

SOFT SKILLS OR HARD CASH?

WHAT WORKS FOR FEMALE EMPLOYMENT IN JORDAN?

Matthew Groh

The World Bank

Khalid Dajani

Dajani Consulting

Jordan New work Opportunities for Women (NOW) Pilot

■ Target Population

- Female graduates from the class of 2010 from Al Balqa University community colleges

■ Interventions

- Soft skills training
- Salary subsidies

■ Goal

- Increase employment and labor force participation by
 - Providing a springboard for women to enter the labor market
 - Breaking negative stereotypes about firms and young women
 - Building a positive employment reputation for young women

Soft Skills Training

- 9 day, 45 hour soft skills training covering
 - Effective communication and presentation skills
 - CV writing
 - Interviewing skills
 - Teamwork skills
 - Business writing
- Based on active participation and cooperative learning with games, visual learning, group exercises, and active demonstrations
- Estimated cost per person: US \$ 332

Salary Subsidies/Job Vouchers

- **Value:** 150 JD per month, which was equivalent to the prevailing minimum wage during the pilot
- **Validity:** Maximum of 6 months from 10/10 – 8/11
- **Conditions for Firms:**
 - Proof of registration
 - Bank account
 - Official, written employment contract
 - Salary offer of at least 150 JD (minimum wage)

Experimental Design with a Lottery

- 1350 graduates stratified along the following:
 - **Location** – Inside/outside Amman
 - **Tawjihi**– Above /below median Tawjihi score in sample
 - **Desire to Work** – Interested/not interest in fulltime work post graduation
 - **Mobility** – Allowed/not allowed to travel to market by oneself

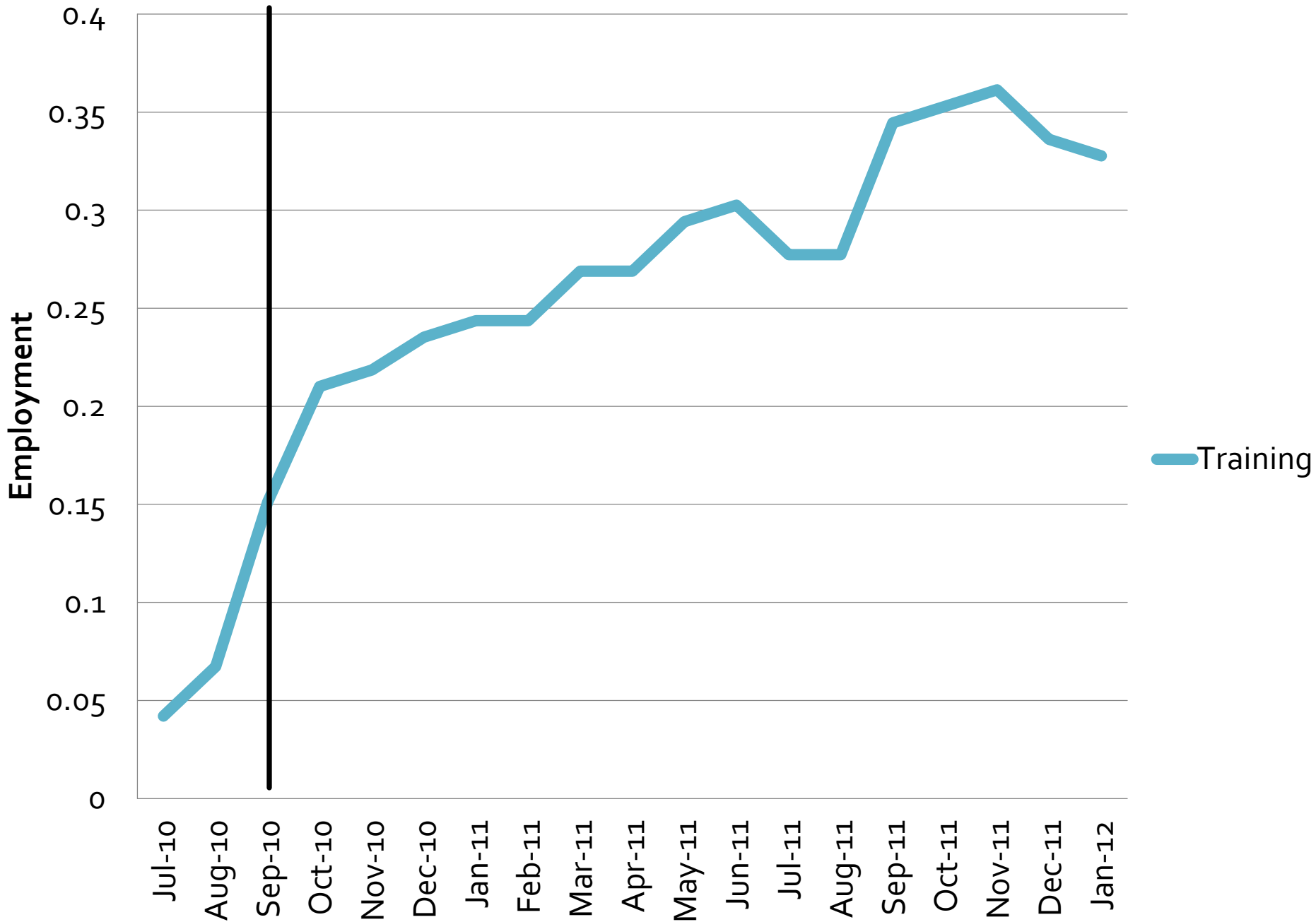
Voucher
300

Training
300

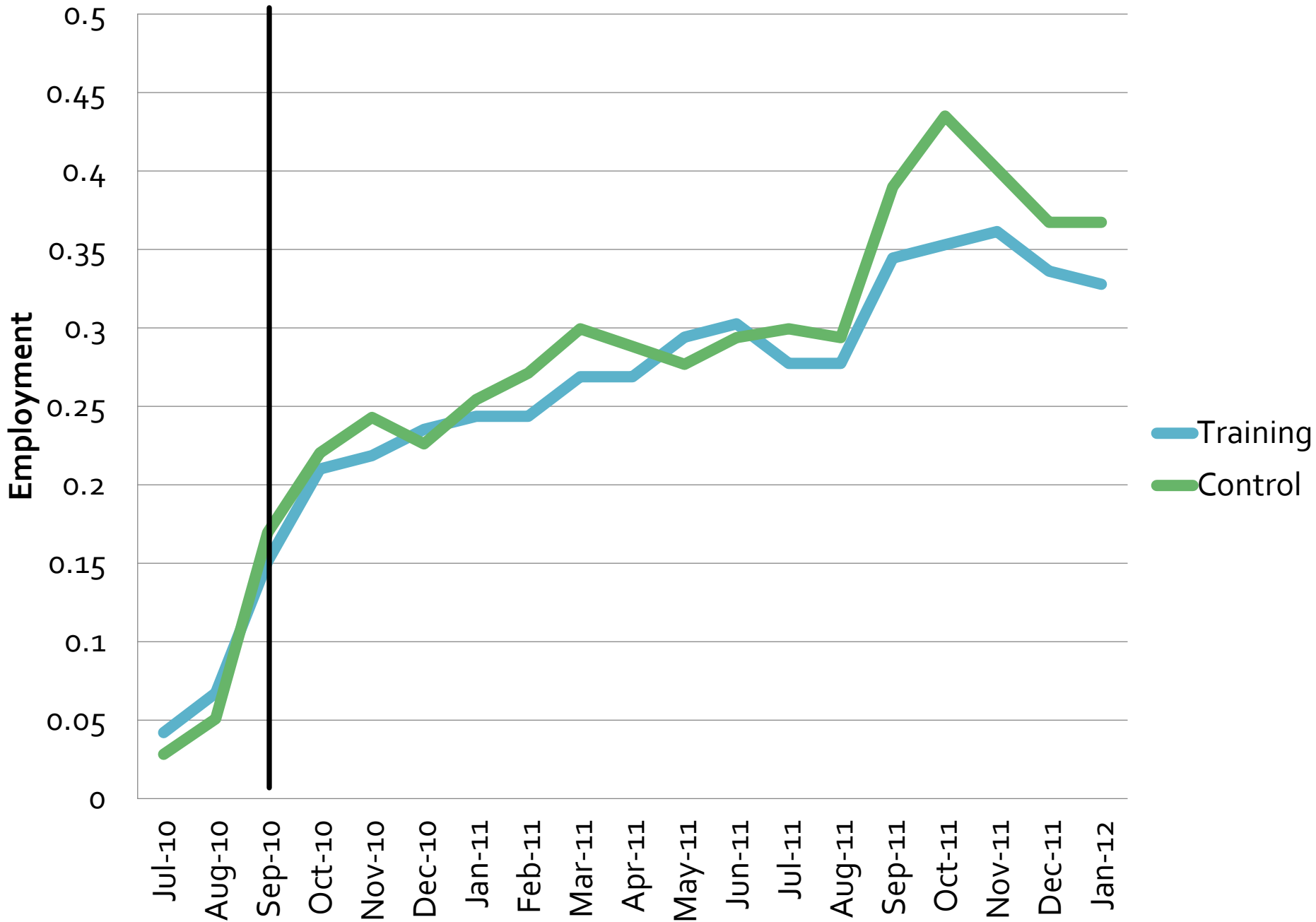
Both
300

Control
450

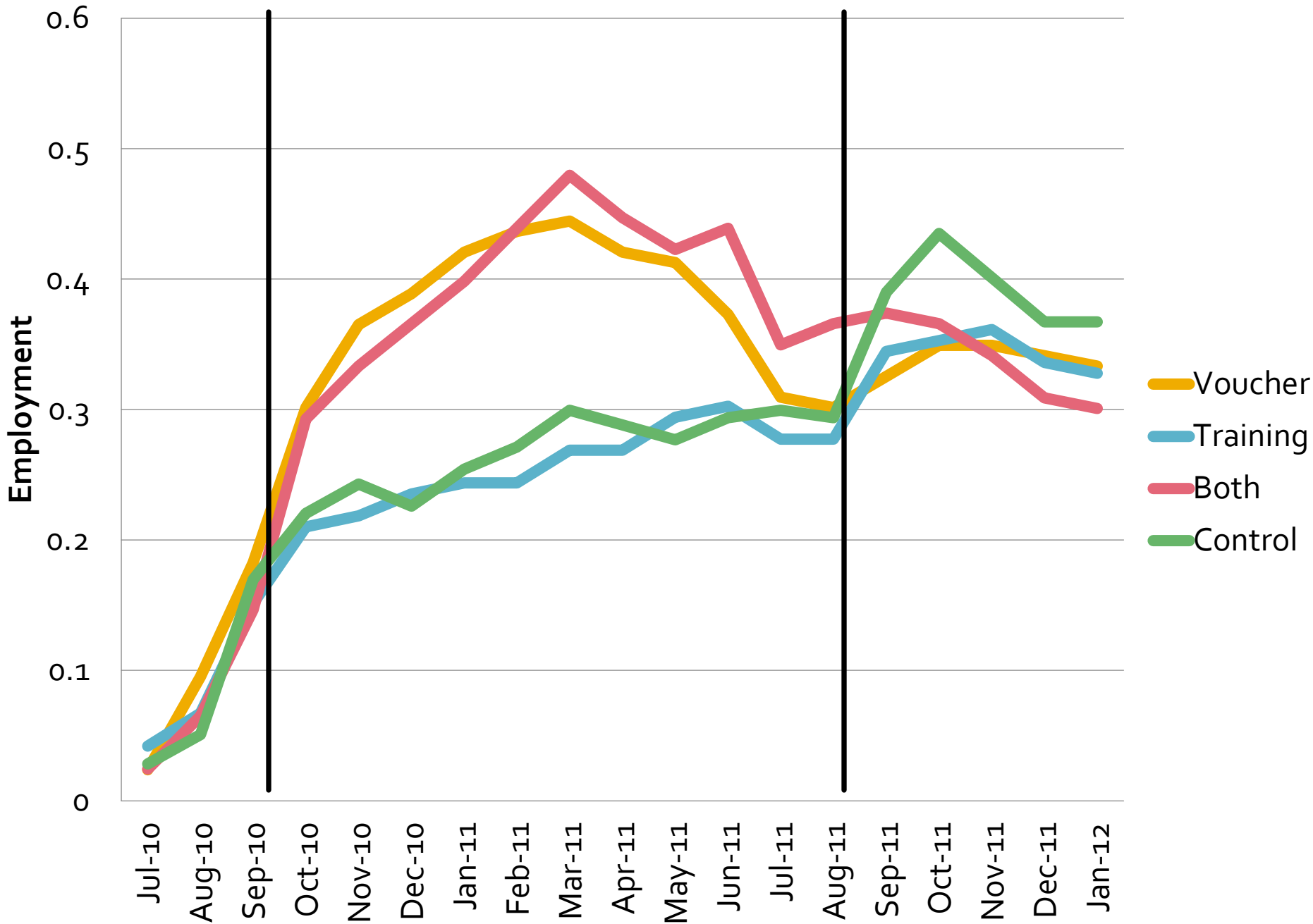
Central Jordan



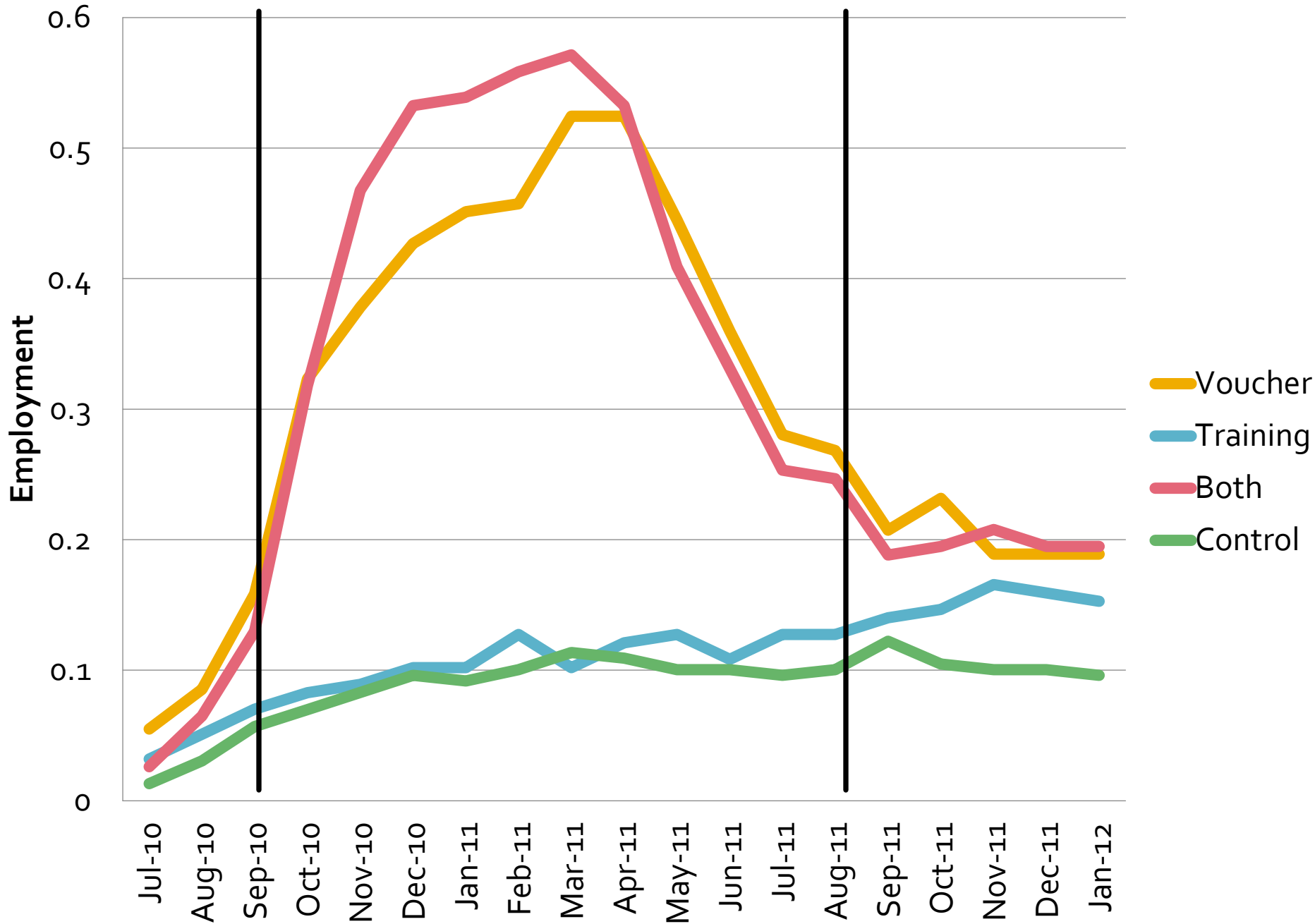
Central Jordan



Central Jordan



Northern and Southern Jordan



16 months after graduation...

	Ever employed (%)	Out of the labor force (%)
Without the program	39	52
Training	43	46
Voucher	70	42

→ Vouchers increased labor market experience, and labor force participation (particularly outside Central Jordan) by about 10 percentage points

Additional Impacts

- Voucher increased current self perception of well being
- Training increased future self perception of well being
- Training decreased incidence of severe depression by 5%

Data Collection Timeline

- Baseline – July 2010
 - Graduation – August 2010
 - **Soft skills training: Sept-Nov 2010**
 - **Voucher period: Oct 2010-Aug 2011**
 - Midline survey: April 2011
 - Endline survey: December 2011
 - Second Endline: January 2013
- + Firm survey October/November 2011
- + Social Security Corporation March 2012/13

Inception Phase

- Facilitating contact with the community colleges administration
- Baseline Survey
- Designing Jordan NOW fact sheet, voucher and training letters, advertisements
- Q&A Information Sessions to Explain Jordan NOW

Setup Phase

- MIS System for Managing Payments
 - Voucher ID number, Name, College, Address, Employment Status, Employer Name/ID, Job Title, Salary, Work Hours, Date of Field Verification, Firm Address, Firm Contact, Firm Bank Account
- Dedicated outreach to firms and job seekers to explain vouchers

Implementation Phase

- Follow up graduates through field visits to track employment and verify all jobs
- Keep employment status up to date, all formal documents in a centralized location,
- Approve payments
- Answer questions from firms and graduates