

# Follow-up Paper

# Follow-up of the field testing at the NAF local offices for labour market activation/ active inclusion

Activity 1. 4.4

By Tibor Bors BORBELY-PECZE, International Senior Non-Key Expert

Reviewed and approved by: Luba Pavlovova, Key Expert4/Component4

Amman, May 2019

# Abbreviations

ALMM Active Labour Market Measures

EU European Union

MoL Ministry of Labour

NAF National Aid Funds

LMS Labour Market Services

IAP Individualized Action Plan

MoU Memorandum of Understanding

JSS Jordan Social Security

ILO International Labour Organisation

PES Public Employment Service

NUR National Unified Registry

PIT Personal Income Tax

SESIP Technical Assistance to the Skills for Employment and Social Inclusion for Jordan

HQ Headquarter

WB World Bank

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# Rationale

The National Aid Fund (NAF) of Jordan is currently responsible for the active inclusion and labour market integration of the NAF active age beneficiaries. This mandate was even extended recently, and currently includes new client groups. One of the roles of SESIP to design capacity building programmes on improving linkages between employment and social protection also called in the policy literature active inclusion for disadvantage groups. Therefore in April 2019 we suggested a possible model for the rearrangement of the workflow at the designated local offices of the NAF (Irbid, East-Amman and Al-Zarqa). Five new front-line tools for caseworkers were introduced, namely;

* job readiness first interview questions,
* screening interview towards ALMMs and LM services
* NAF referral form toward ALMMs and LM services
* ALMM and LMS catalogues for the three locations
* case managers’ feedback form

These suggested new front- line tools are feeding the new workflow model of the NAF local offices, including the changing relation with local offices of the MoL.

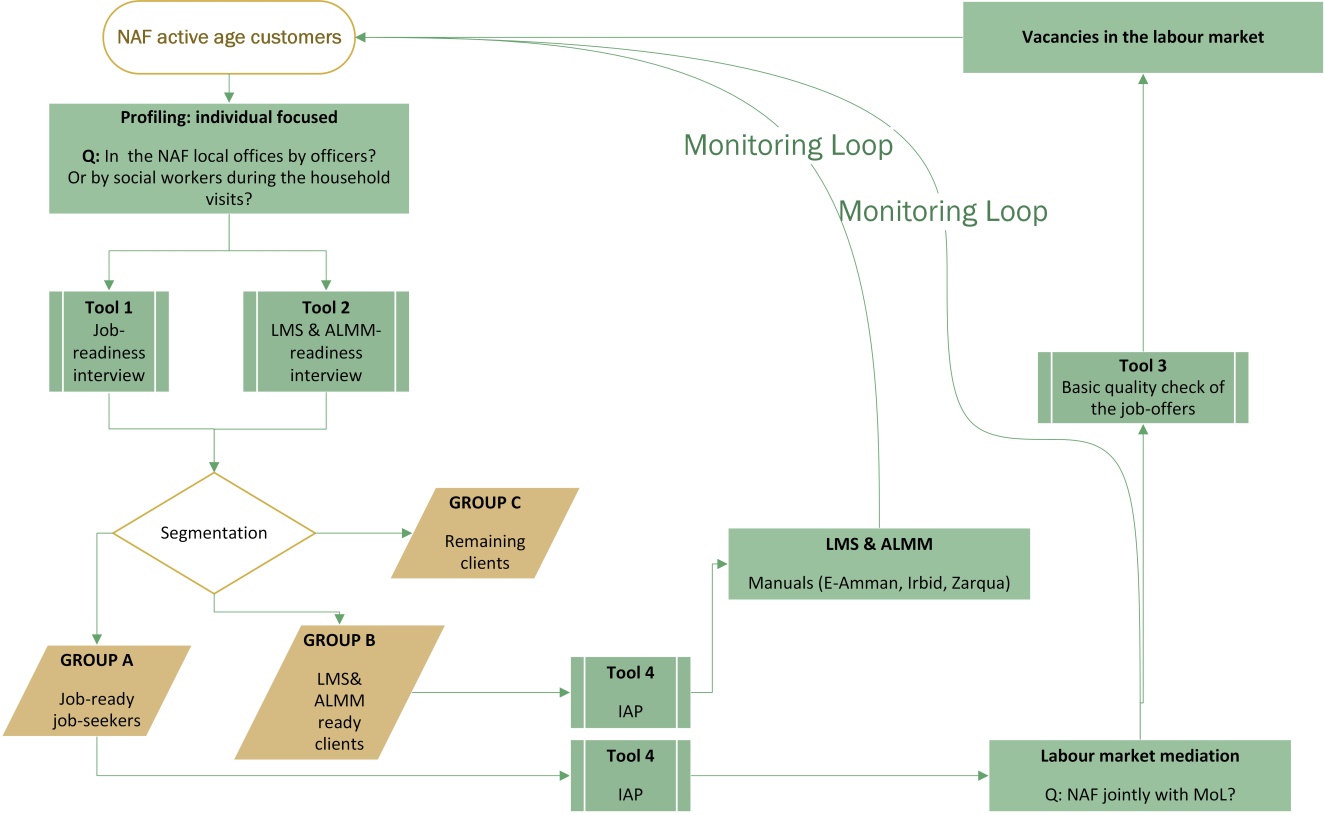
The aim of the May 2019 follow-up mission is to see the state of play in the head-offices of the NAF as well as the Employment Directorate of the MoL and in the three selected local offices. The aims are the following;

* at the cross-institutional level: making suggestion for the amendment of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between NAF and MoL
* at the institutional level supporting the capacity building of NAF concerning active inclusion/ labour market integration
* it includes the rearrangement of the workflow at the local level based on the gained experiences from the testing

The following new workflow structure was agreed by the NAF and MoL for testing (see the details in the April 2019 report). Also clear that NAF as well as the MoL are only in the beginning of the institutional journey which would transform them to a modern social inclusion and activation agency. For example the ILO offers a 21 modules class as well as handbook about the establishment and development of a Public Employment Services (ILO, 2017)[[1]](#footnote-1). The handbook was developed for emerging Asian countries but could fit to the current needs of Jordan as well. Since the SESIP Component 4 has an active operational engagement with NAF and MoL it is clear that a general assistance project cannot handle all of the difficulties these institutions have as some of them are political, others are coming from unclear policies and several are related with general management and leadership. The remaining issues are related with case management and workflow development but all of these cross-connected issues can be tackled via a project which would exclusively addresses the institutional implementation of national employment policy and labour market activation.

Flowchart No. 1.

**Active age beneficiaries of the NAF – labour market activation, the customer’s new journey**

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# First lessons learnt from the testing

During the May mission we visited the three locations where the new customers’ tools have been tested. The testing of the new workflow and tools in the three local offices ***opened up several other professional and institutional also policy issues***;

* such as the proper referral to ALMPs and LMSs.
* lack of professional training of the NAF local staff for employment and active inclusion policies
* the professional leadership within NAF Employment Directorate needs to be further strengthened
* adjustment of the NAF strategy and institutional structure
* adjusting the institutional link between the MoL and NAF (including the revision of the MoU between MoL and NAF
* lack (insufficient) of national budget for labour market activation
* integrated case management between NAF, MoL and other providers
* proper monitoring of the labour market and gathering feedbacks (LMIS)
* after the testing the new customer’s system of the NAF can be adjusted with module No. 5 (employment activation)

These issues are not new but the testing of the labour market activation tools made them visible for the local staff and also for the NAF management. These points need to be equally addressed for the development of the NAF new graduation strategy.

## Cross-institutional level

During the first weeks of the testing there were no critical points between NAF and other institutional partners. For the implementation of the employment activation / graduation strategy there are two key institutional partner types for NAF;

* for Group A the local offices of the MoL Employment Directorate
* for Group B all of the service providers regardless their civil statues, provide LMS and ALMMs. For Group B client a special LMS&ALMMs catalogue was developed by the SESIP.

Clearly the new graduation strategy of the NAF can be successful only the Fund will be able to develop strong and durable cross-institutional connections at the national level, local partnership at the municipalities’ level and multi-professional case management at the case workers level. These conditions are mainly missing at the moment.

## Institutional level

The graduation strategy, although the NAF is supposed to work with employment activation since 2016, is absolutely new for the Fund and it has no institutional capacities not at the local offices neither at the headoffice (HQ). The SESIP addresses the development of the new way of institutional thinking about the labour market and activation with establishing a new workflow at the shop-floor.

After the first feedback we gained in May 2019 this is going to be a long process which requests institutional learning and the establishment of new functional unites within NAF; methodological unit in the HQ to support the local offices. In the local offices the workload of the officers need to rearranged in order to allocate time for employment component. The local officers will need proper training.

## At the shop-floor

The most important changes can be observed at the local offices, as we called these at the shop-floor. Therefore we paid visit to the three local offices are involved in the testing phase. The effectiveness of any policy reforms is visible at the shop-floor, at the local interface between government and citizens, government and enterprises. Therefore the constant support and monitoring of the NAF local offices as well as the MoL branches is crucial. During May 2019 we visited all of the three appointed NAF branches.

### Irbid

14 of May 2019 we took a visit to the NAF local office in Irbid. This NAF branch was nominated for the testing of the new employment activation tools. On the 14th of May the local office was reporting that they received the links to the on-line tools only on the 13th of May and were not able to use those before this date. Between 10th of April and 14th of May 2019 no steps were taken unless the local staff sent the links to the job-seekers without any further explanation. The NAF head office provided different information to the local office; the new tasks for the local officers remained unclear. After the 8th of April internal training was provided by the project (SESIP) at the head office of the NAF, where the representatives of the 3 local offices were also present the chain of command wasn’t established and new task weren’t allocated at the local level. The director of the local office in Irbid reported that he hasn’t received any official letter from the NAF head office to start the testing. Since 8th of April *eight clients* were handled according the new workflow. The local officer contacted more active age beneficiary but most of them refused to come to the office for a job-readiness interview. It was estimated that 30 beneficiaries were contacted and only 8 showed up, two were referred to the employment office. The only local officer responsible for employment activation doesn’t feel herself confident in the process and asked for further on-the-job training. After the job-readiness interview was taken the local officer did not follow the new workflow and even did not realise that she need to proceed with Group A towards the local employment office. There are no customers in Group B and C at the moment as everybody accepts to be job-ready for 220 JOD gross wage. The second screening interview for Group B (active measures and services) wasn’t used so far. In other hands this is far from the reality of the labour market as informal economy is strong. In the case of group A the referrals towards to employment office were issued only a week later as the officer wasn’t aware of the reason of the exercise.

### Zarqa

On the 19th of May 2019 we visited the Zarqa office. This office received the links for the 4 on-line tools only a week ago and the new suggested workflow wasn’t clear for the local officers. The same misunderstanding and lack of coordination was reported from this local office as well. The professional coordination and the chain of command are unclear between the HQ and the local office concerning the employment activation tool testing. Within a week in May, the local officer met with 20 job-seekers and run the job-readiness interviews. These interviews were made by phones and in person as well. The local office made a list of NAF beneficiaries before the diagnosis interview, they believe is in group A. This approach makes the suggested new workflow and diagnoses tools useless. Also the local staffs are not able to make distinction between on-line Google tools and an IT system. The internal processes within NAF are unclear for the staff. The local staffs are not able to link the new suggested tools to the case management of the client. It means that either there is no individual case management within the local offices or the date is not recorded. Still the local staffs are not reading the documents. The suggested workflow is still unclear for the local officer. She is not following the manual. The local officer’s working time (only one is partly responsible for employment) is overloaded with other activities; the employment activation testing does not get any priority. The local officers are making their own targets, cumulating 50 interviews before taking any actions. With this approach they basically destroy the individual case management and make the client frustrated. The individual referral forms haven’t been issued since the start of the testing.

During the presence of the local employment officers from MoL we discussed the new workflow again, highlighted the role of the individual approach vs. group approach. The role of the local employment office vs. NAF office was discussed again as well as the feedback loop of the individual case management. The local staffs (both MoL and NAF) still have a limited understanding and a low level of professional confident to act according the new structure. 90% of the recorded vacancies of the MoL local branch recorded for the minimal wage.

So far no client was put in Group B and nobody was referred to service providers as the workflow wasn’t clear for the staff and the SESIP Manuals weren’t studied.

### East-Amman

20th of May 2019 we paid a monitoring visit to the East-Amman NAF office. This office already discussed the new workflow and the use of the new forms before the study visit to Slovakia and Austria. They printed out the 2 interviews, the referral from and the feedback from as the office staff has no internet access, they are recording the data in the evening from home. This office had received the forms almost a month earlier than the other two offices had reported. The linked to the Google forms were received only in early May. Already 106 beneficiaries were called for job-readiness interview and 30 of them were already placed in factories. The MoL local office was not contacted. The local officers of NAF took their own car to do a follow up visit in the factory. The beneficiaries were hired a day before the local visit so they are not yet recorded in the Social Security Corporation. The job readiness interviews were made by two colleagues of the local NAF office by phone or in person. The local office has been using all the five tools. Based on the catalogue the officers are already in a discussion with a training provider to refer 11 Group B clients. The job-readiness interview takes 10 minutes as an average, the same with Group B interview. The interviews are easy to use by the officers. The crucial part is the wage-request question. Most the clients are unhappy to work for the minimal wage. The requests are between 300-400 JOD. Even out of the 20 beneficiaries were placed in a factory in Jerash just a day ago 50% already left the job as the minimal wage isn’t sufficient.

With the first job-readiness interview the officers set different users’ group already;

1. has desire to work even with precariat employment opportunities,
2. beneficiaries do not have career plans
3. negative users, do not want to cooperate with NAF

The 92 Group A clients were also all transferred to the MoL local office, 82% are registered in the NEES by MoL officers. The NAF office does not use the individual referral from offered by the SESIP. The names of the beneficiaries are being sent by fax or by What’sUp. This is still not an individual case management, the MoL have to restart the process from the very beginning.

The head of the East-Amman MoL office was complaining about the employers. Employers are asking for certain age categories only, most preferably under 30 years. This is a strong prejudice based on the fact that older people usually has family obligations. The local MoL office this year has more than 2000 registered only 500 job openings and placed 400 job-seekers. Receiving the minimal wage with a combination with undeclared work plus the burden to pay all transportation costs for commuting to work create a dangerous combination. After three months the newly hired will be registered by the Social Security Coo. There is no active measure in place to support the commuting to work only for training. The NAF beneficiaries can keep the social benefits for an extra 2 years once they are hired and in certain cases NAF pays the social security for 2 more years (positive discrimination). Out of the three NAF local offices currently only East-Amman office is capable to fulfil the basic criteria of the testing. The office has limited Internet access, currently the WB donated the NAF a few tablets with internet access. These devices may be used for the testing. In East-Amman they want to keep the hardcopies as well for archive. The NAF officers have no job descriptions. The employment component now occupies 1-5% of their working time.

### Summary of the field visits

As a summary of the field visits/ monitoring visits it is clear that the local offices and namely the case managers are responsible for the graduation strategy need a stronger methodological support from the NAF HQ, also clear order are necessary for them. Changing the institutional settings has been developing since 2016, since NAF is responsible for employment also need to be changed, and it needs first of all time, secondly clear leadership. For this the role of NAF needs to be evaluated and the relation with employment policy needs to be settled. This policy level is also highly important when we are evaluating the work of the local offices and case managers. The final new workflow can be added once these open questions will be settled. However the testing of the new workflow in three locations as well as the new type of relations with other providers and the changing nature of the case management hopefully will provide more robust evidence by the end of the summer 2019.

**Table 1.**

**8th April – 20th of May 2019 Outcomes of the new workflow & tools testing in the three test branches of the NAF**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **local office** | **no. of contacted client** | **no. of job-readiness interviews made** | **Categorized to Group A** | **Group A referred to local employment office** | **Group B (for ALMMs and LMS)** | **Group B clients referred to service providers** | **Group C** | **feedback form MoL & other providers** | **day of visit** |
| **Irbid** | 30 | 8 | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14th of May |
| **Al-Zarqa** | 20 | 20 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 19th of May |
| **East-Amman** | 106 | 106 | 92 | 30\*/92\*\* | 11 | 0 | 3 | 30 | 20th of May |
| **TOTAL** | 156 | 134 | 120 | 94 | 11 | 0 | 3 | 30 |  |

updated 20th of May 2019.

### *\*MoL was not contacted but the NAF office directly contacted the factories in Jerash and Amman.*

*\*\* but all of them were transferred to the MoL local office as well*

### Simulation workshop for NAF front-line officers

The SESIP introduced new tools to support the development of the new graduation strategy of the NAF in April 2019. Five new front-line tools were offered to the NAF local offices. During the May mission we are revisiting the three local offices were appointed for the testing of the new front-line tools. One of the outcomes of these visits is that local officers and local heads of the NAF branches need strong support to introduce the new tools in practice. The NAF HQ as the employment activation task is relative new for them isn’t prepared yet for the methodological support of the local branches.

Therefore a simulation workshop was planned for 16th of May 2019 at the NAF HQ for the three local offices, including those caseworkers are engaged in employment activation and the testing of the new workflow, segmentation of the customers and to try out of the new tools.

### Trouble shooting during the simulation workshop

During the simulation workshop the following trouble shooting issues were identified;

* The NAF officers haven’t realized that they received 4 different on-line forms, we discussed again the new workflow and the role of the 4 different forms
* The local offices have received NAF tablets (donated by the WB) with 3G SIM connection so can use these temporary for recording the online forms.
* The local officers were sending out the interview questions directly to the beneficiaries, it was discussed again that these tools are for the staff to be used not for the beneficiaries.
* Also some offices directly printed the forms and sent it back to the NAF HQ in Amman, again it was discussed that the tools are for the local officers.
* The case management between the NAF and MoL local offices and ALMM/LMS providers isn’t automatized yet; referral forms need to be handled by NAF local officers.

### Recommendations

The testing of the new workflow and suggested tools to support the NAF new graduation strategy will go on until end of June/July as agreed in April 2019 and may be extended until August 2019. After a few weeks of testing the following conclusions can be made and be transferred to recommendations.

#1. The chain of command, in the field of employment activation, needs to be developed within the NAF. Currently there is a lack of clear command in NAF concerning employment activation policy. Communication between the local offices and the head office is weak. This can be covered by the new Graduation Strategy.

#2. A very detailed on-the-job training is absolutely needed at the level of the local offices as local heads and officers, case workers have limited understanding on employment activation and such and are not capable to make distinctions between job-readiness selection (profiling) and direct placement to workplaces. SESIP reacted immediately and offered a simulation exercise for the front-line case managers of the three locations. It was held at the NAF HQ on the 16th of May 2019.

#3. The cross-institutional cooperation of the NAF caseworkers is supply-driven and does not reflect the needs of the families/job-seekers but often the local officers offer solution based on the living contract with training companies. In the future, for the development of a realistic profiling, customer segmentation and individual action planning this is needed to be shifted towards a demand-driven approach.

#4. For the testing phase the role of the two institutional coordinators (Ms. Dina Hammad and Mr. Mohamed Aghannanim) needs to be reinforced as they are crucial to connect the three locations with HQs and with SESIP.

#5. Out of the three NAF local offices only East-Amman office is capable to fulfil the basic criteria of the testing. With the other two offices (Irbid, Zarqa) it is only make sense to continue the testing if the same minimal circumstances can be guaranteed. It means more than one local officer must be involved, a local head of unit must take care of the operation.

#6. Development of an in-work benefit solution of the NAF client is demanded as most of the official job offers for non-skilled labour is for the minimal wage. Currently NAF client may keep their benefit for two additional years after placement. This solution partly bridges the gap between the minimal wage (220 JOD) and the expected decent wage (300-400 JOD) of the NAF beneficiaries.

#7. Addition active measures to subsidize the commuting to work could be developed.

#8. One of the game changer steps, which need to be taken, is to introduce the individual case management within the NAF as labour mediation and LMS&ALMM management both request individual assessment.

Amman, 23rd of May 2019

## Annex Flowchart of graduation strategy of the NAF

labour market mediation

Q: NAF jointly with MoL?

LMS & ALMM : Manuals (E-Amman, Irbid, Zarqua)

transferring Group A & B to providers with IAP

feedback & follow up

Vacancies in the labour market

Remaining clients

GROUP C

Outcome 2:

LMS& ALMM ready clients

GROUP B

Segmentation

Outcome 1:

job-ready job-seekers

GROUP A

profiling: (individual focused)

Q: In the NAF local offices by officers? or by social workers during the household visits?

NAF active age customers

1. <https://www.ilo.org/asia/publications/WCMS_549677/lang--en/index.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)