

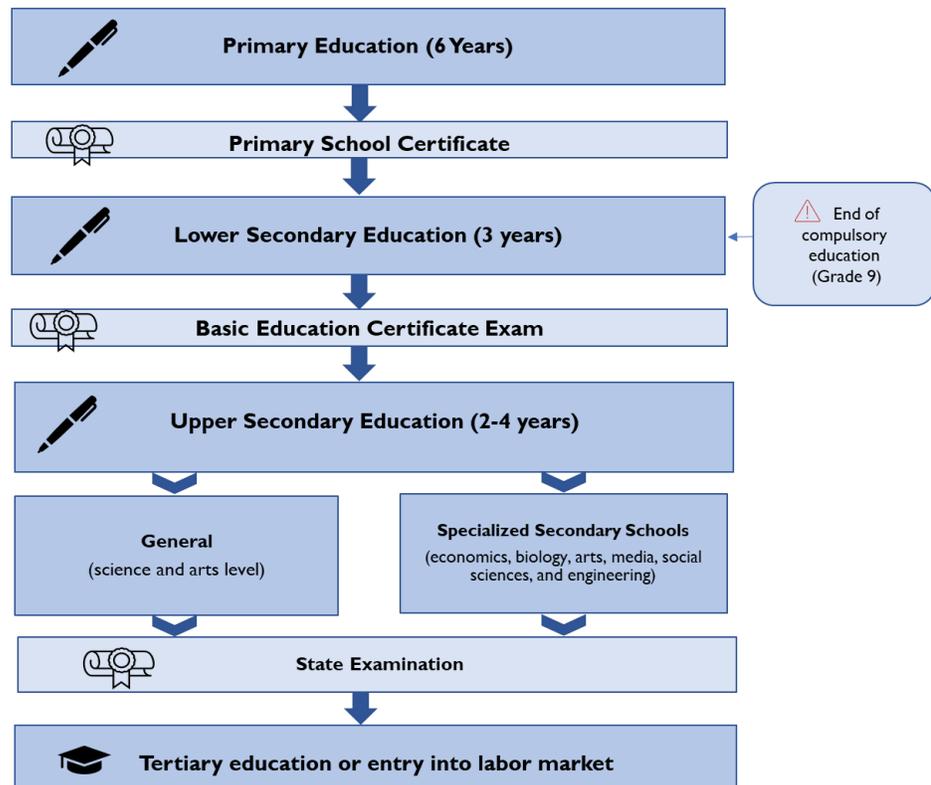


LIBYA

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



TECHNICAL EDUCATION. Students are accepted into intermediate vocational education institutions once they have obtained a Basic Education Certificate.¹ They are accepted into higher technical institutions and technical colleges once they have obtained the Intermediate Vocational Diploma or the Secondary School Certificate, according to the acceptance criteria set by the Minis-

try of Education (MOE). Within TVET in Libya, “Over 44 programs are available in fields as diverse as electrical and mechanical, building and carpentry, architectural, agricultural and marine fishing, and even in what are referred to locally as female vocations.”² These training programs vary in duration and are designed to equip students with very specific practical skills to enable them to access em-

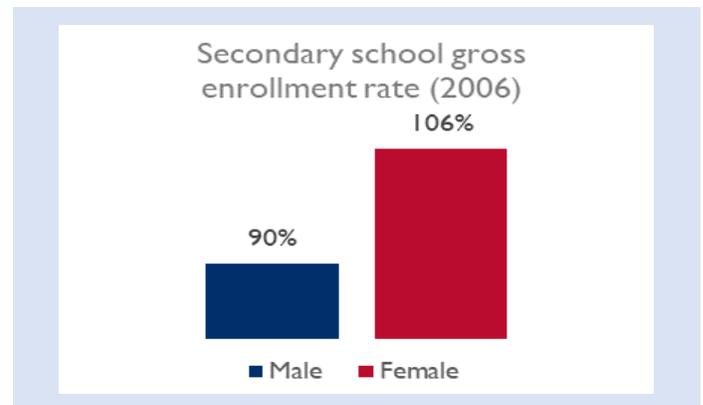
-ployment opportunities in identified skill shortage areas. Traditionally, some occupations such as childcare, midwifery, early years teaching are perceived to be “female vocations,” others, such as construction or marine fishing, male occupations.

CAREER COUNSELING. There is no provision for careers guidance and counseling mandated in Libyan law. Career decisions are perceived to be the responsibility of the students and their families. “The focus of careers guidance even in the limited form it developed was to encourage people to look at the TVET sector and as such, it had somewhat of a marketing role, and more generally careers guidance is informal based on family, friends, and other social contacts rather than as a component part of the secondary education process.”³ Where counseling exists, it is more concerned with students’ behaviors and compliance with school rules than with making informed choices concerning their career.⁴ Since the mid-80s, MOE law has directed 40

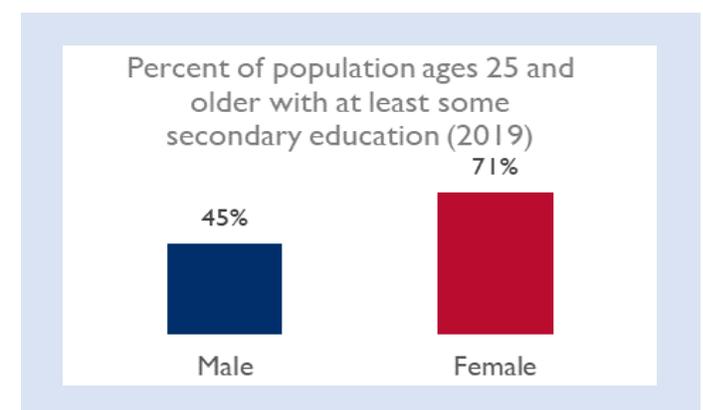


percent of students completing grade nine into TVET; the government offered scholarships to students who opt for technical and vocational schools, and guaranteed jobs with salaries significantly higher than for those graduating from academic schools. The effort to direct youth towards vocational and technical education continues despite very high unemployment rates and there remains strong social preferences for academic studies. In 2015, Libya had one of the highest rates of university attendance in the MENA region. “The main concern (of career guidance) is with the classification of students on the basis of their grades and using these results as a justification for channelling students towards academic or vocational schools. Almost 70 percent of Libyan students end up going to academic education, resulting in a shortage of technical labor in the Libyan economy.”⁵

KEY STATISTICS. Libya is still one of the “youngest” countries in the MENA region, with 32 percent of the population below 18.⁶ Verifiable information on the structure and current situation of the education system in Libya is patchy and out of date, as seen in the 2021 UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) data. The only enrollment data available are from 2006 and measure gross enrollment, with 106 percent female enrollment, suggesting that a significant proportion of females enrolled in secondary education are not of secondary school age.⁷



In 2019, 58 percent of Libyans completed at least one level of secondary education, reflecting a greater percentage of females with at least some secondary education than their male peers.⁸ Additionally, 32 percent of youth ages 15–24 are not in employment or education or training,⁹ a significant percentage of young people are disconnected from key institutional pathways related to school or work.



Numerous **systems-wide factors impact youth transitions and the interventions designed to support youth through this period.** Notable strengths and weaknesses related to the general and technical education systems include:



Strengths

-  Revenue from national resources enable the government to spend on educational reform and infrastructure.
-  TVET and HE level efforts at career guidance provide models that could be cascaded to secondary level.
-  Huge efforts by the international community to keep youth in Libya—part of this effort is enhancing education and providing more choices to students, more technical skills and better soft skills to enhance employability.
-  Ministry of Labor offers vocational training through private centers to those who drop out prior to completing basic education.¹¹

Weaknesses

-  Education system is in poor condition, with no textbooks in this academic year; students leave school with very poor academic and soft skills.
-  Lack of updated data on school enrollment, employment, graduate rates, gender, students with disabilities, etc.
-  Weak culture of pursuing TVET among youth, and related shortage of technical labor.
-  Teacher's payroll includes many who are not working.
-  No clear evidence of parental engagement in the education system.
-  Schools are not accommodating to people with disabilities, challenging to incorporate youth with disabilities in school-based programs.
-  Counseling techniques are outdated in relation to gender and career.

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

-  Decreased reliance on oil revenue has pushed youth to explore more career options.
-  Libya's location, tourist sites, and fishery sector provide youth with options beyond the oil sector.
-  Large youth initiative to mobilize youth at the university level, which could be leveraged to launch a service-learning program where older youth mentor and counsel younger youth (city year model).
-  USAID/Libya Youth Situational Assessment, conducted by youth, generated actionable information and recommendations on the integration of youth development into the full range of current and future USAID/Libya Mission programming, at both program and strategy levels.¹²

Threats

-  Dependency of the country on oil, lack of diversified economy.
-  Fragility of political situation with possibilities of frequent governmental changes and general overall instability.
-  Conflict is impacting the functioning of the educational system.
-  The deep tribal divide between west, east, and north.
-  The huge attraction to join militia groups as opposed education and employment presents challenges to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR).
-  The Ghaddafi era left a weak culture of entrepreneurship, risk taking, critical thinking and initiative mindset.
-  Ansar al-Sharia in Libya group is promoting distracted ideology, sometimes reaching schools.
-  Strong desire among youth to pursue career in the public sector, in which positions available are decreasing.

Interventions targeting the secondary school age group in Libya focus on:

EDUCATION. Programs offer infrastructure, equipment, tools, and mentoring to enhance the learning environment. There are also online platforms being developed to enhance the quality of education for adolescents and youth.

EMPLOYABILITY & TRAINING. Programs offer economic empowerment for vulnerable groups by teaching entrepreneurial skills to women and youth, enabling them to launch their own businesses. Some emphasize TVET training through “centers of excellence and career orientation.” Others support youth to launch start-ups in the Information Technology (IT) and the engineering sectors. There are efforts to reform TVET policy to promote quality TVET pathways through learning-by-doing approaches, entrepreneurship, digital skills, and gender equality. Programs to enhance regional cooperation in the field of TVET with focus on skills assessment were also noted.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION, SOFT SKILLS & LEARNING. Programs emphasize working with youth to develop their soft and emotional skills, project management, and leadership. Youth debate clubs at high schools and universities to promote dialogue, positive and peaceful communication, and the participation in the political process. There is growing interest in the government, donor community, and local stakeholders’ promotion of civic education, voter education, and citizenship for the in-school and out-of-school youth, as well as a focus on youth participation in reconciliation and peacebuilding.

KEY GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION AND FOUNDATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

USAID Libya Elections and Legislative Strengthening Activity (LESLA): National Democratic Institution (NDI)

- Program includes introducing youth debate programs in high schools (and universities) to promote dialogue, positive and peaceful communication, and the active participation of Libyan young people in political processes.^{10, 11}

Elham Education, Inspire Lab

- An educational company that has created an environment consisting of equipment, tools, mentors, a work environment, and online platforms to enhance the character of teens and raise their competence by improving the quality of education for children and youth (aged 4–17).¹²

INJAZ Al-Arab/ Junior Achievement Worldwide

- Core INJAZ work readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy curriculum for students; introduced in Libya in 2019.¹³

USAID LESLA: International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

- In partnership with the MOE, developed an age-appropriate curriculum for grades 4 to 12 that adapted to the values, customs, and culture of Libya. Important concepts for secondary level grades included, human rights and responsibilities to family and society, difference and coexistence, citizenship, volunteerism, participation in cultural life, caring for the environment, participation of women in society, peaceful transitions of power, elections and class elections, designed to encourage democratic participation and civic engagement among Libyan youth.¹⁴

USAID Promoting Leadership and Activism of Youth “Play for Peace”

- Aims to increase youth (aged 18–24) participation in reconciliation efforts providing safe spaces and skill building to foster positive relationships and collaborative attitudes to peacebuilding within and between communities.¹⁵

KEY SECONDARY-LEVEL TVET AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

UNESCO Youth Employment in the Mediterranean (YEM) Project

- Program to 1) improve the capacities of countries in the South Mediterranean region in assessing and understanding labor market demands and linking the results with future TVET policy and program decisions; 2) use the results of skills assessment and predictions to promote quality TVET pathways through learning by doing, entrepreneurship, and digital skills, and to improve gender equality; and 3) enhance regional cooperation in the field of TVET with a particular focus on skills assessment and anticipation issues.¹⁶

UNDP Strengthening Local Capacities for Resilience and Recovery Project

- Project aims are threefold: 1) provide basic services with access for vulnerable groups; 2) enforce local stability and community security; and 3) rehabilitate the local economy, by creating jobs and livelihoods, for example, targeting young Libyans and encouraging them to start-up businesses through the Libyan Social Development Fund in areas such as IT and engineering.¹⁷

EU/British Council Libya (TVET) Delivery and Development Project

- Pilot Centers of Excellence at TVET intermediate institutes (targets ages 15–26).
- Program components include: 1) leadership and management of technical institutes at the institutional level; 2) Training of Trainers (ToT) teacher training component; 3) Education and business partnership establishment; and 4) Career guidance network.
- Works with youth to develop their soft skills through participation in debate clubs and support them in developing their leadership and project management skills.¹⁸

USAID Libya Economic Empowerment Program

- Responded to challenging economic conditions, the program (which ended in 2019), offered opportunities for women and youth to develop entrepreneurial activities and to help promote economic growth and stability in the country.
- Included business plan competitions with financial prizes and youth innovation grants (youth age not specified).¹⁹

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

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