Youth Unemployment in Jordan: Evaluation of the Role of Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) in Increasing Job Opportunities for Rural female Youth
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Youth Unemployment in Jordan: Evaluation of the Role of Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) in Increasing Job Opportunities for Rural Youth

Active Labor Market Programs are widely used around the world, especially during transition periods and crises. They constitute a way to stimulate labor demand and provide support to job seekers and the unemployed (Angel-Urdinola, 2010). The overarching objectives of ALMPs are to improve employability and promote job creation. In addition, they can help correct employment barriers that can arise from insufficient labor demand and the mismatch between worker skills and labor market demand. (Urdinola et al., 2013). In Jordan, Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) emerged as a policy tool to address inconsistencies between skills and information (Angel-Urdinola, 2010). This research is an evaluation of the Active Labor Market Programs conducted in rural Jordan. This research aims at determining how successful Active Labor Market Programs are increasing rural youth employment, particularly, in terms of meeting the skill demand of the labor market, as well as creation and location of jobs for rural young women, after Jordan’s economic recession in 2008. The research was carried out in two different geographical areas in Jordan, and the research tools used for this research include key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and a questionnaire survey of participants. The study found that the ALMPs that are not targeting unemployed female youth in rural areas, where they are attracting unemployed individuals with high education level, at no cost to participants and do not require minimum skills for participation. The most common types of ALMPs provided in rural Jordan are vocational training programs. However, these programs are facing various obstacles. Firstly, there are still social barriers that prevent females from joining these training programs. Secondly, the design of these programs is not based according to community needs assessment which leads to poor performance. And finally, these programs are not evaluated at any stage of implementation.
Chapter One

1.0 The Research Background

Today’s generation of young people- the Millennial Generation- is the largest cohort of youth the world has ever seen. Over 3.5 billion people, about half of the world’s population are under the age of 25. In this younger half, 1.2 billion fit the definition of “youth”- people between the ages of 15 and 24 (Hanna, A., 2014). It is of critical importance to ensure that this population of youth is engaged in employment, actively contributing to the development of their local communities and nations.

Unfortunately, youth unemployment has grown in prominence on national and global development agendas. This problem has become particularly relevant in both developing and developed countries after the collapse of Lehman Brothers in 2008 and the ensuing global recession. Kelly et al (2012) state that young people are more vulnerable to unemployment during an economic downturn. In particular, young women often find it more difficult to find decent work compared to young men, and rural youth, in general, face an additional set of barriers which are linked to their spatial isolation, and to the narrow range of opportunities which are available (Cartmel & Furlong, 2000). One in five people living in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) are between the ages of 15 and 24, the demographic group known as “youth.” The current number of youth in these regions is unprecedented—nearly 90 million in 2010 (Roudi, 2011). These young people could become the backbone of strong economies and build a vibrant future if they had the right education, skills, and job opportunities. Yet, young people entering the labour force over the past few decades have mostly faced tough job markets. So many have experienced persistent unemployment that, today, MENA’s unemployment has become a youth phenomenon. In Jordan in 2007, for example, when the country’s unemployment rate stood at 13 percent, three-quarters of the unemployed were below age 30 (Roudi, 2011).

Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) are labour market policy interventions that the welfare state uses to ‘actively’ increase the employment probability of jobseekers and decrease aggregate unemployment
ALMPs have been evaluated worldwide, and scholars have two contrasting positions on their effectiveness. On one hand, proponents of these programs argue that ALMPs can act as complementary or compensatory programs for those young people at risk of being unemployed (Biavaschi et al., 2012, P.23). The paper “Youth Unemployment and Vocational training” argues in favor of combining vocational education and training programs, which will link young people’s competencies with employers’ needs, and eventually help young people move into sustainable jobs (Biavaschi et al., 2012). On the other hand, opponents of the programs tend to summarily dismiss these programs as a waste of public money with high opportunity costs compared to other social programs (Dar& Tzannatos, 1999). In a study that was conducted by Angel-Urdinola, Kudo and Semlali (2012) that provides an institutional assessment of public employment services (PES) in a selected group of countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), the data included in this study were collected through face-to-face interviews with officers from the PES in Jordan, Tunisia, Syria and Lebanon between January 2010 and June 2011. The Results show that contrary to the international best practices, MENA countries are moving away from less costly employment services and into more expensive training and employment services, most of the programs target highly skilled unemployed youth and some of these programs target low-skilled individuals in rural areas. (Angel-Urdionla, Kudo and Semlali, 2012). Indeed similar results were shown by Angel-Urdinola et al in an earlier study in (2010) where they found that university graduates in urban areas are the main beneficiaries of ALMPs in MENA countries, and that these programs require these beneficiaries to have a minimum set of skills. Therefore, low-income members of society, most of whom have a low level of education and live in rural areas, often cannot benefit from these programs. In addition, only 5 percent of these programs target rural areas and 10 percent target women (Angel-Urdinola et.al, 2010, P.23).

The skills mismatch between labor market and education which lead to unfilled vacancies is one of the major constraints that faces unemployed rural female youth. But when this issue is addressed by providing proper trainings, hence will lead to decreasing the school-to-work transition period. This challenge is aggregated with the geographic mismatch, where jobs are mostly created in the capital while the majority
of the unemployed are located outside this area. Additionally, the lack of information about available vacancies and the inability of the unemployed rural female youth to signal their competencies are considered of the biggest challenges that face them. But by providing proper intermediation and counselling will help them to solve this challenge.

1.1 The Problem statement

It is evident from the literature that most ALMPs are open to both men and women, but women are radically underrepresented, and this is due to lack of flexibility in ALMP schedules and child care constraints (Urdinola et al., 2013). In addition, an earlier evidence shows that the implemented programs in Jordan are moving from less costly into more expensive trainings and most of the programs target highly skilled unemployed youth while some of the programs target low-skilled individuals in rural areas (Angel-Urdinola, Kuddo and Semlali, 2012). Based on data collected through surveys administered to public social, employment, and educational agencies in selected MENA countries to identify key constraints and options for reforming publicly provided employment programs. The study reveals that there is a need for rigorous program evaluations to show the best practices in the context of Jordan and to improve overall policy making (Angel-Urdinola et al., 2013, P.22). This research will therefore seek to address this lack of information by evaluating ALMPs in the context of Jordan, thereby providing potential guidance for policy makers and financiers for reforms to improve the design of new ones.

1.2 Goal and Objectives

1.2.1 Research Goal

The primary goal of this research is to apply an evaluation of active labor market programs (ALMPs) in terms of the disconnect between skills and labor market needs, and the challenge of creating jobs for rural young women after the economic recession in 2008 in Jordan.

1.2.2 Research Objectives
The objectives of this research are:

Objective 1: To determine if ALMPs are equally delivered to both unemployed male and female youth in Jordan.

1. How does the public sector regulate ALMPs and set quality standards?
2. What is the coordination and partnership among relevant stakeholders?
3. To what extent the design of ALMPs are adjusted to rural young women needs and desires?
4. To what extent the delivery of ALMPs are adjusted to rural young women needs and desires?
5. What are the key barriers to young women from participation in ALMPs?
6. What is the level of awareness young rural women have about ALMPs in their areas?

Objective 2: To determine if ALMPs are equally delivered to university graduates and lower education level participants in rural areas

1. What kind of minimum skills are required in order to participate in ALMPs training programs?
2. To what extent are ALMPs targeting low education level participants in their programs?
3. To what extent are the ALMPs enabling university graduates from rural areas to gain employment?

Objective 3: to determine if the various types of ALMPs are providing the participants with the knowledge and skills required by labor market in both the urban and rural areas of Jordan.

1. What types of programs are provided to unemployed youth in rural areas?
2. How do these programs identify labor market requirements?
3. Do these programs provide signaling to participants upon training completion to signal skills acquisition?
4. To what extent do ALMPs provide some kind of job matching services?
5. Is there collaboration between ALMPs and labor market at the local level?
1.3 Significance of the Research

1.3.1 Jordan

The Jordanian labor market faces several challenges which are summarized by Comolet, 2014: The first fact is that the working-age population in Jordan in year 2012 is above 4 million. However, economically active people only represent around 40 percent of this population. Additionally, the economically active males represent over 1 million, while the female share is only 287,720 thousand (Comolet, 2014, P. 8).

These numbers not only show that the Jordanian economy faces the challenge of improving the participation rate of the active workforce, it also shows it has been a prominent problem. It is worth to mention at this point that Jordan’s youth participation in the labor force is lower than the average in Middle East and North Africa (MENA) countries (Comolet, 2014).

In order to increase labor participation, the government of Jordan has been active in developing policies to promote youth employment. The government has placed emphasis on education and training, job creation and entrepreneurship, inclusion of youth in the labour market, and institutional reform. Active Labor Market Programs are just one type of intervention that aims to increase the allocative function of the labor market and to correct some market failure. Several studies and reviews have been conducted to evaluate the conducted ALMPs; the results of the evaluations of ALMPs are varied, sometime providing contradictory conclusions. The failures or successes of ALMPs depend on country, time period, and the specific program characteristics under consideration.

The aim of this research is to evaluate how successful ALMPs are in increasing rural female youth employment, particularly, in terms of meeting the skills demand in the labor market as well as the creation and location of jobs for rural young women in Jordan. This research will attempt to provide insight into the ALMPs provided in the Jordanian context in general, and assign a special emphasis on ALMPs provided by The Jordanian Hashemite Fund for Human Development organization (JOHUD). This organization is dedicated to promoting rights-based sustainable human development in the region. JOHUD organization aims at helping people to improve their livelihoods across Jordan and throughout 50 community development centers. Analyzing the ALMPs conducted by JOHUD organization will contribute to the
existing literature about ALMPs in Jordan, and will help policy makers to better understand the various issues pertaining to the design and implementation of these programs in Jordan.

1.3.2 Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs)

This study attempts to draw on some best practices for ALMPs as indicated in literature. Most of the ALMPs evaluations referred to in this study come from industrialized countries, though ALMPs are also found in developing countries. ALMPs in Jordan are funded and conducted by different agencies, such as international non-governmental organizations, local nongovernmental organizations, community-based organizations and governmental organizations. This research may help ALMPs managers in Jordan context to understand the needs and desires of rural female youth when designing and implementing these programs, and learn how to conduct a proper type of evaluation for their programs. In addition, as most of the funding agencies and donors support organizations bring positive changes in the lives of their beneficiaries, this study may provide an opportunity for JOHUD organization to develop training programs according to the needs of the rural female youth in order to improve their knowledge about labor market needs and as well as to induce their success in securing future job opportunities. The challenge, then, is to learn from existing ALMPs, to investigate programs that have positive returns and alter or drop programs that do not.

1.3.3 Rural Planning and Development

Unemployment affects young people from all walks of life; however, some young people are more vulnerable than others. While youth unemployment has been well researched, the majority of studies have focused on youth living in urban areas. Although many of the problems associated with unemployment that are faced by urban youth also apply to those living in rural areas, rural youth face an additional set of barriers which are linked to their spatial location and to the narrow range of opportunities that are available. Lessons learned from this research will contribute to the literature of rural planning and development and will enable the policy makers, planners, and practitioners in the development sector of Jordan to design, plan and
implement ALMPs to effectively address the issues of female youth unemployment in the rural areas of Jordan.

1.3.4 Research Limitations

Limitations are those factors that were outside of the control of the researcher, they include the following:

- The research had limited funds to carry out research activities, as such activities were executed with little cost as possible.
- Resource constraints restricted the scope of survey research. It would have been desirable to interview a wider pool of stakeholders involved in ALMPs.
- Another constraint appeared during the research. It was proposed to survey ALMPs in the JOHUD organization in Madaba and Mafraq areas. However, during the field work it was discovered that the JOHUD organization in Madaba area does not conduct any training programs. After conducting consultations with the training officer in Mafraq, the research area was changed from Madaba to Eidun area.
- The total surveyed population was 91 participants. The small size of population may not give representative results.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The literature review below is by no means comprehensive in nature; it, however, attempts to summarize the main arguments within the literature regarding youth unemployment around the world, the
MENA region, and in Jordan, regarding the emergence and types of ALMPs. Furthermore, it draws from the growing field of ALMP evaluations in order to design a framework for evaluating ALMPs in Jordan.

2.1 The Global Youth unemployment

Today’s generation of young people - the Millennial Generation - is the largest cohort of youths the world has ever seen. Over 3.5 billion people – about half of the world’s population - are under the age of 25. Youth make up 17 percent of the world’s population, and 87 percent of youth are living in the developing countries. Furthermore, youth make up 40 percent of the world’s unemployed (Global Agenda Councils, 2013). The global adult unemployment rate is 4.5 percent and the global youth unemployment rate is 12.6 percent (Global Agenda Councils, 2013). Close to 75 million youth worldwide were unemployed in 2012. Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has the highest youth unemployment rates among other regions where it reached 26.5 percent, compared to the European region 21.4 percent, and 17.4 percent in North America (Global Agenda Councils, 2013).

The labor market outlook for young people has worsened in nearly every region of the world. Youth have been hit particularly hard by the recent global economic crisis. In 2010, 358 million young people were not active in education, employment, or training (a metric called NEET – Not in Education, Employment, or Training), and this number has been growing rapidly ever since (Global Agenda Councils, 2013). In 2011, 75 million youth, aged 15–24, were unemployed; globally, young people are nearly three times as likely as adults to be unemployed (ILO, 2012). Furthermore, the global youth unemployment rates rose to 13.1 percent in 2013, from 12.9 percent in 2012 and 11.6 percent in 2007 (ILO, 2014, P.21).

Many young people worldwide are underemployed and/or work in low quality jobs that offer limited socio-economic security, few training opportunities, and poor working conditions (Misola, 2010). Furthermore, young women in many countries are much more likely to be unemployed than young men (UN, 2012). The marginalization of women in employment and training is a relevant issue globally given the potential impact on human capital. Young individuals entering the labor market are generally considered a
population at risk, exhibiting an above-average turnover rate between jobs and an increased probability of entering unemployment.

There is a significant regional variation in youth unemployment among countries, where countries of the Middle East, Africa, South Asia, and Latin America are particularly affected (United Nations [UN], 2012; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs [UNDESA], 2011). The largest increase of youth unemployment occurred in the Middle East region (ILO, 2014, P.21). This region has one of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world, with 27.2 per cent of young people in the labor force without work in 2013, versus 26.6 per cent in 2012 (ILO, 2014). Central and South-Eastern Europe (non-EU) and CIS, East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific and North Africa all witnessed a substantial increase in youth unemployment rates (ILO, 2014).

Fig. 1: GLOBAL YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 1991-2013

Source: ETF. 2014
Policy makers need to pay particular attention to young workers. As the analysis of global youth employment trends provided by the International Labour Office (ILO, 2013) illustrates, worldwide youth unemployment has remained at high levels since the sudden increase induced by the global financial crisis in 2008 (ETF, 2014).

2.2 Policies Target Youth Employment Issues around the World

Youth employment problems have various dimensions, and the extent of youth unemployment varies by region. For instance, in East Asia, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Middle East, and North Africa region, unemployment rates are higher for young women than for young men. In South Asia, Latin America, OECD, the Central and Eastern European and Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS) countries, youth unemployment rates tend to be among the less educated. While, the more educated youth suffer from high unemployment rates in the Middle East and North Africa (Betcherman et al. 2007). The literature have shown that young people face a “transition” problem; during this period youth requisite time to have experience and gain skills to find suitable jobs. This period is a difficult period for the youth as they face social and economic hardships. As a result, policy makers should select suitable interventions that can smooth the young people transition from school to work.

Worldwide the key policies for broadening youth employment opportunities start with a sound macroeconomic conditions, and a positive investment climate which will create rich employment opportunities for young people (Betcherman et al., 2007). According to the World Bank (2006) report, in response to the East Asian financial crisis in 1998, Korea has taken further steps in expanding youth unemployment insurance programs to smaller firms as well as to temporary and daily workers in order to reduce the high rates of unemployment (World Bank, 2006, P.150). Developing countries implemented other types of programs, such as the Bangladesh’s program of income generation for the development of vulnerable groups (World Bank, 2006, P.150). This program offers in-kind assistance to rural women for a period of 18 months, where they are required to save some money and participate in business training program. By graduating from training program they will be eligible for entry into microfinance program.
Recently, most European countries have changed the shift in emphasis and resource allocation from passive to active measures to assist the unemployed back to work. Active measures, such as the range of job placement, assistance and employment services, training programmes, employment subsidies and direct employment provision (Kelly et al., 2011). Furthermore, OECD countries have made changes on the strategy, design and implementation of active policy. In fact, OECD countries increased the emphasis on job search assistance, served clients and provided them with counseling through a one-stop window. In addition, OECD countries increased reliance on private sector on training delivery, employment services and public works, where the government’s role in these situations had been to establish overall priorities, ensure quality, and provide financing.

The policies and initiatives that have been taken by the governments of developed countries ranged from maintaining close partnerships with employers, and communities in order to ensure that the implemented programs respond very well to market conditions. Also these governments have encouraged “making work pay” initiatives targeting low-skilled workers to take low-pay jobs. Furthermore, the governments of developed countries have succeeded in introducing the “Profiling” method of the unemployed clients, the profiling method is a helpful tool in identifying individuals who really need the employment services or retraining assistance. Finally, the developed countries governments’ emphasized and allocated adequate resources for evaluating the programs, where they used the results of the evaluation in improving the design and implementation of ALMPs (Betcherman et al., 2004).

The OECD countries have emphasized the “activation” strategies, which is based on the principle of “mutual obligation”. The “mutual obligation” strategy implies that job seekers are encouraged to look and find work and improve, and at the same time, participate in training programs to improve their employability skills. This policy seeks to improve beneficiaries’ personal, social, and vocational skills, and help them plan, and implement individual employment and career plans (Kelly et al., 2011). The “New Deal for the Young Unemployed” program conducted in Great Britain, which aims to help young people (between 18- and 24 years) who have been unemployed and claiming jobseeker’s allowance for more than six months. The program offered jobseekers job search assistance, full time education and training, and the allowance, where
participation in this program was mandatory and who those refused will lose their entitlements. The results of the evaluation of this program showed that young unemployed men are 20 percent more likely to find a job after the program (Betcherman et al., 2004).

In addition, public employment services (PES) have been used widely in developed countries as an instrument in helping unemployed workers, and the findings about those programs were positive. A study in Denmark and Sweden found that workers who received personalized job assistance, career counselling, and regular checkup meetings at the local public employment agency had a 30 percent higher employment rates (Angel-Urdinola et al., 2013, P.7). In the United States PES worked best when targeted at specific groups such as women. In contrast, PES services were ineffective for young workers as proved in Canada and the Netherlands experience (Angel-Urdinola et al., 2013, P.7).

Finally, it can be concluded from the developed world experience, that successful PES are characterized by a combination of a good design, implementation, and governance features that includes coordination with the private sector, quality assurance, and accreditation mechanisms, and a solid monitoring and evaluation.

2.3 Youth Unemployment in MENA region

The attention of the world has been captured by the social unrest that has spilled over from events in Tunisia to other countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The region is struggling in both addressing historical problems and offering a clear path of political stability and economic growth for current and future generations. In particular, the crises in the Syrian Arab Republic and Libya have intensified the political tensions in the region and considerably slowed economic growth. Unemployment rates in MENA are among the highest in the world, and the region has a large share of untapped human resources. Due to high levels of youth unemployment and overall low employment levels, political tensions and social unrest are expected to increase across the MENA region well into the 2020s (ILO, 2014). Female labor force participation, at 25.4 percent in the Middle East and 28.1 percent in North Africa, is significantly lower than the world average of 51.6 percent (World Bank, 2013). Youth unemployment is higher in the Middle East (19 percent) and North Africa (25 percent) than in any developing region. At the same time, population
growth in MENA is also among the highest in the world, with a demographic transition in which the youth bulge (ages 15-24) accounts for 30 percent of the overall population, compared to 18 percent worldwide (World Bank, 2013). The mismatch between workers' skills and labor market demands combined with the rapidly growing number of new entrants to the labor market has created a situation in which too many young people have a hard time finding jobs. MENA’s unemployment rate is the highest among the world’s regions, primarily because of very high youth unemployment rates. MENA’s youth unemployment rate is more than twice that of South Asia (Assad, R. and Fahimi, F., 2007).

Fig.2: Unemployment Rate among Youth by Selected World Regions, 2005

Source: Assad, R., Fahimi, F. (2007). “Youth in the Middle East and North Africa: Demographic opportunity or challenge?”

2.4 The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a small, young Arab country located in the Middle East, with a population of 6.4 million (World Bank, 2013). The World Bank (2013) reported that Jordan’s strategic position has made it vulnerable to certain factors that impede development in the region as a whole. To some extent, the political, economic, and social upheavals of the region exert pressures on all Arab countries. For example, the crises in the Syrian Arab Republic and Libya that have intensified the political tensions in the
region and considerably slowed economic growth (World Bank, 2013). As a result, neighboring countries (such as Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, and Tunisia) have witnessed a significant flow of (return) migrants, which, in turn, will have a drastic effect on the labor markets in the region. Jordan is categorized as an “upper middle-income” country (World Bank, 2013). Since 1992, the contribution of agricultural activity to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has consistently trended downwards, while manufacturing and services sectors have both shown growth (SIDA, 2011). Since 1999, Jordan has been implementing economic reforms, however, the GDP growth has reached its lowest during the years 2009 and 2010, reaching a growth of 2.3 percent and 3.1 percent (Saidi and Qudah, 2012, p.21). Saidi and Qudah (2012) added that the economic growth in Jordan in 2010 did not exceed 3.1 percent, while the population growth was around 2.2 percent. Economists report that if there is a one percent increase in the population growth, then economic growth should be around three percent; but the economic growth in 2010 did not exceed 3.1 percent, while the population growth was around 2.2 percent, and this will increase the negative impact of the economic situation on Jordan (Saidi and Qudah, 2012, P.21). As well, the national poverty rate has increased from 13.3 percent in 2008 to 14.4 percent in 2010 (Barcucci and Mryyan, 2014). In recent years, economic reforms have been a priority in Jordan, which have led to increased economic growth rate, but the pattern of sectorial growth did not have a change. Moreover, the private sector anticipated a larger role in the economy (Saif and El-Rayyes, 2009), and the service sector continued to dominate the economy, accounting for 70 percent of the GDP; considered the fastest growth among other sectors such as the manufacturing sector (Saif and El-Rayyes, 2009). Hence, the service sector is concentrated around urban areas; thus the urban population has benefited more than the rural population from job opportunities. In recent years, as it is reported by the World Bank, Jordan has witnessed a significant progress over the past two decades (World Bank, 2013). This development was evident in Human Development Index (HDI) value; during the period between 1980 and 2012, Jordan’s HDI value increased from 0.545 to 0.700 (UNDP, 2013). There has been impressive results recorded in closing the gender gap in literacy between 1970 till 2000; the percentage of 15-to-14 year olds who are literate increased from 64 percent in 1970 to 99 percent in 2000. In addition, the percentage of literate females and males between 15-to-24 years old are both 99 percent (UNESCO, 2003). Only 13.2
percent of the female working-age population is in the labor force, compared to 60.4 percent of working-age males (Barcucci and Mryyan, 2014. P.7). The department of statistics in Jordan places female participation rates at around 15 percent (compared to 69 percent of men), which is considered a low figure given the MENA average of percent (UNDP, 2011).

2.4.1 Labor Supply in Jordan: Situation and Prospects

Jordan’s demographic profile presents a major challenge for labor market performance in the kingdom. The World Bank report states that the 2013 Jordanian population and housing census gave a total population figure of 6.459 million (World Bank, 2015). This population figure is a sixfold increase over the 901,000 in 1961 (Saif and El-Rayyes, 2009, P.3). These two authors explain this high rate of population growth has been caused by several waves of migration over the past 50 years combined with a high population growth rate (Saif and El-Rayyes, 2009, P.3). In discussing the relationship between demography and labor supply in Jordan, it is important to note Jordan’s persistently suffer from low rates of economically active individuals. As evident by official data which affirms that unemployment rate for the third quarter of 2013 rose by one percent (to 14 percent) compared to the same period for 2012. This represents the highest increase in the number of unemployed over the past four years (World Bank, 2014, P.13). Moreover, unemployment among men stands at 11.3 percent with that for women 20.8 percent, and unemployment among youth (15-19 and 20-24 years) is extremely high, which stands at 37.9 and 34.9 percent respectively (World Bank, 2014, P.13). Furthermore, unemployment has remained high among university graduates, approaching 20.6 percent and the gap between the numbers of unemployed people in the different regions of the country has widened (World Bank, 2014. P.13). In the article “Youth Employment in the MENA Region: A Situational Assessment” the author agrees with the empirical evidence that asserts that macroeconomic conditions, and the flexibility of the labor markets are more important determinants of both youth and adult unemployment rates than demographic changes (Kabbani and Kothari, 2005, P. 15). Some other scholars attribute the causes of the decline of the economic activity rate to; young people rejection of certain jobs, and other available jobs that lack social security benefits and health insurance (Saidi and Qudah, 2012).
2.4.2 Policies Address Youth Employment Issues in Jordan

One of the core policies of the Jordanian agenda is setting up several measures to overcome barriers to employment, where employment support and vocational training are considered key priorities of the government’s national agenda for 2011-2013 and a total budget of $212 million dollars were allocated for this area for the years 2011-2013 (World Bank, 2013, P. 73). The objective of the national agenda is to improve participation rate of the Jordanian workforce. The Jordanian government focused on institutions, governance and reforming the structures in charge of policy making and service delivery of human resource development (World Bank, 2013, P.73).

The National Agenda committee has issued a law which supports the establishment of an employment Technical Vocational Education and Training (E-TVET) council, which is responsible of implementing and coordination of policies concerning employment and training as well as developing and funding the Jordanian human resources (World Bank, 2013, P. 74). One of their initiatives is to focus on investing and conducting various ALMPs such as public employment services, training programs for the unemployed, employment subsidies and programs that supports micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) development, in order to support skills upgrade and facilitate job matching services (World Bank, 2013,p.72). Accordingly, several agencies including the vocational training center (VTC), where it provides short term vocational training programs and accrediting training providers in Jordan were established. The department of employment and training (DET). Fourteen branches covering all of Jordan’s governorates, where they provide direct employment services and regulates private employment agencies. The National Training and Employment project (NTEP), which is a training agency affiliated from the MoL, has 40 staff and a budget that ranged from JD3.5 million up to JD 5.7 million ($5-8million) per year in 2007-10. Though it is affiliated with MoL, the extent of coordination with the Ministry is not clear. The National Center for Human Resources Development (NCHRD), which provides knowledge on human resource development, provides policy guidance and support to the government. The NCHRD provides the public with public employment labor market information, an online labor exchange platform and career guidance, the
Development and Employment Fund provides support to MSME development projects are involved on the provision of ALMPs. It is documented by literature that Ministry of Labor (MoL) is responsible of the direct provision of ALMPs; is a key player in the implementation of governance reforms for the human resource development; and plays a key role in policy coordination, where the coordination between related agencies is nonexistent (Angel Urdinola et al., 2013,p.72).

2.4.3 The Emergence of Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs)

Active Labour Market Policies (ALMPs) are labour market policy interventions that the welfare state uses to ‘actively’ increase the employment probability of jobseekers and decrease aggregate unemployment (ETF, 2014). ALMPs have been widely used by governments around the world to lessen the impact of economic downturns by providing both employers and employees with incentives to participate in the labor market. In the U.S. and Europe, governments channel huge sums towards employment programs to relieve poverty, spur growth, and bolster political support. In developing countries, governments invest in employment and anti-poverty programs with additional motives in mind: to strengthen the sense of citizenship and civic action, and to lessen the risk of social instability. Roughly two billion people, nearly a third of the world population, are between the ages of 15 and 34 and live in a developing nation. This proportion is continuing to rise and will peak in coming years, creating a global “youth bulge” (World Bank 2007). Fears are bulging even faster (Blattman, Fiala and Martinez, 2011).

2.4.4 Objectives of Active labor Market Programs (ALMPs)

ALMPs’ general aim is to keep and bring workers into employment, increase their productivity and earnings as well as to improve the general functioning of labor markets. Besides these economic aims, the implicit social aim of ALMPs is raising participation, inclusion, and cohesion through providing employment incentives for the disadvantaged, and improving employment opportunities are often mentioned (Brown, A., Kotti, J., 2012). ALMPs are considered “active” programs because beneficiaries are required to engage in an activity (activation) in order to receive a service or financial benefit (Angel-Urdionla and Solano, 2013).
ALMPs can help employment barriers that can arise from the existence of the skills mismatches, insufficient labor demand, and information asymmetries.

Table 1

Selection of ALMPs by Objective and Employment Barrier

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to Employment</th>
<th>Type of ALMP</th>
<th>Program Objective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Skills mismatch</td>
<td>Training (on the job, in class), activation.</td>
<td>Enhance employability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information asymmetries</td>
<td>Intermediation service, job search assistance, counselling.</td>
<td>Enhance employability, promote job creation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient labor demand</td>
<td>Wage subsidies, public works programs, self-employment, work sharing and short work.</td>
<td>Promote job creation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: processes from Angel-Urdinola et al. (2010)

International experience shows that the impact of ALMPs on labor market outcomes is positive, but modest. While many ALMPs have effectively addressed market failures in countries with very different labor market challenges, many others have not succeeded in improving beneficiaries’ livelihoods (Angel-Urdionla and Solano, 2013).

2.4.5 Types of Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs)

Most countries provide a mix of programs that should be tailored to overcoming specific employment barriers such as inadequate labor supply, information asymmetries, and insufficient labor demand. The five main types of ALMPs are (I) employment services, (ii) labor market training, (iii) wage subsidies, (iv) public works, and (v) self-employment promotion. The main objective of employment services and labor market training is to enhance employability, whereas the main objective of wage subsidies, public works, and assistance to the self-employed is to promote job creation. Enhancing employability and promoting job creation are complementary objectives to reduce (long-term) unemployment, to increase labor force
participation (as discouraged workers tend to leave the labor market), and to minimize unemployment for those individuals at risk (Angel-Urdionla, D., Semlali, A., Brodmam, S., 2010).

As noted from Fig. (1), Training remains the most prominent ALMP provided by the public sector in MENA countries (Angel-Urdinola, Leon-Solano, 2013). A survey of publicly provided ALMPs that were implemented in 2010 by the public employment agencies of seven countries in the region: Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen; found that the majority of these ALMPs focused on enhancing the employability of program participants. Thirty percent of the ALMPs surveyed focused on vocational training; 15 percent of the ALMPs surveyed included direct job creation; and 9 percent focused on startup incentives. Employment incentive programs; mainly wage subsides, have a prominent role in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia. (Angel-Urdinola, Leon-Solano, 2013). In addition, it is noted that half of ALMPs in MENA countries are targeting skilled workers, notably university graduates who are first-time job seekers, considering high skilled youth are facing higher unemployment rates (Angel-Urdinola, Leon-Solano, 2013). There are some publicly provided ALMPs that benefit individuals living in rural areas and
targeting the low–skilled unemployed women (Angel-Urdinola, Leon-Solano, 2013). It is noted that women are radically underrepresented in publicly provided ALMPs ((Angel-Urdinola, Leon-Solano, 2013). This could be due to many factors, including lack of schedule flexibility and child care constraints (Angel-Urdinola, Leon-Solano, 2013).

2.4.6 Program Evaluation

A program evaluation is an organized study which adopts various research methods to gather data to measure how well a program is working and why. Evaluations answer specific questions about program performance. Evaluations emphasize on assessing program operations or results. Evaluation results may be used to assess a program’s effectiveness, identify how to improve performance, and guide how to use resources (GAO, 2012). If the program is an activity, project, or policy, it must have set of objectives to be assessed whether the objectives are met or not. In addition, evaluations include the program undesirable outcomes. An evaluation assess an entire program or focus on an initiative within a program (GAO, 2012). Furthermore, program evaluation is related to performance measurement and reporting. Where performance measures or indicators may address staffing and resources (or inputs), level of program activities conducted (or process), services delivered by a program (or output), or the results of those services (or outcomes) (GAO, 2012). Besides, program evaluations analyze relationships between program settings and services to learn how to improve program performance and to ascertain whether a program activities have given in the desired benefits for program participants (GAO, 2012). Evaluation is an important tool for training programs and an essential element for organizations, to leverage the learning and ensure the efficient use of resources (Tasca et al., 2010). The definition of program evaluation adopted in this study is promoted by the 1998 report by the World Health Organization: “The systematic examination and assessment of features of an initiative and its effects, in order to produce information that can be used by those who have an interest in its improvement or effectiveness” (Palfrey, Thomas& Phillips, 2012).

2.4.7 The Program Logic Model (PLM)
One of the main basics of the program evaluation is the logic model which is described as a logical series of statements linking a condition(s) in the community, the activities that will be employed to address a specific condition, short term outcomes resulting from activities and the long term impacts likely to occur as multiple outcomes are achieved. Thus, the logic model provides a simple means of presenting a program and establishing processes and outcome goals (Julian, 1997). McLaughlin and Jordan (1998) define the elements of the logic model as: resources, activities, outputs, customers reached, short, intermediate and longer term outcomes, and the relevant external influences (McLaughlin & Jordan, 1998). The logic model is a tool for telling a program’s performance story, by answering the questions: “what are you trying to accomplish and why is it important? How will you measure effectiveness? And how are you actually doing it? The logic model’s final product will be a logic model diagram that reveals the essence of the program, text that describes the logic model diagram and a measurement plan (McLaughlin & Jordan, 1998). The logic model builds a common understanding of the program; builds the team and improves communication; helps in program design; communicates the place of a program in an organization; and leads to a set of measurement points and thus improves data collection and usefulness (McLaughlin & Jordan, 1998).

2.4.8 Research Design

To select an appropriate evaluation design, it is crucial to understand the features of the intervention being evaluated (the evaluand), the political, the economical, and the organizational context within which the evaluation is being implemented (Bamberger, Rugh and Linda, 2012). It is important to understand the purpose for which the evaluation is being called and to define the evaluation questions. The vast majority of program evaluation boil down to two types; process evaluation which aims to determine if the program has been implemented as planned. Process evaluation is directed at three key questions: (1) the extent to which a program is reaching the appropriate target population (2) Whether or not its service delivery is consistent with program design and (3) What resources are being expended. The purpose of summative evaluation is to assess the impact of the program, that is, ascertain the extent needs of its target group. Summative evaluation measures program success in achieving their objectives. The process of selecting an evaluation design, starts
by formulating evaluation questions, and select appropriate measures and comparisons that will permit
drawing valid conclusions on those questions (GAO, 2012). The evaluation design documents the activities
best able to provide reliable evidence on the evaluation questions within the time and resources available for
drawing strong conclusions on those questions (GAO, 2012). The basic components of an evaluation design
are; the evaluation questions, objectives, and scope; information sources and measures, data collection
methods including sampling procedures, an analysis plan and assessment of study limitations (GAO, 2012).

2.4.9 The Evaluation Matrix

The Evaluation Matrix lists the primary evaluation criteria, the related evaluation questions (and, where
needed, sub-questions), the data sources required to answer the questions, and the data collection methods.
The evaluation matrix is a key tool for systematizing the data collection process as well as in making the
evaluation process transparent to the commissioners of the evaluation. Completing evaluation matrix will
ensure that all necessary issues are covered. In this project the issues to be examined include:

Rationale refers to the extent to which a program contributes to the overall goal or strategic direction of the
organization. The exploration of rationale considers the question “Is this the most appropriate way to achieve
the goal?” (Cummings, 2004). Efficiency refers to the extent to which program inputs were supplied and
managed and activities organized in the most appropriate manner at the least cost to produce the outputs. It is
the link between outputs and outcomes in the PLM. Efficiency questions usually refer to the timeliness,
quality and quantity of the delivery of inputs in relation to the program plans and needs (Cummings, 2004).
Effectiveness refers to the extent to which the program outputs produced outcomes (or results) and thereby
contributed to the program goal. It records changes in the beneficiary group(s) that have happened as a result
of the project. It is the link between outputs and outcomes in the PLM. Effectiveness questions examine
whether the program outputs are being used in a manner consistent with the program goals (Cummings,
2004).

2.5 Data Collection Tools
2.5.1 Key Informant Interview (KII)

Key informant interviews (KII) are used to deliver in-depth information from people who are identified as knowledgeable about a particular subject. KII are conducted in a face-to-face setting, which allows participants to add their views and ideas, and provides for more complete thought and answers to open-ended questions (McCracken, 1988). There are certain situations where Key Informant Interviews are appropriate to use, such as, when the descriptive information is insufficient for decision-making, when the understanding of the underlying motivations and attitudes of a target population is required, when quantitative data collected through other methods need to be interpreted and when the primary purpose of the study is to generate suggestions and recommendations (Kumar, 1989, P. 2).

2.5.2 Focus Groups

Focus groups sessions are a form of group interview that use communication between research participants in order to generate data. The researcher encourages participants to talk to one another: asks questions, encourages participants to exchange stories, and to comment on each other’s experiences (kitzinger, 1995). This method is useful for exploring people’s experiences, and is useful in examining what people think about and how they think, and why they think that way. Group discussion is appropriate when the interviewer has a series of open ended questions, and wishes to encourage research participants to explore the issues of importance to them, in their own vocabulary, generating their own questions and pursuing their own priorities, and if group dynamics work well, this will lead the research to unexpected directions (Kitzinger, 1995, P.299).

2.5.3 Surveys

A survey is an activity that collects information in an organized manner about characteristics of interest from some or all units of a population using well-defined concepts, methods and procedures, and compiles such information into a useful summary form (Statistics Canada, 2010). Survey research is one of the most important areas of measurement in applied research. The survey can be seen as a research strategy in which
information is systematically collected from a population (Leeuw, Hox & Dillman, 2008). There are several stages in designing a survey, and each influence the survey quality. These include defining objectives; selecting a survey frame; determining the sample design; designing the questionnaire; collecting and processing the data; and documenting the survey (Statistics Canada, 2010). In addition, the life of survey is broken down into several phases: These are the planning phase, the design and development phase, the implementation stage, the data acquisition and cleaning phase, and the analysis (Statistics Canada, 2010).

Chapter Three
Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to give the reader adequate understanding of the process employed in the collection of the data. The chapter includes information relevant to the research design, epistemology, data collection techniques, and participants.

3.1 Research Methodology

A mixed methods approach was utilized in data collection. This mixed method combines both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The rationale for using both methods is to achieve triangulation of the evaluation findings, which will enhance the trustworthiness of information. Trustworthiness includes internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity of findings (Marsland et al., 2000). Validity can be achieved by comparing information obtained from different methods of data collection. In addition, the results of one method can be used to develop the questions for another. Furthermore, the results from two methods will broaden and deepen the understanding, and will bring new insights into evaluation findings (Better Evaluation website, 2016). Qualitative research includes an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world,
while quantitative is objective and explanatory; they both have been show to balance each other. Qualitative researchers study things in their normal settings, striving to make sense of, or deduce, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). Qualitative research consists of various theoretical approaches, and their methods characterize the discussions and the research practice. The methods starts with clarifying the subjective viewpoints, and studying the course of interactions among variables (Sage, 2009). The type of combination that will be used for this evaluation is a sequencing method, where the informal tools will be used before the formal ones. The sequencing method will permit using open ended questions before the closed ones. As a result, it will help in the process of formulation of the hypothesis, which can be tested thoroughly by questionnaires (Marsland et al., 2000).

Different instruments were employed in the data collection process, inclusive of

3.1.1 Semi Structured Interviews, Key Informant Interviews

A compilation of possible key informants was generated to include stakeholders involved in the provision of ALMPs. Four organizations were selected for interviews- inclusive of two governmental representatives-i.e., Ministry of Labor, which is labelled with A.1.1 for the coding process and the development and Employment Fund (REYADA), and labelled with A.1.2 for the coding process. In addition, local service providers-Family and Children Protection Association and labelled with A.2.1 for the coding process; Hashemite Fund for Human Development (JOHUD) in Mafraq area, labelled with A.2.2 for the coding process and in Eidoun area and labelled with A.2.3 for the coding process. The potential interviewees were contacted by phone, and the interview dates were scheduled. The semi-structured interviews were conducted in Arabic, face-to-face, and open-ended questions were used to gain new information that might enrich the study. The method of conducting the interviews was as follows. The researcher clarified the purpose of the interview, why the stakeholder has been selected, anticipated duration of the interview, and how the information will be
recorded, and the key data were summarized after the interview. Governmental representatives were asked the same set of questions, local service providers were asked different set of questions, and were allowed to elaborate as they felt necessary. This allowed for both to the point answers and in-depth information to be collected from these key informants. The Key Informant Interview guides can be found in Annex 1 and Annex 2.

3.1.2 Focus Group Discussions with Youth who participated in ALMPs

Two focus group sessions were conducted for this study. The sessions were arranged with the help of JOHUD organization training officers in two different areas; Mafraq and Eidoun. Focus group I, comprised of six female individuals, and the second focus group session comprised of four male and one female participants, who previously participated in ALMPs in Mafraq and Eidoun areas respectively. The method of conduct was done with the help of the training officers, who scheduled for sessions and selected the participants. During the sessions, the researcher explained the purpose of the group discussion, why they have been selected, and expected duration of the discussion, how the data will be recorded and how the information will be kept confidential. Focus groups were formed to discuss the types of ALMPs provided in their areas, whether these programs were able to improve their level of knowledge, and whether training programs mode of delivery are well suited to rural females. In addition, if these programs play any role in increasing rural female self-confidence and whether found decent job opportunities or not. Full details of the focus group discussions can be found in Annex 3.

3.1.3 Survey Questionnaires

The research questionnaire was designed to gather information from young respondents who participated in ALMPs. Pre and post questionnaires inclusive of both close and open ended questions were administered. A total of 91 questionnaires were completed by young participants who had attended four training programs in Mafraq and Eidun: In Mafraq, 20 participants were enrolled in Soft skills training program, and 25 participants were enrolled in Vocational training program. In Eidun, 20 participants were enrolled in Soft
skills training program, and 26 participants were enrolled in Vocational training program. The pre questionnaire aimed at describing the participants’ level of education, type of training program they have joined; their objectives for attending the program; and to list the barriers that face rural female youth from attending training programs. The post questionnaire measured the level of agreement of participants with certain statements about training programs they attended; listed the most useful topics about training programs, and if their self-confidence have increased upon training completion; and whether they a found job or not. The full details of the Pre and Post questionnaires can be found in Annex 4.

3.2 Research Design

This study is fundamentally looking at the role of ALMP programs in increasing rural female youth employment in terms of skills mismatch, job creation, and location. The study is mostly related to program evaluation, and the field research component of the study used a logical, positivist and scientific approach. Quasi-experimental designs are used more often than true experimental designs that are simply not feasible for carrying out research in the social sciences (Frye and Hemmer, 2012, pp.292). The recommended procedures for the social sciences are quasi-experimental designs using a combination of different research methods such as quantitative and qualitative, which relatively works well in real life settings. Training programs in two different areas were surveyed. For each training program, participants were surveyed before and after attending each training. The socio economic conditions of both areas surveyed are similar. The survey involved pre-post questionnaires, where participants were asked a series of questions at both the beginning of a program (pretest) and then again at the end of the program (posttest) (Colosi& Dunion, 2006). This design is used to measure variations in participants’ knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding the program content, where the measurement at two time intervals can identify any participant changes due to program participation, which is considered a rigorous method (Colosi& Dunion, 2006).
3.3 Site Selection

As mentioned in the proposal, the study was supposed to be conducted in Mafraq area, which is located 80 km to the north from the capital of Jordan, Amman and in Madaba area. However, it was discovered in the field that the local community center located in Madaba does not offer training programs for unemployed youth. After consultation with the training officer in Mafraq, the research area was changed from Madaba to Eidun area. Eidun is located in the north of Jordan, and is rural in nature. Eidun was selected because the community center offers training programs for unemployed youth, and the area suffers from high youth unemployment rates.

3.4 Data Collection Techniques and Methodology

The study used mixed methods research, which is defined as the class of research where the researcher mixes quantitative and qualitative methods, approaches and concepts (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Mixed methods benefit from the characteristics of quantitative research which focuses on deduction, confirmation, theory/hypothesis testing, explanation and prediction; and benefits from the qualitative research characteristics are induction, discovery, exploration, and theory generation (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The mixed methods approach is characterized by words and narratives in qualitative method, and are used to provide meaning to numbers, whereas the numbers in quantitative method can be used to add precision to words; the end result of this method is a broad and more complete range of answers for research questions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). A mix of quantitative and qualitative data collection methods are used to strengthen the reliability of data, and validity of findings. The rationale for using both methods is to achieve triangulation of the evaluation findings, which will enhance the validity of findings. According to Lacey and Luff (2009) triangulation means collecting and analyzing data from more than one source to have a further perspective on the situation the researcher is investigating (Lacey & Luff, 2009, P. 27). Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, striving to make sense of, or deduce, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to
them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). In addition, Qualitative research use a wide range of interconnected interpretive practices, in order to get a better understanding of the subject matter. But qualitative data faces the problem of generality, which can be solved by adding quantitative findings to the research study.

3.4.1 Key Informant Interviews with public and local service providers

Interviews were conducted with A.1.1 the official in the Training and Employment Department at the Ministry of Labor (MoL), A.1.2 the Head of the Training Section at the Development and Employment Fund, A.2.1 the Project Coordinator at the Family and Children Protection Association - Irbid Branch, and A.2.2 and A.2.3 are the Training Officers at the Jordanian Hashemite fund for Human Development (JOHUD) organization in Mafraq and Eidoun areas. The interviews were held to get an insight regarding Active Labor Market Programs (ALMPs) conducted by different service providers. The interviews aimed to ascertain each organization, and their approach in implementing ALMPs; so as to determine whether they identify labor market requirements prior to implementing ALMPs to determine whether the design and delivery of ALMPs; are adjusted to young women needs and desires. Additionally, to determine whether these programs provide signaling to participants upon training completion; and whether these organizations play any role in job matching services. To determine the key barriers that prevent rural female youth from participating in ALMPs and their level of awareness. Furthermore, the questions were designed to determine the role of public sector in regulating the provision of ALMPs in the Jordanian context; in setting quality standards, and to understand the coordination and partnership among relevant stakeholders (public, local organizations).

3.4.2 Focus Group Interviews with Rural Youth who participated in ALMPs

Focus group discussions were carried out to identify the collective views of youth participants about the research topics. Barbour (2008) suggests that focus group discussions provide extremely rich data, and besides, it is a helpful tool in reaching those segments of society which are hard to reach. Two focus groups
(Focus Group 1 and Focus Group II) discussions were held in two different geographical areas - Mafraq and Eidun. Focus Group I was formed in Mafraq, and comprised of 6 female youth who volunteered to participate in group discussions, while Focus Group II was formed in Eidun, and comprised of four male and one female participant. An effort was made at the beginning to provide the participants with an atmosphere where they could freely express their views on the types of ALMPs provided in their area as to whether these programs are improving their level of knowledge; whether the training programs mode of delivery are well suited to rural females; and if these programs have a role in increasing rural female self-confidence.

3.4.3 Sample Survey

3.4.4 Sample Size and Questionnaires

Four training programs in two different rural areas were pre and post surveyed. The training programs are soft skills and vocational. Due to the small number of participants in both training programs, it was agreed between the researcher and training coordinators that the whole population will be surveyed. The total number of participants that were surveyed was ninety–one; forty-five participants were surveyed in Mafraq, and forty-six participants were surveyed in Eidun. The training programs comprise of both female and male participants. The questionnaire was pre-tested on 7 participants (4 males and 3 females) in JOHUD organization in Mafraq area. The questionnaires were prepared in English, while the participants only spoke the Arabic language. The researcher’s native language is Arabic; therefore, the researcher translated the questionnaires into Arabic.

3.4.5 Questionnaire Coding

The objectives of conducting the survey were to compare between males and females who participated in two training programs (Soft skills and vocational) in two different geographical areas (Mafraq and Eidun) in terms of the preferred type of training programs among females and males in different areas. Specifically, to determine participants’ objectives of attending trainings; to identify barriers that prevent females from participating in trainings; to determine the level of awareness of female youth towards these trainings; to determine if implemented trainings design and delivery are adjusted to women needs and desires; and to
determine if implemented trainings are targeting rural female youth with low education level. Data were collected by using predetermined categories. Each response to a category was allocated a numeric code; similarly, non-responses were also categorized and assigned numeric codes. The reason for assigning different codes to non-responses was to remove any ambiguity in the data and to improve the accuracy of the data. The respondents were categorized on the bases of pre and post participants in training programs. Besides that, open ended questions were included such as usefulness of training programs and recommendations for future trainings in their respective areas. In addition, closed questions were included such as the confidence level of participants after attending training program; the role of job matching services in helping the unemployed to find a suitable job; and if they found a job or not. The statements were as follows: Topics of the training programs were clearly identified; topics covered in training programs were relevant to labor market requirements; training programs timing and schedule were suitable; training programs length was appropriate; training program objectives were met; participants knowledge and skills were improved; training programs design was well adjusted to women needs and desires; and training experience is useful for future work. The Likert scale was used to determine the level of agreement; these are “Strongly Agree”, “Agree”, “Neutral”, “Disagree”, and “Strongly Disagree”.

Chapter 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH FINDINGS

The results of the study are categorized into the specific research questions posed in Chapter 1 of this paper.

How does the public sector regulate ALMPs provision and set quality standards?

The public officials responded in both interviews that Ministry of Labor and the Development and Employment Fund (REYADA) do not regulate ALMPs or set quality criteria.

What is the coordination and partnership among relevant stakeholders?
The official in the Ministry of Labor mentioned that there is no coordination between different stakeholders in terms of design and delivery or targeted groups. In addition, the official in REYADA gave further explanation that their organization is independent, and does not work with other service providers.

To what extent are the design and delivery of ALMPs adjusted to rural young women needs and desires?

Thirty-three female respondents (64 percent), and twenty five male respondents (64 percent) agreed with this statement. Table 2 shows frequencies and percentages of respondents’ answers.

Table 2
Frequencies and Percentages for Agreement that ALMPs design are adjusted to rural young women’s needs and desires.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>63.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>64.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement as to whether programs timing and schedule were suitable. Twenty-two (43 percent) female respondents, and ten (26 percent) of male respondents strongly agree with this statement. Table 3 shows the frequencies and percentages of respondents’ answers.

Table 3
Frequencies and Percentages for Agreement that ALMPs timing and schedule were suitable for rural women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Furthermore, the participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement as to whether the duration of training programs were appropriate. Sixteen (31 percent) female respondents and six (15 percent) of male respondents strongly agree with this statement. Table 4 show the frequencies and percentages of respondents’ answers.

Table 4

*Frequencies and Percentages of Agreement that ALMPs duration of training programs were appropriate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>48.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the first focus group discussion, all of the participants were of the opinion that the design and delivery of training programs are well suited to their needs. They indicated that the training material is written clearly and is useful. They added that the mode of delivery and the training schedule were suitable for them. One respondent said “I have registered in this training program because there is a facility for the children, while I am in the class, my child is taken good care of him. And if there were not any facility for children, you will not find me here at all”. In addition, participants in focus group II, stated that they are satisfied with the mode of delivery of these programs. As well, they indicated that ALMPs offered by JOHUD organization are well organized, suited for the labor market, and suitable for women. Referring to
interview conducted with the official of Ministry of Labor, the official indicated that the “Satellite Units in the Garment Sector” project is designed according to women’s needs as the Ministry of Labor’s initiative was to attract investors to start their business in rural areas with high rate of unemployed female youth. The official continued that this project is targeting unemployed rural females (18-39) years old in different rural areas. The official stated also that the project has established satellite production units in these areas to provide work opportunities for the unemployed young job seekers. The official continued that the most important projects delivered by the ministry is the “Satellite Units in the Garment Sector”. The Satellite Unit is a pilot project with garment companies that was established in the Qualifying Industrial Zones (QIZs)- which are industrial parks that house manufacturing operations in Jordan. They are special free trade zones established to take advantage of the free trade agreements with the United States. Goods produced in QIZ-notified areas can directly access US markets without tariff or quota restriction- This allowed for the construction of Satellite factories with 100 percent Jordanian workforce in rural areas where female unemployment is high. The goal of the project is to increase women’s economic independence and employment in the apparel industry. In addition, the key informant of REYADA stated that their programs target both young males and females aged from 15-29 years old. The official added that REYADA spends additional resources for implementing training programs in rural areas, as they have to spend extra costs to cover transportation expenses. Furthermore, the key informant of the Family and Children Protection Association stated that the implemented programs were tailored to female youth needs and desires. The official indicated that they select training areas that are appropriate for female youth such as hair dressing or retail. Moreover, the official in JOHUD organization in Mafraq area stated that they have a day care facility within their building and is equipped with trained staff. This facility serves female participants with children. In addition, the official indicated that vocational training programs are provided according to females’ request, mainly, hair dressing and pastry making. Finally, the key informant of JOHUD organization in Eidoun area added that they conduct vocational training programs that fit with young women needs and desires such as hair dressing and pastry making.
What are the key barriers to young women from participating in ALMPs?

The participants in the survey data were asked to arrange the barriers that prevent young females from participating in ALMPs from highest barrier=1 to the lowest barrier=5. Five possible answers were provided in the questionnaire. These are: social barriers; required minimum skills to participate; time and length of training programs; and cost of attending the program. Table 5 shows that 66 percent of both female and male respondents reported that social barriers are the main key barriers that prevent women from participating in ALMPs, and thirteen (25 percent) female respondents and ten (26 percent) male respondents reported that the required minimum skills are the second main barrier that prevent women from participating in ALMPs.

Table 5

*Frequencies and Percentages of barriers that prevent rural young women from participating in ALMPs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barrier</th>
<th>Female Frequency</th>
<th>Female Percent</th>
<th>Male Frequency</th>
<th>Male Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Barriers</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>66.0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>66.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required minimum skills</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time and length of training</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of training</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, all female participants in the Focus Group I stated that they did not receive any encouragement from their respective families. The group summarized the situation in their area by stating that at the beginning they did not find any encouragement in joining these programs because their respective families have never heard of these programs, and were not aware of the importance of these programs in filling the gap between academia and labor markets. They stated also that they insisted on joining these programs...
because they believed the programs will improve their skills and self-confidence. One participant spontaneously commented “I have graduated from university and I have been going to university for the past four years, there is no reason that would make my family prevent me from attending these training programs”. She continued that “maybe other females with low education level face barriers regarding joining ALMPs”. The participants in the Focus Group II pointed out that cultural barriers are the main obstacle that prevent rural female youth from participating in ALMPs. A male participant indicated that he will not permit his sister to participate in any of the training programs as he does not accept his sister studying and communicating with males as it was not acceptable in their community. However, the female participant stated that she was very happy with her experience in joining the training program. She stated that after completing the training she did a volunteer work, which enabled her to find a suitable job. They pointed out also that members of the community do not encourage young females to participate in training programs or to involve in volunteer work.

The key informant of MOL indicated that rural females are not facing any social barriers that prevent them from participating in ALMPs. The official in JOHUD organization in Mafraq area stated that young females are encouraged by their families to attend training programs. The official indicated that the local community is conscious of the benefits of these programs. However, the key informant of REYADA stated that young females are still facing social constraints from their families as their families prevent them from participating in training programs. Furthermore, the key informant of the Family& Children Association stated that the vocational training was not effective for females, because job openings were in sectors deemed to be culturally inappropriate. For instance, work places are “mixed”, whereby men and women train or work together in the same environment, and job openings available in areas far away from their residence. The official added that their organization face parents resistance as parents did not permit their daughters to participate, and requested sex-segregated trainings and transportations. The key informant of JOHUD organization in Eidoun area stated that the local community is rather conservative, whereby females cannot
work together with males. Young women, the official continued, are still controlled by their respective fathers, brothers, and maybe even their sons.

*What is the level of awareness young rural women have about ALMPs in their area?*

The participants in Focus Group I stated that they did not know of the existence of ALMPs, and were not aware of the importance of ALMPs in helping them to improve their skills and knowledge, and to find a job. They said that this is the role of training center in their area, the “training center” should spread the word about their activities to the local community. Moreover, the participants in the Focus Group II stated that the rural female youth acknowledge, and are aware of the importance of the training programs. The key informant of MOL stated the females are fully aware about the importance of ALMPs based on the high number of females participating in the training programs. In addition, the key informant of REYADA indicated that the number of female participants are exceeding the number of male participants in training programs. Furthermore, the key informant of Family and Children Protection Association remarked that females are fully aware of the importance of training programs to meet skills that are needed in the labor market. Likewise, the key informant of JOHUD organization in Mafraq area stated that the awareness of the importance of training programs is higher among females than their male counterparts as the number of female participants exceeds males. Similarly, the key informant of JOHUD organization in Eidoun area stated that the females are fully aware of the importance of training programs in improving their skills.

*What kind of minimum skills are required in order to participate in ALMPs training programs?*

Based on survey results, twenty six percent of both female and male respondents consider required minimum skills as a barrier that prevent young females from participating in ALMPs. However, the participants of Focus Group I were of the opinion that these programs do not have any criteria for joining, and targets individuals with any level of education. In addition, the key informant of MOL stated that they are attracting rural young females with different education level as no requirements are needed to join their training programs, the key informant of REYADA stated that there are no eligibility criteria for participation.
Furthermore, the key informant of Family and Children Protection Association stated that their programs are targeting individuals with low education level. The official stated that they are targeting youth at risk between 15 and 24 years old in poverty-stricken areas who are less fortunate and did not attain a university degree. The key informant of JOHUD organization in Mafraq stated that there are no entry requirement. The official added that their organization targets participants with low education and low socio-economic status.

To what extent are ALMPs targeting low education level participants in their programs?

The majority of participants in Focus Group I were of the opinion that these programs do not have any criteria for joining, and target individuals with any level of education. Participants in Focus Group II stated that the training programs are provided to any individual despite their education. Furthermore, the key informant at MOL added that the “Satellite Unit” project was successful in attracting rural female youth with different education levels as no requirements are needed to join the project. As well, the key informant at Family and Children Protection Association stated that programs delivered by their organization are targeting individuals with low education level. The official added that they are targeting youth at risk between 15 and 24 years old in poverty-stricken areas who are less fortunate and did not attain university degree. Finally, the key informant of JOHUD organization in Eidoun indicated that their programs target participants with low education and low socio-economic status.

To what extent are the ALMPs enabling university graduates from rural areas to gain employment?

According to survey results, thirty (58 percent) female respondents believed they will find a job after joining training program, while 26 (67 percent) male respondents believed they will find a job after attending the training program. In response to a question as to whether respondents found a suitable job upon completion of the training program, sixteen (30 percent) female respondents and eleven (28 percent) male respondents indicated they found suitable jobs.

To what extent are the ALMPs enabling university graduates from rural areas to gain employment?
All the participants in Focus Group I agreed that the training programs have improved their skills in specific areas. For example, all participants mentioned the importance of the “interview” training program they have participated in. They spoke about this program with excitement; the way they were made to practice real interviews as preparation for employment opportunities. One participant had the chance to do volunteer work in the local area, while the other participants stated they had not found a job as of the time of the group discussion. In response to a question as to whether ALMPs enable university graduates to gain employment, they indicated that although they have university degree, the training programs equip them with required profession such as hair dressing and pastry, which are needed by labor market. In addition, they stated they received certificates upon training completion and work placement completion. The participants in the Focus Group II stated that these programs have improved their skills. The male participants described vocational training programs they were involved in; first, the duration of the training program is three months consisted of 100 hours in class training, followed by a two month practical training within an establishment. They stated that during the training program they received daily allowance that covered their transportation, and they also had the chance to work in these establishments at the end of the training. The participants indicated that youth in their area need vocational training. One female and one male participants found a suitable job after training completion. The male participants indicated that they had participated in the vocational training so as to be equipped with specific occupations such as: fixing cars and hair styling. The participants stated that a high percentage of individuals who joined vocational training have found jobs. The female participant, who is a university graduate, stated that she joined the “how to start a project” training, which helped her to gain employment. The key informant of MOL stated that they have trained and equipped young females with required skills and wage subsides for 18 months. The key informant of REYADA stated that most of the unemployed females are university graduates, but still lack the required skills to enter the labor market. However, the official did not mention about their employment status after attending training program. The key informant of JOHUD organization in Mafraq stated that they collected participants’ resumes and tried to match them with local companies, and also organized job fairs on a yearly basis. The official indicated that job fairs are considered a good opportunity that enable job seekers to meet with local companies’
representatives and apply for available jobs. Lastly, the key informant of JOHUD organization in Eidoun stated they have a recruitment office, where staff keep data base of job seekers and match with local employers, and organize annual job fairs.

What types of programs are provided to unemployed youth in rural areas?

Based on the survey results, table 6 shows frequencies and percentages of female and male participants in soft skills and vocational trainings. The total number of female participants who were engaged in vocational trainings was 30 (59 percent), and the total number of male participants who were engaged in vocational trainings was 21 (53 percent). Table 7 shows a cross tabulation between gender and type of training programs. Twenty one female respondents joined soft skills program, and thirty one female respondents joined vocational program, while nineteen male respondents joined soft skills, and twenty male respondents joined vocational program.

A Chi square test was conducted to investigate if there is a relation between gender and type of training. There is no significance relationship between gender and type of training; both males and females equally prefer vocational training programs to soft skills programs.

Table 6
Number and Percentages of female and male participants in training programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th></th>
<th>Male</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft skills</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>41.2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>52.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7
Cross Tabulation between gender and type of training programs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Type of training</th>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Soft skills</td>
<td>Vocational</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chi-square = 0.428 (Not Significant).
Participants in Focus Group I listed the types of programs in the soft skills and vocational training category, and emphasized the importance of soft skills training program in equipping them with necessary skills needed for labor market. The soft skills programs listed are English language, C.V. writing, and interview skills. One participant said “we all need to improve our English language and this training program is considered a core training for all of us”, she continued that “Once I have registered in an English language training, and when I came the first day I found the class empty, because there were not enough participants registered for this class, it is cancelled”. The participants indicated that they have participated in soft skills training programs, because they recognize the importance of improving their skills. Although, the vocational training programs equip participants with specific occupations such as cosmetology and photography, the female participants indicated that they are interested in joining these programs. They reported that they have university degree, and these programs equipped them with required profession needed by the labor market, such as hair dressing and pastry. They added that they received certificates upon training completion and were offered work placement.

Participants in Focus Group II listed soft skills and vocational training programs. They added that soft skills training programs equip trainees with certain skills that every university graduate needs to enter the labor market, such as English language, C.V. writing and the interview skills. The male participants emphasized the importance of vocational training as they help them to acquire a new occupation. According to the male respondents, low level of education vis-à-vis the presence of high number of Syrian refugees in Eidun area have affected their situation negatively in terms of finding jobs. In addition, male participants indicated that their families are facing difficult financial conditions. Another participant commented that joining the vocational training program has helped him to learn new skills, and made him employable in the labor market. Still another participant stated that he joined vocational training program, due to the difficult financial situation his family was facing, which had prevented him from pursuing higher level of education. He indicated that the learning opportunity provided by JOHUD was useful for him as he acquired new skills.
in fixing cars. The male participants indicated that they had participated in the vocational training so as to be equipped with specific occupations such as fixing cars and hair styling. The participants stated that a high percentage of individuals, who joined vocational training have found jobs. The female participant, who is a university graduate, stated that she joined the “how to start a project” training, which helped her to gain employment.

The key informant of MOL mentioned that the most important projects delivered by the ministry is the “Satellite Units in the Garment Sector”. This allowed for the construction of Satellite factories with 100 percent Jordanian workforce in rural areas where female unemployment rates is high. The goal of the project is to increase women’s economic independence and employment in the apparel industry. The key informant of REYADA mentioned that their organization provides lending and training services to microenterprises, and is considered a major provider of SME development programs. The officer reported that they offer financial support to unemployed males and females to start businesses in rural areas. The official added that they provide technical support in terms of training. The official continued also that they aim to improve trainees’ skills, and knowledge through three types of training programmes; namely, the vocational, the soft skills and business. Furthermore, the key informant of Child and Family Protection Association reported that their local organization implements the “Youth for the Future” project which aims to improve livelihoods of vulnerable youth ages 15-24 years old in Irbid, which is located in the north of Amman the capital of Jordan. The official added that the project is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development and implemented with the coordination of Ministry of Social Development. The key informant of JOHUD organization in Mafraq area mentioned that JOHUD organization delivers soft skills, English skills, labor market requirements such as C.V writing, set interview skills, and vocational programmes. The official added that JOHUD is providing vocational training for the males in their area due to the increased presence of Syrian refugees. The official further explained that vocational training programs are mainly conducted to the unemployed youth who have could not afford higher education due to financial constraints. The official added, however, that university degree does not provide young graduates with job prospects. Moreover, the
key informant of the JOHUD organization in Eidoun area stated that they conduct vocational training programs that fit with young women’s needs and desires such as hair dressing and pastry making. The official stated further that they provide various trainings such as plumbing, blacksmith, and barbering. The official stated also that they offer a three month vocational training programs for participants; starting with a one month in class training, followed by two months paid training at the employer’s entity.

*How do these programs identify labor market requirements?*

Based on the survey results, twenty-five (48 percent) of the female respondents and 18 (46 percent) of the male respondents “Strongly Agree” that the topics of training programs are relevant to labor market requirements. Table 8 shows frequencies and percentages of respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strongly agree</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The key informant at MOL indicated that training programs are preceded by participatory needs assessment for the area so as to reach consensus regarding the type of training needed, whereas the key informant at Family and Children Protection Association did not answer this question. However, the key informant at JOHUD organization in Mafraq area stated that their organization does not conduct any labor needs assessment prior to training delivery. The key informant at JOHUD organization in Eidoun area indicated
that they consider young women needs, community needs as well as labor market needs, and they apply needs assessment. The information continued that it was discovered through a needs assessment that a “photography” training program is required by young females, their families, and the labor market.

Do these programs provide signaling to participants upon training completion to signal skills acquisition?

The respective key informants at Family and Children Protection Association, JOHUD organization in Mafraq and Eidun areas stated that participants received certification upon completion.

To what extent ALMPs provide some kind of job matching services?

Referring to survey data, thirty female participants (58 percent) and 26 male participants (67 percent) answered “Yes” to this question. In addition, by referring to both focus group discussions, the participants stated that the training center provides matching services with local organizations. The participants added that the center conducts annual job fairs to help them meet labor market representatives.

The key informant of Family and Children Protection Association stated that they work with Ministry of Labor to determine available employment opportunities, and also participate in annual job fairs. The key informant of JOHUD organization in Mafraq area stated they collect participants’ resumes and try to match them with local companies, and also organize job fairs on a yearly basis. The official indicated that job fairs are considered a good opportunity that enables job seekers to meet with local companies’ representatives and apply for available jobs. Furthermore, the key informant in JOHUD organization in Eidun area mentioned that by the end of the training, the trainees are retained by companies where they received apprenticeship. In addition, JOHUD organization maintains a recruitment office and keeps staff a database of job seekers and match them with local companies. The official concluded that JOHUD organization organizes annual fairs.

Is there a collaboration between ALMPs and labor market at the local level?

The key informant of JOHUD organization in Mafraq area stated that they collect participants’ resumes and try to match them with local companies, and also organize job fairs on a yearly basis. The official indicated that job fairs are considered a good opportunity that enables job seekers to meet with local companies’ representatives and apply for available jobs. Moreover, the key informant of JOHUD in Eidun added that by
the end of the training, trainees are retained by companies where they received apprenticeships. In addition, they have a recruitment office and organize annual fairs.

CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This research focused on evaluating the role of ALMPs in increasing rural female employment in terms of skills mismatch, job creation, and location of jobs. The main objective was to determine if these programs are equally delivered to both unemployed male and female youth; equally delivered to university graduates and lower education level participants; and the types of ALMPs providing trainees with the knowledge and skills required by the labor market; and whether these programs are creating job opportunities for young women in rural areas or not.

5.1 Discussion

Objective 1: To determine if ALMPs are equally delivered to both unemployed male and female youth.

The Jordanian government developed national employment strategies, and most of these employment strategies focus heavily on ALMPs because young people are highly educated and at the same time suffer from highest unemployment rates (Euromed, 2013, P. 23). The research findings show that the public sector does not regulate the provision of programs or set quality standards. This evidence supports that there is a proliferation of schemes, overlapping and with little coordination between different service providers (ETF, 2013). In fact, there is lack of coordination and partnership among various stakeholders, which leads to system fragmentation, and lack of coherence among programs that may lead to duplicate work and high expenses. For example, both officials of MOL and REYADA stated that their organizations do not regulate
ALMPs or set quality criteria, and there is no coordination between different stakeholders in terms of design and delivery of ALMPs.

The research findings show that the design, delivery and schedule of ALMPs are well adjusted to rural young women needs and desires. The survey results show that the female respondents find that the design, delivery, timing, and schedule are all suited to their needs and desires. In addition, the young participants in focus groups discussions were of the opinion that these training programs are well suited to their needs. Furthermore, service providers listed different ways of responding to young women needs and desires. For example, the key informant of MOL stated that they attract investors to start their business in rural areas with high rates of unemployed female youth. However, according to the World Bank (2013) report these programs suffer from internal inefficiencies; have low take up rates; high dropout rates; and low placement rates (The World Bank, 2013, P.79). The number of beneficiaries of the Satellite units project is 1,137, of which 90 percent are women; the dropout rates are high (around 40 percent) due to dissatisfaction of women with their working conditions (The World Bank, 2013, P.81). The key informant of REYADA noted that their organization spends additional resources for implementing training programs in rural areas. Furthermore, the key informants of JOHUD organizations in both areas Mafraq and Eidun stated that they respond to young women needs and desires by selecting training programs that are appropriate for females such as hair dressing.

The research findings highlight that rural females are fully aware of the importance of ALMPs. For example, the key informant of MOL indicates that this is evident with the high number of females participating in their training programs. In addition, the official indicated that the number of female participants are exceeding the number of male participants. Although, rural females are aware of the importance of ALMPs, still they are facing social barriers that prevent them from participating in ALMPs. This is evident with the survey results, where 66 percent of female respondents indicated that social barriers are the main reason preventing them from participating in ALMPs. In addition, based on focus group findings that the local community is rather conservative, and does not accept their daughters to share the same workplace with males. Young women are still controlled by their fathers, brothers, husbands, and maybe even their own sons. Therefore, women are
still not totally free in a sense. For example, the “Satellite Unites” project which is conducted by public sector to promote local industry could not attract female employees due to cultural issues as some families do not want their daughters or wives comingling with foreign workers, particularly work at night. In addition, women end up leaving work once they get married or become pregnant (Public library of US Diplomacy, 2008). The key informant of JOHUD organization in Eidun area indicates that rural females are still facing social constraints from their families as their families prevent them from participating in training programs. Furthermore, the key informant of the Family and Children Protection Association stated that the vocational training was not effective for females because employment opportunities were in sectors deemed culturally inappropriate, and also provided in different geographical areas. This was confirmed by the results of the focus group discussions, where the females in Mafraq area reported that although the training center is providing vocational training programs to upgrade females’ skills by learning new profession for the future, there is still cultural resistance against these training programs. The survey results revealed also that required minimum skills as a barrier that prevent young females from participating in ALMPs. However, the participants in focus group discussions were of the opinion that these programs do not have any criteria for joining ALMPs. This was confirmed with the interview results, where officials indicated there are no entry requirement, and their respective organizations target participants with low education and low economic status. Although it was mentioned by service providers that minimum skills for participating were not required, it was evident that these programs are attracting the most qualified groups. Several scholars have indicated that most of the programs target highly skilled unemployed youth, and some of these programs target low-skilled individuals in rural areas (Angel-Urdionla, Kuddo and Semlali, 2012). Indeed similar results were shown by Angel-Urdinola et al in an earlier study in (2010) where they found that university graduates in urban areas are the main beneficiaries of ALMPs in MENA countries, and that these programs require from beneficiaries to have a minimum set of skills. Therefore, low-income members of society, most of whom have a low level of education and live in rural areas, often cannot benefit from these programs. In addition, only five percent of these programs target rural areas and 10 percent target women (Angel-Urdinola et.al, 2010, P.23).
In terms of the ability of ALMPs to improve the chances of university graduates to gain employment, the results of the focus group discussions revealed that youth participants agreed that these programs have improved their skills in specific areas needed by the labor market such as hair dressing and pastry. However, service providers responded differently regarding this issue, where one service provider did not mention about the employment status of rural youth after attending training program because they do not follow up with participants. Another service provider stated that the offered jobs were in sectors that are culturally inappropriate, such as work places are “mixed”, as well as were provided in areas far from their residence. Other service providers summarized their role as collecting participants’ resumes, matching them with local companies, and organizing job fairs. These results were confirmed with literature which indicates that youth training rarely improves the employment and earnings prospects for participants (Betcherman, Olivas & Dar, 2004, P.37).

The survey results show that the number of both male and female participants were higher in vocational training than in soft skills training programs. As well, there is no significant association between gender and the type of training, where the youth participants in the focus group discussions emphasized the importance of soft skills training programs in equipping them with necessary skills needed by labor market. Moreover, vocational training programs equip participants with specific occupations such as cosmolgy and photography. The male participants emphasized the importance of vocational training as they need them to acquire a new occupation. It can interpreted that young people in general join vocational training programs, to find or start a business, and they join soft skills training programs to improve their skills in areas such as English language and resume writing.

The survey results show that ALMPs topics are relevant to labor market requirements. However, only two officials indicated that they their training programs are preceded by needs assessment, while the rest stated that they do not apply needs assessment prior to conducting any training program. All the service providers surveyed indicated that they provide certification upon training completion, and this was confirmed by participants’ responses in the focus group discussions. The participants in the focus groups have indicated that the training center provides matching services with local organizations through conducting annual job
fairs to help them meet labor market representatives. The service providers have indicated that their role is summarized by organizing job fairs. They collect participants’ resumes and try to match them with local companies. The collaboration between ALMPs service providers and local companies are at the lowest level.

5.2 Recommendations for future research

The following areas may be explored for further research. First, the ability of ALMPs in helping university graduates from rural areas to gain employment needs more investigation. The participants emphasized the ability of these programs to improve their skills, but the role of these programs in improving their employability was not clear. Second, the role of public sector in regulating ALMPs and setting quality standards should be explored and investigated. Third, the impact of conducted ALMPs needs more investigation.
References:


Kumar, K. (1989).”Conducting Key Informant Interview in Developing Countries”. Washington: Agency for International Development (A.I.D.)


Annexes

Annex 1

Key Informant Interview

Public Service Providers

Section A

61
Section B

Questions:

- Describe the types of ALMPs provided by your organization?
- What is the process your organization follow in implementing the training programs?
- How does the public sector regulate ALMPs provision and set quality standards?
- What is the coordination and partnership among relevant stakeholders?
- To what extent the design of ALMPs are adjusted to rural young women needs and desires?
- To what extent the delivery of ALMPs are adjusted to rural young women needs and desires?
- What are the key barriers to young women from participating in ALMPS?
- What is the level of awareness young rural women have about ALMPs in their areas?
- How do these programs identify urban and rural labor market requirements?
- What kind of minimum skills are required to participate in ALMPs?
- To what extent the ALMPs are enabling university graduates in rural areas to gain employment?

Annex 2

Key Informant Interview

Local Service Providers

Section A
Section B

Questions:
- Describe the types of ALMPs provided for unemployed youth in rural areas?
- Describe the type of minimum skills required to participate in these programmes?
- To what extent the design of ALMPs are adjusted to rural young women needs and desires?
- What are the key barriers to young women from participating in ALMPS?
- What is the level of awareness young rural women have about ALMPs in their areas?
- Do these programs provide skills certification to participants upon training completion to validate skills acquisition?
- How do these programs identify urban and rural labor market requirements?
- To what extent do ALMPs provide some kind of job matching services?
- To what extent are ALMPs targeting low education level participants in their programs?
Annex 3

Focus Group questions

Date:
Location of Meeting:

Q1. Do you think that the design and delivery of these training programs in your area are adjusted to rural young women? (yes/No) and why?

Q2. What are the key barriers that prevent rural young women from participating in ALMPs in their areas?

Q3. Discuss if ALMP are enabling university graduates in rural areas to gain employment

Q4. To what extent ALMPs are targeting low education level participants in their programs?

Q5. Do ALMPs provide some job matching services for the rural youth in their areas which helps them to gain employment?

Q6. What is your recommendation for implementing these programs in order to be more effective?
Annex 4

Pre Training questions

Date:

Title of Training:

Location of Training:

Gender:

Q1. What is the highest level of education have you completed?

1- University certificate
2- Diploma certificate
3- High school certificate
4- Other

Q2. What type of program are you participating in

1- Vocational training
2- Soft skills training
3- On the job training
4- Start up business

Q3. What do you want to learn by attending this training program?

1.

2.

3.

Q4. How did you know about this training program?

Q5. Arrange the barriers SHOWN BELOW that face unemployed young rural women from participating in these types of programs from the highest to lowest:

1- Social barriers
2- Required minimum skills
3- Training timing and length
4- Cost of attending the program
5- Education level of participant
6- Other please explain

Q6. Do you think THAT by joining in this type of training program IT will help you find a job?

1- Yes
2- No
Annex 5

Post Training questions

Date: 
Title of Training: 
Location of Training: 

Q1. Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The topics of the training were clearly defined.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The topics covered were relevant to labor market requirements</td>
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<td>The timing and schedule of training program were suitable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The length of the training program is appropriate</td>
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<tr>
<td>All objectives were met by the training program</td>
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<tr>
<td>Your knowledge and skills were totally improved by joining training program</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The design of the training program is well adjusted according to women needs and desires.</td>
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<tr>
<td>This training experience will be useful for my future work.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q2. What did you find most useful in this training program?

Q3. Do you feel more confident of your skills after joining this program?
   1- Yes  
   2- No

Q4. Do you think that the job matching services that the organization provides will help you to find a suitable job?
Q5. Can you recommend one thing that you do to improve ALMPS you are participating in?

Q6. Did you find a suitable job?
   1- Yes
   2- No