers targeted 1,051 former trainees and reached a total of 531 to conduct

\[ \text{The minimum six-month time span was chosen for practical reasons to test the feasibility of the fieldwork, in particular the extent to which it was possible to trace the graduates after the end of the training. It would be useful to repeat such an exercise to see how the results change with time.} \]
interviews. The second cohort consisted of the 389 graduates left in the sample, who were called in July 2018, of which 257 were reached and interviewed. With a total of 788 graduates traced, the requirements for a representative sample were comfortably reached.

2.3 Questionnaire

A questionnaire was drafted, containing 33 questions sub-divided into four categories: (1) basic information and employment status; (2) previous and current jobs, which asked graduates to specify the number of jobs the interviewee had been working in since graduation; (3) type of employment, aimed at learning more about the employment (such as payment, working hours and sector); and (4) final questions, which required the interviewee to give their assessment of the training’s impact on their employment situation and recorded further data.

To collect all the necessary information, the questionnaire was translated into Arabic and telephone calls were conducted with the graduates. The interviewers were trained carefully on how to conduct the calls beforehand, since various types of training had been offered by different providers, which led to a diverse focus group of people to be interviewed. Each question was also separately discussed with the callers to give them the ability to rephrase questions and interpret answers.

2.4 Tools for data entry and analysis

A research centre was contracted to conduct the telephone interviews. The information given during these phone calls was filled in by the interviewers on an online and user-friendly survey tool. This data was then exported and analysed in the statistical analysis programme SPSS. Analysis was conducted for all questions and disaggregated according to gender, area, refugee status and employment status.
3. RESULTS

This section provides some insight information on how the graduates that participated in this tracer study are behaving in the labour market and how the transition from school to work has happened.

3.1 Definitions

- **Employed** is a person who is currently in employment. The international definition of employment has been used which means that, for the purpose of this tracer study, people who worked at least one hour in the previous week were considered employed.

- The **employment rate** is calculated by dividing the total number of graduates employed by the total number of graduates who have participated in the survey. It is sometimes referred to as ‘employment to population ratio’. See note on the interpretation of the employment rate below.

\[
\text{employment rate (ERT)} = \frac{\text{graduates employed}}{\text{total number of graduates}}
\]

- **Self-employed** is a person currently running their own business.

- **Student** is a person who is in education or training.

- **Unemployed** is a person who is currently not working and is looking for a job. The unemployment rate is calculated by dividing the total number of unemployed people by the total number of graduates that are active in the economy (unemployed + employed).

\[
\text{unemployment rate (URT)} = \frac{\text{graduates unemployed}}{\text{graduates unemployed} + \text{employed}}
\]

- **Unemployed not looking for a job** is self-explanatory.

- **NEET** refers to those who are not in employment, education or training. It refers to those who are unemployed but who are also inactive and not studying. The rate of NEETs is calculated by dividing the total NEETs by the total population of graduates.

\[
\text{NEET rate (NEET)} = \frac{\text{graduates not in employment, education or training}}{\text{total number of graduates}}
\]

3.2 Key labour market indicators

This section provides statistical information on the labour market situation based on the results of the tracer study.

NOTE

The employment rate calculated for this tracer study is based on the international definition, where the number of employed persons is divided by the population of the same age group (see above). The PCBS defines the employment rate as the number of employed persons divided by the active population of the same age. Therefore, these two approaches of calculating the employment rate cannot be directly compared.
Six months after graduation, 16% of TVET graduates are continuing their studies, and the rest are split fairly evenly between working and not working. Almost 38% are employed and 5% more are self-employed. Almost 35% are unemployed, and an extra 7% are not working nor looking for a job. Males are more likely to be employed and/or continuing their studies than females, who often end up unemployed or even lose hope of finding a job. In fact, 15% of female graduates are unemployed and not looking for a job, as they stopped actively participating in the labour market.

**FIGURE 3.1 KEY LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS BY GENDER**

The employment rate of graduates is slightly higher than 40%; the unemployment and NEET rates are similar. The female contribution to the economy is lower than that of males, while the rate of unemployment and NEET is much higher for females than for males.

In general, women in Palestine have a particularly complicated employment situation, often combining housework with micro-businesses at home or occasional or seasonal work.
The situation in Gaza is worse than in the other areas. The employment rate stands at 20%, while the unemployment rate goes beyond 70%, and the NEET rate is around 60%, which means that one in two TVET graduates in Gaza does not continue to either study or work. In the rest of Palestine, around half of the graduates are working, and the unemployment rate is between 28% and 39%. In the West Bank, Area C performs slightly worse than Area A and B and the Israel Territories.

The TEP programme by GIZ and WBL programme from Enabel are the most successful programmes in easing the labour market transition of graduates. By contrast, graduates from the CVET and MJO programmes have more difficulty finding employment and are more likely to remain unemployed or NEET. This is due to the fact that half of the initiatives on CVET programmes were implemented in Gaza, where employment opportunities are scarce.
3.3 Transition to work

The transition from education to employment is clearly very challenging in Palestine. Even though the educational system has been continuously improved, with TVET becoming an important pillar, the lack of opportunities due to the economic decline has led to high unemployment numbers and a growing informal sector that is not able to absorb the graduates coming into the labour market each year. Young people are the most vulnerable when it comes to finding employment due to a lack of skills and experience. Young women in particular are often found outside the labour market.

Long periods of unemployment lead to labour market inactivity, often followed by enrolment into education and training or family responsibilities as well as housework.

The highest degree of job security can be found in the public sector, but it is unable to absorb all university graduates. TVET graduates find themselves in the very dynamic private sector, where the turnover in workers is high and salaries are low.

3.3.1 Time spent finding a job

The survey asked graduates of the GIZ and Enabel training programmes when they had found their first employment. This made it possible to gain information about their first employment after the training, without it necessarily being the employment situation they were in at the time of the interview. Since fluctuation on the labour market is very dynamic, it was important to take this into account. The phrasing also left room for graduates to specify if they had been employed before and during the training. The graduates could further specify if they had found employment directly after graduation, one month, one to three, three to six, or even over six months after they had received the training.

**FIGURE 3.4 TIME UNTIL FINDING EMPLOYMENT BY GENDER**

Of the interviewees, 32% declared that they had been working before the training or that they had not graduated. More than 30% of the graduates found employment directly after the training. If we do not consider the category ‘other’, this amounts to one in two graduates that were employed directly after the training. A further 7.7% found their job one month later. Around 10% took three to six months and almost 12% took over six months to find a job. For most of the trainees seeking employment after their graduation and not being employed straight away, the transition phase was one to three months, accounting for almost 20% of the interviewees who found employment.
Gender differences are small when it comes to the transition period, the highest being a 5% difference between males and females finding employment directly after graduation. In other words, 35.5% of employed males and 30.2% of employed females found a job directly after finishing the training. Almost 5% of male and 6% of female respondents faced a transition time of less than a month. One to three months after graduation, 15.6% of females were still looking for employment. Slightly fewer males (12.9%) took the same time to find their first job. When it comes to the longest transition time (more than six months), we find that the percentage of female respondents is substantially higher (11.5%) compared to their male counterparts (7%), while the two groups are basically even in the period of three to six months (female 7%, male 7%).

### TABLE 3.2 TIME UNTIL FINDING EMPLOYMENT BY AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In which area is your employment located?</th>
<th>When did you get your first employment?</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directly after the training (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Less than 1 month after graduation (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within 1–3 months of graduation (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Within 3–6 months of graduation (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 6 months after graduation (%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bank Area A+B</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bank Area C</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaza Strip</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Jerusalem</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel/settlements</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost 54% of graduates who found employment in the Gaza Strip found their job directly after graduation. This is the highest rate from all the areas observed in this study, followed by Area A+B (almost 52%) and Area C (almost 49%). Transition into the world of work is most diverse in East Jerusalem, where only 35% of respondents found their employment directly after graduation. The rest of the respondents were then spread out over the other time intervals possible. Finding work in the settlements or Israel shows a similar picture. In the West Bank, 4.6% (in Areas A+B) and 12.2% (in Area C) of the graduates found employment less than a month after graduation, 21.8% (Areas A+B) and 22.0% (Area C) took up to two months longer. Whereas 9.1% of the graduates in Area A+B and 7.3% in Area C took between three and six months, and 11.9% (12.7% Area A+B and 9.8% Area C) found employment after over six months. Interestingly, there are similar patterns for Gaza when it comes to the time young people take to find a job following the training period.

When comparing the different training programmes examined in this study, 55% of graduates from CVET trainings were in employment directly after graduation and in total 80% of the CVET trainees were in employment one month after graduation. Short-term training on the MJO programme had 81% of graduates in employment one month after completing their training. The long-term initial training course had 72% of their graduates find employment straight away (33%) or one month after graduation (39%). For graduates of WBL programmes, 21% found a job straight away and 49% found one after one month. The GIZ short-term courses had an employment rate of 65% one month after graduation. A longer training-to-work transition (after three to six months or more) can be seen with the long-term initial training courses (25%) and the WBL programmes (30%).
3.3.2 Movement of people to find work

### TABLE 3.3 EMPLOYMENT IN OR OUTSIDE THE AREA OF RESIDENCE – MOVEMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In which area is your residence located?</th>
<th>In which area is your employment located?</th>
<th>Not employed (%)</th>
<th>Other areas (%)</th>
<th>West Bank Area A+B (%)</th>
<th>West Bank Area C (%)</th>
<th>Gaza Strip (%)</th>
<th>East Jerusalem (%)</th>
<th>Israel/settlements (%)</th>
<th>Total N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Bank Area A+B (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>45.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bank Area C (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>46.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>24.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaza Strip (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Jerusalem (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>52.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside of the Palestinian territories (%)</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total N                                 |                                          | 410              | 3              | 182                    | 58                  | 90              | 31                  | 13                     | 787     |

The situation in the West Bank often makes it necessary for graduates to find employment in a different area than the one in which they reside. This is especially the case if the graduates come from Area C, where restrictions in development due to the regulations implemented by Israel limit the options of finding employment or founding a business. Therefore, many young people move to the cities to find a job. Movement to and from East Jerusalem or the Gaza Strip is very limited and graduates living in East Jerusalem and Gaza in most cases do not leave their place of residence to find employment. The number of graduates leaving Palestine to work in Israel are not represented here. It is assumed that the number of trained TVET graduates finding work in Israel is high and in most of the cases, these graduates are more difficult to reach.

3.3.3 Jobs per sector

When focusing on the sectors the graduates ended up working in, it can be observed that transition to the labour market was straight for young people working in carpentry (88.9% direct employment after graduation), automotive (75% direct employment after graduation) and electricity (62.5% direct employment after graduation) sectors, while a high percentage ended up in the agricultural sector after a long job hunt. The service (27% employed after six months), beauty (22% employed after six months) and communication (20% employed after six months) sectors show long transition times as well, with 27% of beauty and 28.6% of agricultural sector graduates becoming self-employed, accounting for a possibly longer transition phase while establishing their business.

3.3.4 Job-finding methods

An important reason for the high unemployment rate in Palestine lies in the lack of effective matching activities to connect the supply and demand side of the labour market. In the National Employment Strategy, the National TVET Strategy as well as the Labour Sector Strategy, the Palestinian Authority emphasised the need for a systematised approach to tackle unemployment. The public employment services have therefore created one-stop-shops on a local level to offer jobseekers access to guidance and counselling. In the National Policy Agenda 2017–2022, focus is directed to providing better services for Palestinian citizens, such as employment services. However, the available data suggests that matching activities have had a limited impact so far.

Besides government services, web-based services like jobs.ps or platforms like LinkedIn, there are also other ways for young Palestinians to find a job.
Despite the effort made and resources created to make job searching easier, in the Palestinian context, family and friends helped over 82% of graduates with the transition into the workforce. Only 1% of graduates successfully found their position with help of the services offered by the one-stop-shops.

The gender disaggregated results show that men rely even more than women on the support of friends and family to begin their professional career. Although women also count on family ties to get into employment, 11% use networks built up during their training and almost 15% use newspapers or job portals, while only 7% of men found their job through networks and 4% through newspapers or portals.

The training-based networks also speed up the transition period, since the data indicates that 75% of the interviewees found employment directly after graduation when relying on networking during the training period. Almost half of the jobseekers found employment through family and friends shortly after completion. For 60% of the jobs found through job portals or newspapers, the transition phase took three months or longer.

In East Jerusalem, almost 13% of graduates use newspapers and job portals, which might be an influence of the more formal Israeli labour market.
Journalism, IT and education can be identified as sectors that rely on more formal approaches to recruiting employees. In these sectors, jobs were mostly found through newspapers and job portals. Moreover, positions filled through announcements in newspapers and job portals are proven to be more stable: 92% of the people who found their job this way were in the same job at the time of questioning. With jobs found through family members, this rate drops to 74%. Just over half (52%) of the graduates employed through networking are still employed, plus 7% in self-employment, but of the people in waged employment, 15% are looking for better employment\(^2\). Of the graduates using the services of the one-stop-shops 67% remain employed, but almost 70% have changed jobs up to two times since graduation.

It is especially interesting to see that when it comes to the type of training, finding a job through family and friends ranges between 70% and 90% of the interviewed graduates. The MJO programme and its community-based approach has the highest number of matchings through family (90%), while this figure is 74% for the short-term TEP programme courses, since much of the training took place in East Jerusalem, where a large number of jobs are found through job portals and announcements in newspapers. WBL activities display matching through family to account for 80%, but still have the highest level of recruitment through networks (15%) of all training formats.

### 3.3.5 Types of employment

Many graduates find their first employment in waged employment, where they face many difficulties such as low payment, transportation problems, hazardous working conditions and bad working hours (Sadeq, 2016). Many labour laws remain unenforced and the scarce employment opportunities drive young people to take every position that is offered to them.

**FIGURE 3.7 TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT**

Most of the graduates can later be found in waged employment. For this tracer study, 69% of female interviewees and 74% of male interviewees categorised their employment as ‘paid work’.

When it comes to self-employment, there are almost twice as many women (17%) as men (9%) who state they are self-employed. A further 7% of women call themselves a business owner, compared to almost 10% of men. Combining the two (i.e. self-employed and business owner), this means 24% of

\(^2\) These numbers should be taken carefully since we are talking about very low numbers.
women classify themselves within this category, which is 5% more than men. In both genders, between 5% and 6% work in a paid job for their family and a surprisingly low number of women (1%) and men (2%) work in family businesses without payment.

When owning a business, 68% of interviewees stated that the business was founded by themselves, while 32% have taken over the family business.

When asked about salary increases, 29% of women and 27% of men stated that their salary had increased compared to their previous salary as a result of the training. However, 69% of women and 67% of men said they had not received a pay rise as a result of the training at the time of interview. This high percentage is due to the fact that many will have entered their first employment after the training and will be earning their first salary, meaning they have no point of comparison. It is worth noting that continuous education courses and short-term measures target young people to improve their employment situation or further professionalise young people. Therefore, the highest increases in payment can be found as a result of short-term training on the MJO programme (41%) and following Enabel’s CVET programme (36%).

In this study a small number of unpaid workers for non-family businesses are solely found in Area C, and an even share of graduates from Areas A+B and C as well as Gaza were working in a family business without payment. In East Jerusalem, 94% of graduates who found employment have become paid workers. The other 6% have opened a business. A quarter (25%) of graduates in Gaza have set up their own businesses or were self-employed by the time of the interview. In Area A+B, this percentage is only 19%, and 21% in Area C, pointing to the limited wage employment opportunities in the Gaza Strip, where only 62% of interviewees were in paid employment, compared to 75% in Area A+B and 70% in Area C.

Around 20% of men and women worked on demand (21% women, 22% men), almost half of them (48%) in Gaza. About 7% of men and double the number of women (14%) worked part-time. Over two-thirds (70%) of men have found full-time positions and 61% of women worked 40 hours a week or more. While this form of employment makes up almost 75% in Areas A+B and C, only 43% of graduates have a similar position in the Gaza Strip. Of the graduates who are resident in East Jerusalem and in employment, a total of 94% were working full-time or more.

**FIGURE 3.8 SALARY INCREASE**

The training had a lower impact on payment rates than expected, with almost 70% of men and women indicating that their salary had not increased after the training. Since the graduates were interviewed a couple of months after graduation, it can be assumed that the effect might be delayed.
3.3.6 Sustainability of employment (temporary vs permanent positions)

Data shows that fluctuation on the labour market is high in Palestine and jobs are unstable.

Of the graduates who were unemployed or in training six months after graduation, 10% had at least one job before the interview (29% of them even had two to three jobs) but lost it again. Overall, 17% of all graduates interviewed had more than one position before being interviewed about their employment situation.

The sustainability of employment is influenced by several factors. In some cases, the skills acquired through the training do not match the labour market needs and therefore the graduates lose their position after a short time. For some years now, the private sector has been indicating that many newly employed young people quit their jobs after a short time due to the low payment and quality and type of job role.

**FIGURE 3.9 TEMPORARY CONTRACTS BY GENDER, AREA AND SECTOR**

![Bar chart](chart)

Over half of the women (58%) state that they are employed in temporary positions, while 39% of men are in temporary jobs.

The highest percentage of temporary positions can be found in Gaza, where the economic situation favours seasonal work. Over half (60%) of graduates interviewed from Gaza have found only temporary positions in the Gaza Strip. In East Jerusalem, 80% of trained young people have found stable positions, while in the West Bank, the rate of temporary positions is around 40% for Area A+B and 44% for Area C.

When focusing on the sectors, seasonal work is found predominantly in the agricultural sector, where 81% of interviewees do not have permanent positions. The communication sector also has a high percentage of unsustainable positions (73%), since the design and multimedia sector undergoes a lot of fluctuation. The construction sector also produces unstable employment (54%). Of the graduates in construction, 9% work in the Israeli Settlements, but with the low response rate and the limited reach of surveys like this, the number of graduates working in construction in Israel ought to be much higher. That said, in the West Bank and Gaza, this sector offers only a limited number of sustainable positions.
The most sustainable positions are offered to graduates working in the tourism sector, where 91% of the trained young people are permanently employed, followed by carpentry (83%), automotive (78%) and the service sector (69%). A short period after graduation, 56% of positions were permanent. The high employment rate in each sector can be ascribed to the low number of respondents. Therefore, a possible follow-up tracer study in 2019 could assess the validity and sustainability of these results.

Regarding the type of training, in particular, short-term training through the MJO programme (52%) and the CVET programme (62%) lead people to temporary positions. The TEP short-term training, which combines training with internships and matching, the TEP initial training courses, which offer extensive training for up to 24 months, and the Enabel’s WBL programme, which trains young people with the support of companies and employers, have a higher success rate of getting people into permanent positions. While the graduates of the TEP short-term courses end up in stable positions 67% of the time, the initial training courses are successful in producing sustainable employment in 62% of all cases (six months after graduation). Enabel’s WBL programme enables 55% of its graduates to find permanent employment half a year after graduation.
4. CRITICAL REFLECTION ON THE DATA COLLECTION

For several years, the ETF, GIZ and Enabel have been promoting results-based monitoring to measure the employment rate of graduates enrolled in their training activities. This is a challenging task, since monitoring and evaluation departments need to trace young graduates a fixed amount of time after completion of the training, achieve a sufficient reach and verify quantitative results against qualitative data gathered. Over the years, both GIZ and Enabel have conducted several tracer studies of TVET graduates within their programmes according to different methodologies and have experienced different challenges and results as a consequence. Tracer results could differ strongly depending on the methodology used to implement the tracer. Variations in the questionnaire have very important consequences on the final creation of indicators (e.g. employment rate and unemployment rate). Therefore, it is very important that all national and international institutions agree on a common methodology to implement tracer studies.

One critical question that varies across questionnaires is the interpretation of the term ‘employment’. Different studies have used different definitions of employment and paid work. Recently, the PCBS has implemented the resolution of the 19th Conference of Labour Statisticians. One of the critical points is that this resolution refers to different forms of work that might not be captured by the traditional question about whether somebody worked for pay or profit in the last four weeks. Many young Palestinians do work for a couple of hours that is either paid or unpaid. All these forms of work are now captured by the National Labour Force Survey, and should in the future also be captured in tracer studies carried out by the PCBS. The questionnaire for this tracer study has been adapted accordingly and it defines someone who has work as ‘a person that has been working for more than one hour during the previous week’.

Variations on the way graduates are reached may also influence the results. The response rate could differ significantly according to the method of acquiring the data. Both Enabel and GIZ experienced many difficulties reaching graduates for several reasons.

- Young people in Palestine have a habit of often changing phone numbers, with graduates becoming unreachable within months of graduation. It should be investigated if this correlates with their employment situation.
- Female graduates can often only be reached through family members.
- Labour migration to Israel, where the graduates may benefit from higher salaries and better working conditions. In this case, graduates often change their contact details or place of residence.
- Young people may use email less than social media platforms such as Facebook. Therefore, social media should be used as a first tool to collect information about the job-finding process.
- Online questionnaires are often not completed by graduates due to the lack of trust in surveys. In addition, graduates may not answer surveys if they work in Israel or they might assume that the organisation that runs the survey, particularly if framed as GIZ or Enabel, will offer them a job.

To make data collection sustainable, a comprehensive contact database should be built when the students are still in training. This will make it possible to conduct further follow-up tracer studies and track young people and their employment situation. It is also important to build awareness among students about the importance of such surveys.

Looking at data from previous tracer studies and the experience of this joint exercise, we have found that face-to-face interviews provide the highest response rate, followed by phone calls and Facebook. Survey links sent through email or SMS text message were regarded as the least reliable.
5. CONCLUSIONS

The main objective of this tracer study was to provide information on the employment status of TVET graduates in four different programmes offered by GIZ and Enabel, according to gender, specialisation, region and type of training, as well as to provide insights into qualitative aspects of a graduate’s search for employment, the type of contract and how sustainable the job is.

The key conclusions are the following:

- Male graduates are more likely to be employed or at least continue their studies, whereas female graduates face higher unemployment and NEET rates. There are numerous reasons for the high unemployment and low labour market participation rates for women in Palestine, including a culture that discourages female participation in the labour market, wage discrimination, cultural and safety limitations on female mobility between areas, and lack of supportive legislation (Hillis et al., 2018). Partly because of these limitations, women in Palestine turn to self-employment more often than men, which is also reflected in the data presented in the Hillis et al. study.

- The most disadvantaged areas are Gaza and Area C in the West Bank which face higher unemployment rates as well as lower levels of continuation of studies.

- Carpentry, automotive and electricity-based vocations have the highest employment rates. Services, beauty and communication jobs have lower employment rates, which can also be attributed to the higher participation of women in these vocations.

- The majority of employed graduates found employment straight after training or within three months of graduation, across areas and with minor differences in gender.

- There seems to be a high rate of labour migration of trainees finding employment in areas away from their home residence. This is especially true for Area C in the West Bank, where lack of job opportunities drives them to migration. Exceptions to this are the employed graduates from Gaza and East Jerusalem because of mobility restrictions.

- The majority of graduates still find their jobs through personal networks. This can partly be attributed to the informal economy of Palestine, the lack of public career-matching services and the lack of public use of online platforms and websites in general. However, it seems that programmes that include a WBL or apprenticeshp component make it possible for the trainees to establish new networks and find employment in this way as well.

- Sustainable employment (permanent jobs) seems to vary strongly according to gender, area, length of training and sector. Graduates from Gaza seem to have less sustainable job opportunities and end up in temporary positions. Graduates from East Jerusalem find the most sustainable employment, possibly because of the proximity of the more stable Israeli labour market. Similarly, women face higher rates of temporary employment. The most sustainable sectors in the programmes include carpentry, auto mechanic, services and tourism. Interestingly, it seems that the longer the training, the more chance the graduates have to find sustainable employment afterwards. Shorter programmes, on the other hand, correlate more with temporary positions.

- At least a quarter of employed graduates from the analysed programmes found jobs with improved wages.

These findings provide a first insight into the challenges and opportunities that young TVET graduates encounter when entering the Palestinian labour market.
Challenges include:
- unstable job opportunities and temporary employment;
- gender discrimination; and
- difficulties with mobility between areas.

Opportunities include:
- potential for self-employment for women;
- correlation of apprenticeships with improved networks and sustainable employment;
- untapped potential of one-stop-shops;
- growing TVET sector.
6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the experience gained from implementing this joint tracer study, a series of recommendations have been identified.

Combining quantitative and qualitative methods

Using only quantitative research methods (particularly if they are exclusively online) has proven to have its limitations regarding the reach and reliability of the data. Operating a questionnaire with limited outcomes that do not capture the whole reality may lead to not very informative or even inaccurate data.

A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods has been proven to have the best reach and reliability, while still offering the option of analysing data in a quantitative way. Low reach can be tackled by using a sampling methodology and having personal contact with the graduates through an interview in person or by phone. Since the survey would then become expensive and labour intensive, using sampling methods might help alleviate the excessive cost. Low reliability can be tackled by improving the questionnaire and updating questionnaires according to information collected during previous tracer experiences.

The objective would be to go for a national tracer study, with a unified methodology, instead of different methodologies applied to different parts of the same population.

Adapting the definition of ‘work’ and ‘employment’ and using a unified questionnaire

Future tracer studies conducted in Palestine may benefit from the new ILO definition of ‘work’, which is broader than ‘employment’. This might also allow comparison of the indicators collected in the tracer study with those collected by the PCBS.

Future studies should also take into account the existence of the informal economy in Palestine and the prevalence of micro-businesses at home and short-term and seasonal jobs.

Both the definition of ‘work’ and ‘employment’ and the capture of informal work are two critical components to achieve the broader objective: to have a unified national questionnaire that can be used for carrying out tracer studies. This common questionnaire should be aligned with the PCBS and be used by all the different actors (e.g. government, non-governmental organisations and donors).

Focusing more on the different types of employment

This tracer study was designed to evaluate the success of different training programmes in terms of sustainable employment and good-quality positions of the graduates. Cases of underemployment and partial employment (that were not within the scope of the tracer study) might not have been detected due to the method of data collection.

A similar tracer study conducted by Enabel captured up to 32% of underemployed and partially employed training graduates by using multiple questions and methods which then resulted in an overall employment rate of 83.7% (Hilal, 2018).

Adjustments in the method of questioning and the design of the questionnaire can further sharpen the picture of the diverse forms of employment that can be found in Palestine today. The Jobs Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit from the World Bank is a good example of how employment status can be investigated more thoroughly.
Comparing data

The created data and analysed results help to reach a better understanding of the training and employment situation in the Palestinian complex environment. While it has been shown that the created sample made it possible to compare different training formats of the selected donors and the possible differences between genders and areas, a broader scope would make it possible to gain insights on a wider scale. Future studies should therefore include a comparison with other data, be it national data, possible identified comparison groups or higher education graduates.
# Annexes

## Annex 1. Sampling overview

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## GIZ MORE JOB OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAMME – SHORT-TERM COURSES

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## GIZ TVET AND EMPLOYMENT PROMOTION PROGRAMME – SHORT-TERM COURSES

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</table>
Annex 2. Questionnaire

Basic information and employment status

1. Did you graduate from the training/course in question?
   - Yes
   - No

2. Please state your full name

3. Please state your email address

4. What is your age?

5. What is your gender?
   - Female
   - Male

6. Marital status
   - Single
   - Engaged
   - Married
   - Divorced
   - Widowed

7. What governorate do you reside in?
   - Bethlehem governorate
   - Hebron governorate
   - Jenin governorate
   - Jericho governorate
   - Jerusalem governorate
   - Nablus governorate
   - Qalqilya governorate
   - Ramallah and Al-Bireh governorate
   - Salfit governorate
   - Tubas governorate
   - Tulkarm governorate
   - Gaza (North Gaza, Gaza City, Middle Gaza, Khan Younis, Rafa)
8. In which area is your residence located?

- West Bank Area A+B
- West Bank Area C
- Gaza Strip
- East Jerusalem
- Outside the Palestinian territories

9. Do you have UNRWA [United Nations Relief and Works Agency] refugee status?

- Yes
- No
- The interviewee does not know
- Other (please specify) :

10. What was the title of the training you received?

11. How would you evaluate the training?

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good

12. How would you evaluate the performance of the trainer?

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good

13. What is your current employment situation?

- I am employed
- I am working but looking for a job
- I am running my own business
- I am training/studying and looking for a job
- I am training/studying and not looking for a job
- I am not working but looking for a job
- I am not working and not looking for a job
14. Is your business...
- founded by you?
- a family business?

Previous and current jobs

15. How many different jobs have you had since graduation? (If they are currently working, it is 1)
على كم وظيفة حصلت بعد التدريب؟ (إذا كانوا يعملون حاليا فانجواب هو 1)
- None
- 2 to 3
- More than 3

Employment

16. Were any of your previous jobs related to the training you did? Did you work in the job that you were trained for?
هل كانت أي من وظائفك السابقة تتعلق بالتدريب الذي التحقت به؟ هل عملت في الوظيفة التي تم تدريبك عليها؟
- No, none
- Yes, 1
- Yes, 2 to 3 of my jobs
- Yes, more than 3 of my jobs

17. When did you get your first employment?
بعد كم شهر تمكنت من الحصول على عمل
- Directly after the training
- Less than 1 month after graduation
- Within 1–3 months after graduation
- Within 3–6 months after graduation
- More than 6 months after graduation
- Other (please specify)

18. How many jobs do you currently have?
كم عدد الوظائف لديك حالياً?
- 1 job
- 2 jobs
- More than two jobs
- Other

19. What type of work do you have at the moment?
- Self-employed
- Business owner
- Unpaid work
20. Do you work part-time or full-time?

- Unpaid work (in family business)
- Paid work
- Paid work (in family business)

21. What is the duration of your employment?

- Permanent position (with no specific end date)
- Temporary position (with a specific end date, including seasonal, freelance and short-term contracts)

22. Has your salary increased as a result of the training?

- No previous salary
- Yes
- No
- Yes, by another percentage. By what amount/percentage?
- Other (please specify)

23. If you have found a job, in which sector are you currently working?

- Textile
- Automotive
- Carpentry
- Construction
- Agriculture
- Food processing/catering/hotel services
- Electricity
- Heating, ventilation and air conditioning
- Journalism
- Health
Company name

Location

24. (Not to be filled out for self-employed) Please enter the name and location of the company you are working for ما هو اسم و موقع الشركة التي تعمل بها

25. How did you find your current job?
- One-stop-shop
- Newspaper/online job portal
- Family members/friends
- Through the network built up during the training
- Other (please specify)

26. In which area is your employment located?
- West Bank Area A+B
- West Bank Area C
- Gaza Strip
- East Jerusalem
- Israel/settlements
- Outside the Palestinian territories

Final questions

27. Do you believe the training enabled you to find employment?
- Yes
- No

28. Please state your mobile number

"TRACING TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION GRADUATES IN PALESTINE* | 36"
29. To be filled by the interviewer: In which area is your residence located? (at the time of the training)

- West Bank Area A+B
- West Bank Area C
- Gaza Strip
- East Jerusalem
- No Information

30. To be filled by the interviewer: Refugee status (from the list)

- Refugee
- Non-refugee

31. To be filled by the interviewer: Sponsor of the training in question (from the list)

- MJO
- TEP
- BTC

32. To be filled by interviewer: How long was/were the training/studies?

33. Interviewee # - رقم المبحوث

34. Enumerator # - رقم الباحث
# ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tr>
<td>CVET</td>
<td>continuous vocational education and training</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enabel</td>
<td>Belgian Development Agency</td>
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<td>ETF</td>
<td>European Training Foundation</td>
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<tr>
<td>GIZ</td>
<td>Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MJO</td>
<td>More Job Opportunities (GIZ programme)</td>
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<td>NEET</td>
<td>not in employment, education or training</td>
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<td>PCBS</td>
<td>Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics</td>
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<td>TEP</td>
<td>TVET and Employment Promotion (GIZ programme)</td>
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<td>technical and vocational education and training</td>
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<td>WBL</td>
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REFERENCES


Hilal, R., ‘WBL initiatives, graduates’ tracer study report (Enabel)’, Optimum for Consultancy and Training, April 2018 (unpublished).


Where to find out more

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