



International Labour Organization
Regional Office for Arab States

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National Consultation on Youth Employment in Jordan

ILO and ECOSOC consultation aims to facilitate open dialogue and create national platform for interaction on youth employment in Jordan

Beirut (ILO News) - The International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) have together organized a national consultation on youth employment in Jordan on Thursday 19 April 2012, in a bid to map out current activities, and identify potential synergies.

The consultation brought together around 40 representatives of relevant stakeholders, including government, workers' and employers' organizations, international development partners, civil society, and youth organizations, with the aim of reaching a common understanding on the issues at hand, improving coordination, and sharing good practices from the relevant policies and interventions. The consultation ultimately seeks to create a national platform for interaction and coordination on youth employment issues so as to strengthen the combined impact of youth employment initiatives on a national level.

This consultation is the third in a series of events organized by the ILO regional office for the Arab states and one of fifty national events held globally ahead of the International Labour Conference which in June 2012 will focus on the 'Youth Employment Crisis'.

The ILO Skills and Employability Specialist, Mr. Patrick Daru said "In Jordan, as elsewhere, the labour participation of young people does not only reflect the number of jobs available, but also the market relevance and quality of the jobs offered. If we want young women and men in Jordan to be active participants in the labour market, we need to tackle the business climate, the skills development system, the job quality, and gender issues, all at the same time."

"Creating job opportunities is not the sole responsibility of the government; it is the joint responsibility of the public and private sectors", said Mr. Mazen Awdeh, ECOSOC Secretary General.

On behalf of young people, Ms. Wajd Safi, Employability Specialist, International Youth Foundation indicated that "cultural stigma linked to certain professions prevents a significant number of young Jordanians particularly young women from accessing potential job opportunities."

Furthermore, Mr. Mahmud Nabulsi, Program Manager, Lothan Youth Achievement Center (LOYAC) highlighted the "...urgent need to promote the culture of internship and apprenticeship, as well as entrepreneurship among young people in Jordan."

Youth employment has featured prominently in recent popular uprisings in the region. While young people constitute 22 per cent of Jordan's burgeoning population, they make up almost half (49 per cent) the unemployed. This demands an integrated framework for tackling the issue in order to increase the outreach and the impact of current activities.

The Jordanian Government has engaged in a number of policy initiatives to address these challenges. There is also an array of programmes and projects supported by development partner agencies that address youth participation and youth employment. UN agencies in particular have implemented numerous initiatives to address the youth employment challenge directly or indirectly. These policies, programmes and initiatives will be presented and discussed at the consultation on 19 April in a bid to make the most of all agencies efforts, and improve the labour participation and the employment status of young women and men in Jordan.

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