



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

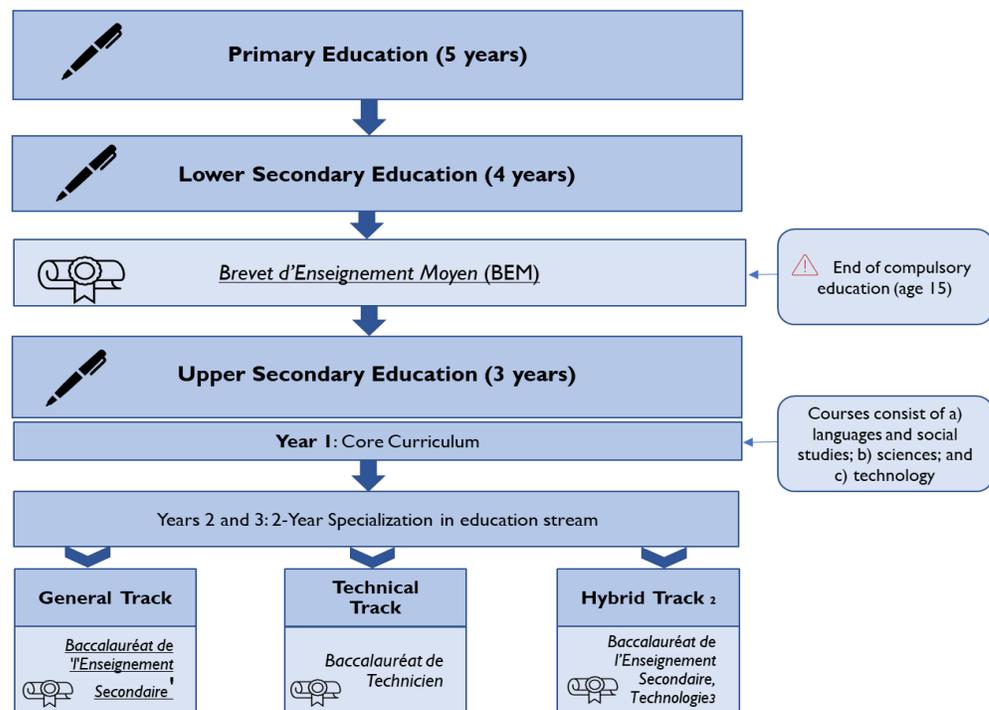
**Middle East Educations, Research,  
Training, and Support (MEERS)**



## ALGERIA

This brief is part of a larger study investigating interventions that support lower and upper secondary school aged youths' transition through school to higher education (HE), to technical and vocational training (TVET), and/or to prepare youth (including out of school youth of secondary school age) to pursue career and livelihood pathways in 11 selected countries across the MENA region. This research does not examine the quality of education, but rather, the knowledge and skills needed to make successful transitions. Therefore, this study focuses on support that wraps around general and technical education curricula.

### PROGRESSION AND DECISION-MAKING POINTS GENERAL EDUCATION



**VOCATIONAL EDUCATION.** At the lower secondary level, there are vocational training options of one to two years for students leading to a *Certificat de Formation Professionnelle Spécialisée* (CFPS) after one year, and a *Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle* (CAP) at the conclusion of two years' study.<sup>4</sup> Students may transfer to vocational education (*enseignement professionnel*), which operates through specialized institutions, '*Institut d'Enseignement Professionnel*' (IEP), after completing lower

secondary education and passing the *Brevet d'Enseignement Moyen* (BEM). In Algeria, vocational education is a separate education sector, consisting of two levels (secondary and tertiary). Students can obtain a diploma after each level. Secondary level vocational education may last between one and four years and aims to prepare students for the job market and higher education in certain cases. Students pursuing vocational secondary education study electronics, electrical science/technology,

mechanical science, public works, engineering, chemistry, and accounting. At the secondary level, students are expected to participate in an internship. In 2021 the Ministry of Vocational Education and Training added over capacity for over 600 new learners in training centers specialized for students with disabilities, “Centres de formation professionnelle et de l'apprentissage spécialisés pour personnes handicapées physiques” (CFPAHP).<sup>5</sup> Vocational students receive a diploma *Brevet d'Enseignement Professionnel* (BEP) on successful completion of secondary technical studies and can advance toward the tertiary level, which terminates with The *Brevet d'Enseignement Professionnel Supérieur* (BEPS).<sup>6</sup>

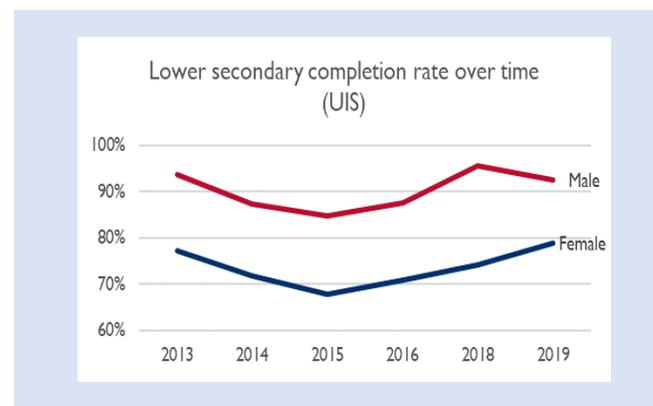
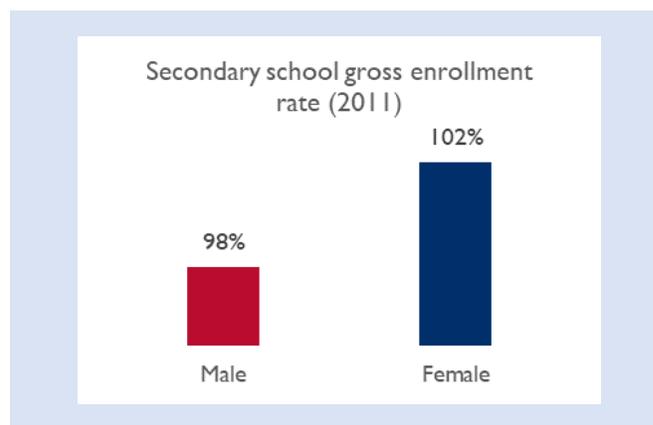
**CAREER COUNSELING.** Career guidance, referred to as “orientation” is considered an integral part of the Algerian education system and is mandated in law, the most recent being the Education Act and the TVET Reform Act of 2008. The Ministry of National Education has responsibility for the Centers for Educational and Career Orientation (CPOSP) and responsible for school and career orientation services. They employ civil servants who are trained career counsellors to deliver these activities. The role of the counsellor, however, is broader, having responsibility for dealing with students’ behavioral issues, discipline, and health and wellbeing concerns. Their role is also more directive than careers guidance, channeling students’ future course of study based on their academic examination results. In addition, school counsellors perform administrative tasks such as the preparation of student distribution in different subject streams and schools through the analysis of school results.

Career guidance is offered to secondary school students at set points in the education cycle and consider the students’ aptitudes and wishes, the requirements of school planning, grades obtained in the national examinations, which serve to determine their future course of study. The first guidance intervention (*conseil de classe*) takes place at the end of middle school following the result of a national examination, BEM, or Middle School Certificate. Students have the option of progressing in the subject stream of their choice (science or humanities) or are ‘oriented’ towards the technical, hybrid, or vocational tracks, depending on the grades achieved. This is followed by a second intervention, at the end of the first year of high school. Although it is supposed to consider the students’ preferences, their exam results ultimately determine if they can follow a science or a humanities stream

or take up technical and vocational subjects; if their grades allow it, most opt to take the route to the *Baccalauréat de l'Enseignement Secondaire*, the general education stream.

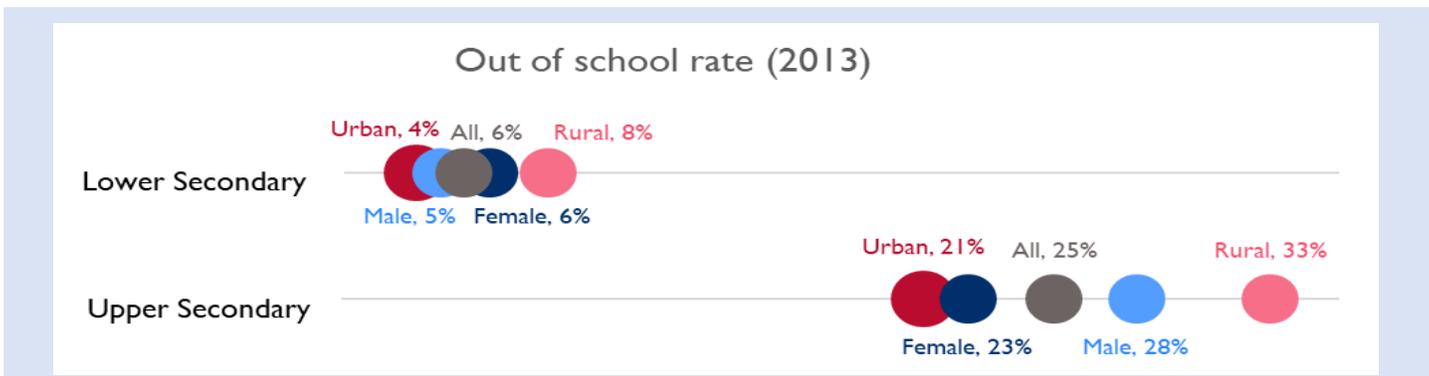
Parental opinion and cultural tradition also play an important role in the students’ decision. The uptake of placement in vocational education is low, despite the government’s efforts in promoting TVET. Although career guidance can have an important role in highlighting the opportunities open to young people making the transition from education to employment or following the vocational track, it fails to correct the perception that it is suitable only for those who fail in doing well at school. This failure can be directly linked to the disconnect between the education system and the needs of the labor market.<sup>7</sup>

**KEY STATISTICS.** The education data from Algeria shows disparities in educational outcomes according to dimensions such as gender and location. The gross enrollment data from 2011 measure the enrollment of all chil-

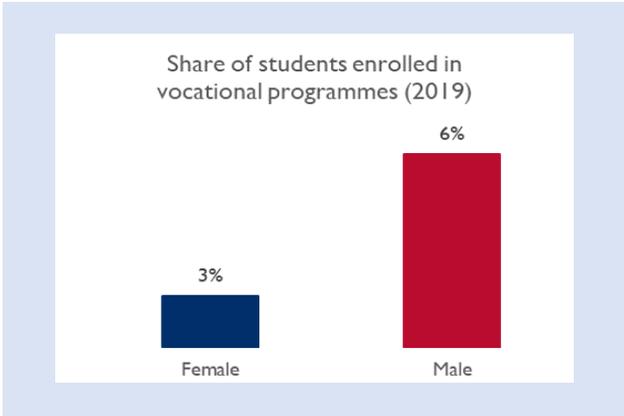


dren as a percentage of the total number of school-aged children, and shows a high percentage of females enrolled in secondary school who were not of the appropriate age.<sup>8</sup>

While the percentage of students who completed lower secondary school declined between 2013 and 2015, there has been a steady increase for males and females between 2015 and 2019, with 79 percent of females completing lower secondary in 2019 compared to only 68 percent in 2015.<sup>9</sup> In 2013, there were significantly more children out of upper secondary school than lower compared to 25 percent of all children out of upper secondary. Further, children living in rural areas have the highest out-of-school rate of all with 33 percent of rural children out of upper secondary school compared to just 21 percent of urban children.<sup>10</sup>



**TVET STATISTICS.** The overall share of students in the TVET sector is small. However, there are twice as many males enrolled in vocational education compared to females, with 6 percent of all males enrolled in the country’s vocational programs compared to only 3 percent of females.<sup>11</sup>



Additionally, numerous **systems-wide factors impact youth experiences and the interventions designed to support youth through this period.** Strengths and weaknesses related to the general and technical education systems include:



### Strengths and Weaknesses of General and Technical Education Systems

#### Strengths

- Soft skills and functional skills needed by Algerian youth have been rigorously studied and could be leveraged in future educational programming.<sup>12</sup>
- Very strong sense of pride due to recent national struggles — a good foundation for popular reforms.<sup>13</sup>

#### Weaknesses

- Outdated curricula do not emphasize learning based on soft skills, such as critical thinking.<sup>14</sup>
- Educational pathways are determined by exams, with no chance for shifting back to general education or different academic stream.
- Academic routes are most desirable to students and families, despite limited subsequent employment opportunities.
- Enrollment in TVET at upper secondary level is low, and seen as a less desirable option, budget is only a small fraction of the total for education.
- Very challenging for outside donors to work with public education sector (as a result, donors tend to partner with independent organizations).
- Huge gap between formal Arabic taught at school and the mixed Arabic language used by students in their daily life — students struggle to attain basic and advanced literacy skills.
- Lack of French and English language skills that are much demanded by the labor market but challenging for students to gain in an Arabic-dominant system.
- There is weak data on the education and workforce.<sup>15,16</sup>

Macro-environment factors impact the lived experiences and decision making of secondary age youth, including the political and economic context, conflict/crisis, demographics, environmental constraints, etc. A selection of key factors include:



## Opportunities and Threats of the Macro-Environment

### Opportunities

-  Growing Interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and youth start-ups: creation of a new Ministry dedicated to supporting startups and lending to startups.<sup>17</sup>
-  Oil resources may help fund education reform at around \$14 Billion.<sup>18</sup>
-  Hirak movement is being led by organized civil society and professional activists, such as lawyers, judges, teachers, students and workers. The case of Algeria stands apart from other countries in the MENA region, providing youth with sense of hope and aspiration.<sup>19</sup>
-  Interventions (DoS/World Learning) have sought to formalize policies and build capacity at the community level over longer term national level policy shifts, providing potential for localized sustainability.
-  Given the rigidity of general education pathways, private sector can be encouraged among youth as a path based more on self-determination than public institutions and public civil service.
-  Youth civic engagement provides spaces for learning and leadership when alternatives, e.g., internships, are limited.

### Threats

-  There are ongoing challenges from past civil conflicts.
-  Closed economy.
-  Economy is reliant on oil, and therefore vulnerable to oil price fluctuation.
-  Government systems are centralized and very bureaucratic.
-  There is a strong culture of suspicion of foreign experts and advisors, which makes it hard for donors to offer technical assistance, especially in education.
-  There is a strong desire among youth to pursue a career in the public sector, in which positions available are decreasing.
-  Algeria ranks 136 out of 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, which assesses progress towards gender parity.<sup>20</sup>

**SKILLS AND CAREER.** Programs aim to strengthen innovation, critical thinking, and communication skills. They provide an interdisciplinary approach to learning where traditional academic concepts are mixed with innovation. In addition, there is a focus on workforce readiness, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship.

**EDUCATION AND MARKET LINKAGES.** Programs emphasize establishing career centers in private vocational training schools with focus on university students and some attention to the secondary TVET level. Programs endeavor to enhance the quality and relevance of curriculum and education outcomes. Educational activities, civic education, and linking education outcomes with employability in the TVET field are stated aims of identified programs.



**JOB, MENTORING AND JOB-READINESS.** Programs endeavor to bridge the gap between education outcomes and the labor market through relevant training and mentoring programs for students. Approaches are designed to grow and diversify industries through incubation of youth-led businesses, job placement, and training on enterprise startup. Other programs provide training, mentorship, and networking opportunities for women to build their leadership skills and job-readiness skills. Significant focus on capacity building in career planning, job search, as well as internship placement programs.

The following tables provide a non-exhaustive **list of general education and TVET-focused interventions targeting secondary school aged youth in Algeria.**

## **KEY GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION AND FOUNDATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS**

### **Algiers STEM Center, U.S. Department of State (DoS) with WorldLearning**

- Aims to strengthen the innovation, critical thinking, and communication skills.
- Focus on educational activities, civic education training linked with future employability in STEM fields, capacity building in career planning, job search, and coaching and mentoring.
- Interdisciplinary approach to learning where rigid academic concepts are mixed with innovation.<sup>21</sup>

### **INJAZ Al-Arab, with Junior Achievement Worldwide**

- Focuses on three main pillars: workforce readiness, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship.
- Aims to narrow the gap between education and the labor market requirements through relevant training and mentoring programs.<sup>22</sup>

## **KEY SECONDARY-LEVEL TVET AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS**

### **Youth Employment Project, U.S. DoS with WorldLearning**

- Established career centers in private vocational training schools in nine cities around Algeria (program focused on university level with some attention to the secondary TVET level).
- Goal to empower youth to act and be part of the future economy, through reinforcing the linkages between young people and the job market.<sup>23</sup>

### **Algeria Entrepreneurship & Employment Program, U.S. DoS with WorldLearning**

- Aims to support growth and diversification of industries through incubation support for youth-led businesses, job placement support, and training on enterprise start up for youth (youth ages not specified).<sup>24</sup>

### **Bawsala Mentorship Program, U.S. DoS with WorldLearning**

- Provides training, mentorship, and networking opportunities to support Algerian young women to build their leadership skills and job-readiness skills (age or education level not specified).
- Goal is to build capacity to: a) increase self-awareness of their personal attributes and skills; b) develop leadership and job-readiness skills; and c) enhance networking skills with successful female leaders in Algeria.<sup>25</sup>

## CITATIONS

- 1 [FHI360 Education Policy and Data Center. \(2018\). Algeria National Education Profile.](#)
- 2 [World Education News + Reviews \(WENR\). \(2006\). Education in the Maghreb: Algeria.](#)
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 [UNESCO International Center for TVET \(UNEVOC\). TVET Country Profiles: Algeria.](#)
- 5 [Algeria Press Service. \(2021\). Vocational Training: More Than 400 Specialties Scheduled for the Next Academic Year.](#)
- 6 [Nuffic \(The Dutch Organization for Internationalization in Education\). A brief description of vocation education in Algeria.](#)
- 7 [Mahdjoub and Miliani. \(2017\). Education and Career Guidance in Algeria: Recurrent Dysfunctions. In Sultana. Career Guidance and Livelihood Planning across the Mediterranean.](#)
- 8 [World Bank. \(2011\). World Development Indicators.](#)
- 9 [UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(UIS\). \(2021\).](#)
- 10 [UNESCO Institute for Statistics \(UIS\). \(2013\).](#)
- 11 [UNICEF. \(2020\). Country Office Annual Report 2020: Algeria.](#)
- 12 [WorldLearning. \(2019\). Soft Skills for Youth Employment in Algeria.](#)
- 13 [The New York Times. \(2019\). "It's Time to Break the Chains" Algerians Seek a Revolution.](#)
- 14 [Gherzouli. \(2019\). Towards a Democratic Algerian Curriculum Development through Secondary School EFL Teachers' Involvement.](#)
- 15 [Computer and Enterprise Investigations Conference \(CEIC\). Algeria Education Statistics](#)
- 16 [World Bank. Education at a Glance – Algeria.](#)
- 17 [Embassy of Algeria to the United States of America. \(2019\). The President of the Republic Abdelmadjid Tebboune announces the Creation of a Ministry for startups, micro-business.](#)
- 18 [Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries \(OPEC\). Algeria Facts and Figures.](#)
- 19 [Human Rights Watch. \(2021\). Algeria's Hirak Protest Movement Marks Second Anniversary.](#)
- 20 [World Economic Forum. \(2021\). Global Gender Gap Report.](#)
- 21 [WorldLearning. Algiers STEM Center. Program Description.](#)
- 22 [INJAZ Al-Arab. Our History.](#)
- 23 [WorldLearning. Youth Employment Project: Program Description.](#)
- 24 [WorldLearning. Algeria Entrepreneurship & Employment Program: Program Description.](#)
- 25 [WorldLearning. Bawsala Mentorship Program: Program Description.](#)



Prepared by  
**Social Impact**  
as part of the Middle East Education, Research,  
Training, and Support Activity  
June 2022

**For more information contact**  
Social Impact: [info@socialimpact.com](mailto:info@socialimpact.com)  
USAID: [ed.me.w@usaid.gov](mailto:ed.me.w@usaid.gov)