

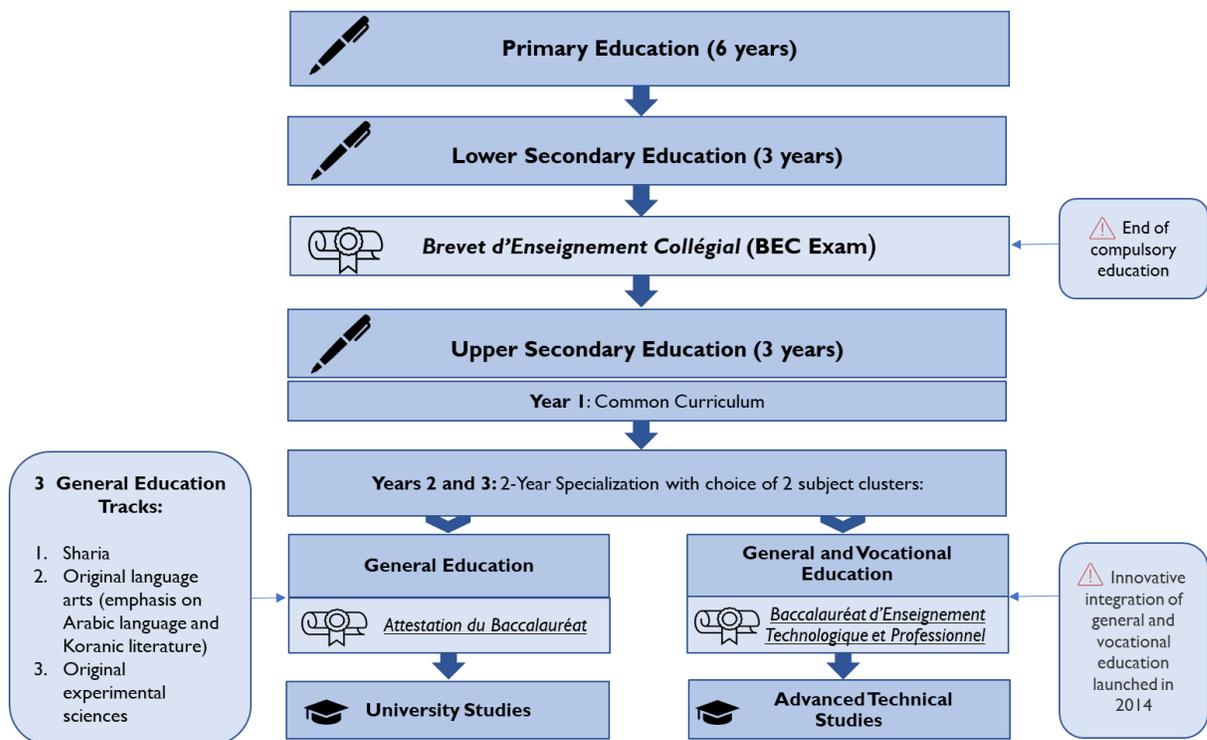


 **MOROCCO**

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 who have completed at least grade six, and are over 15 years old, can pass an exam to enter a two-year program leading to the award of the *Certificat de Formation Professionnelle*. Students who have completed the basic education cycle (nine years) and passed an entrance exam may enter a two-year program leading to the award of *Diplôme de Qualification Professionnelle (DQP)* in an area of specialization. The DQP is also open to those who have not

completed the basic education cycle but have relevant work experience and wish to upgrade their skills. Admission to the second year of *baccalauréat* studies is open to holders of the DQP who have spent time in the workforce and passed an entrance examination. Students who have completed the full 12 years of schooling, but not necessarily passed the *baccalauréat*, can undertake a two-year vocational program that leads to the award of the *Diplôme de Technicien*. Admission to technician pro-

-grams requires an entrance examination. Students who have dropped out of secondary studies after completing at least the first year of studies may also be eligible for entry into technician programs. The Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training launched the professional baccalaureate in the academic year 2014/15,² the goal of which is to improve the link of upper secondary school with vocational training and reduce drop-out.³

CAREER COUNSELING. In Morocco, career guidance has been an integral part of the formal curriculum of secondary schools since 1987–88, and the first national symposium on the subject was held by the Ministry of Education (MOE) in 2005. In 2015, the government embarked on the education reform process known as Vision 2030. The development of an efficient career education and guidance system was included in the strategic vision for the entire education and training sector setting out



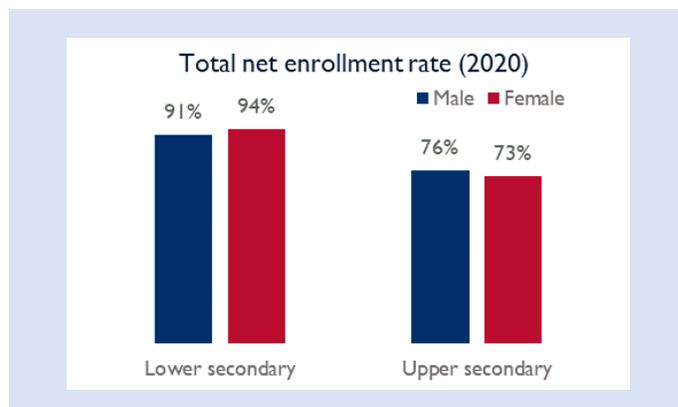
goals and objectives, such as the need to establish information and guidance support structures, numbers of qualified guidance staff required to support students in achieving a successful transition from education to employment. The process is underway, although a look back at goals achieved in the past shows a marked difference from reality, for example:

- Although it was estimated that annually about 300 new secondary level counselors are needed, between 2000–2010 there were an average of 56 per year who were trained.
- The framework and organization for the proposed professionalization of career guidance practitioners was not fully implemented.
- Most career education is offered as extra-curricular and not in formal curriculum. International projects have not been extended nationally, nor through all grade cycles.

- Career guidance tends to be very directive and over-promote TVET, rather than support the student in making an informed choice based on skills, academic achievement and career aspirations.

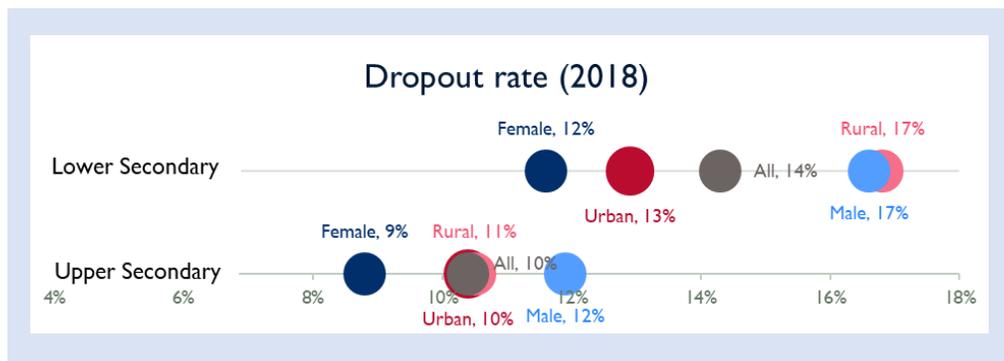
The development of career guidance services, despite the ambitious Vision 2030 strategy for educational reform have proved to be challenging. Government policies have not been implemented consistently throughout all geographical regions or all levels of the educational system. Many of the interventions involving international donors, which have career guidance embedded, are extracurricular, and risk disappearing once funding is no longer available. And despite best intentions to provide robust, student-directed career guidance, “Morocco is no exception when it comes to valuing guidance for its potential in channeling students towards TVET.”⁴

KEY STATISTICS. In Morocco, there is an overall decrease in net enrollment from lower secondary to upper secondary, meaning that this is a key transition point where students leave formal education. Net enrollment data demonstrate the ratio of children of official school age who are enrolled in school to the population of the corresponding official school age. Female net enrollment is higher (94 percent) than male peers in lower secondary (92 percent); however, at the upper secondary level, male school-peers (75 percent) outnumber the net enrollment of female students (73 percent).



More specifically, the following graphic illustrates dropout rates. At the lower secondary level, the highest rates are observed in rural youth and among male students.⁵ Similarly, at the upper secondary level, male youth also lead in the dropout rate; however, interestingly, urban and rural youth (across genders) demonstrate similar rates of dropout. At both levels of secondary schooling, female students tend to drop out less frequently than male

students.⁵ Since 2017, the rate of adolescents who are out of school has declined among women and men, with rates for women dropping from nearly 14 percent in 2017 to 8.5 percent in 2020. For men, dropout rates over this same period began at approximately 8.5 percent and fell to just under 6 percent.



TECHNICAL & VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS. The rate of student enrollment in vocational programs has remained essentially flat over the past four years. As expected, there are very low levels of vocational education at the lower secondary level (4 percent), while even at the upper secondary level, rates of student enrollment in vocational education hover around 15–16 percent.⁶

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



The Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOE) Vision 2030 Strategy showcases MOE's focus on education. It is a 15-year development model that aims to turn the country into a regional hub for higher education, research, and innovation in order to attract students from the African continent and beyond.⁷



In July 2019, the parliament passed a law offering broad reforms of the education system, including the alignment of elementary and secondary education programs. A recent MEERS study proposed recommendations to streamline curricula across primary and secondary grades.⁸



MOE desire to improve inclusive education for learners with disabilities and 'second chance' options for those who drop out.



USAID Morocco Career Centers have successfully brought career advising and services to universities and TVET colleges across the country, and discussions are underway to adapt and integrate aspects of programming at the secondary level.⁹

Weaknesses



Disparity in income and limited access to schooling in rural areas and urban slums.



Significant dropout across grades: enrollment is high in primary schooling, but drops to 34.5 percent in secondary school, and only half of these students finish Grade 12. Less than 10 percent of students enroll in tertiary education.



Lack of equity and inclusiveness is a persistent problem. The overall literacy rate in Morocco is 67.1 percent, with that of women lagging at 57.6 percent.¹⁰



Poor school infrastructure and limited digital access in rural areas.



Low compensation, lack of pay transparency, and limited professional development opportunities for teachers.



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.



Lack of connection between curriculum and future work.



Few Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs), those that exist mainly operate at private schools.¹¹



Strong culture of parents pushing their children to pursue specific educational topics (medicine or engineering) to achieve social status or adhere to family pressure.

The macro-environment frames 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

-  Openness to career guidance at the tertiary level may present roadmap to introducing at earlier levels of schooling and acceptability (or demand for) career services.
-  The Government of Morocco launched one of the largest solar farms in the Nour region — green economy jobs are attractive to young Moroccans.
-  Growing interest in TVET by donors, such as the Millennium Challenge Corporation, could be built on to improve TVET status, quality, and relationships with private sector employers.¹²
-  The Moroccan diaspora in Europe contributes to economic growth. In 2018, remittances were 6 percent of GDP.¹³

Threats

-  High desire among youth to immigrate.
-  Limited job opportunities in rural areas.
-  Morocco ranks 144 out of 156 countries in the Global Gender Gap Index, which assesses progress towards gender parity.¹⁴
-  Women experience frequent harassment on public transportation, creating barriers to their safe participation in education, work, and civic engagement.¹⁵
-  COVID-19: An impact example, according to USAID's Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), tourism sector dropped by \$1.2 billion (63 percent) in the first half of 2020 and the textile export sector lost \$544 million. Approximately 10,000 small business bankruptcies are expected by early 2021 and the Moroccan Ministry of Finance estimates the Moroccan economy will decrease by 8 percent in 2021 as a result of the pandemic.
-  Strong desire among youth to pursue careers in the public sector, in which positions available are decreasing.

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

EDUCATION. Programs to enrich school-based learning emphasize enhancing the quality of curriculum to make it more relevant to work, pivoting into digital content delivery due to COVID-19, shifting pedagogy to be student-focused and project based, and supporting learners with disabilities.

EMPLOYABILITY & TRAINING. Programs emphasize enhancing the quality of TVET, bolstering one-stop career and counseling centers, collaborating with CSOs and Youth Serving Organizations, offering work readiness training including entrepreneurship training, financial literacy, and on-the-job training.

SKILLS & LEARNING. Programs emphasize reaching out-of-school youth to reintegrate them into the education system, connecting them to sustainable jobs, offering soft and language skills (ex: UNICEF's twelve core life skills curricula), reducing dropout in upper secondary schools, and developing tools to enhance learning outcomes such as distance learning, individual and social learning, and informal learning opportunities.

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

KEY GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION AND FOUNDATIONAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

INJAZ Morocco

- Active over 10 years and offers three sets of training including a) entrepreneurship; b) work readiness; and c) financial literacy.
- Curricula prepare K-12 and college students for the world of work either for direct employment or self-employment.
- Contribute to strengthening the links between the educational and the private sector, instill a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship among youth, enhance their creativity, and help them develop a sense of responsibility by introducing them to the business world.¹⁶

USAID FORSATY Program (in partnership with IYF)

- Aims to help build capacities, facilitate citizen participation, and ensure sustainable participatory governance.
- Works closely with different public youth-serving institutions and local civil society organizations (CSOs).
- Focus on north of Morocco to strengthen social and economic inclusion of vulnerable youth (10-24 years old) living in marginalized communities.
- Approach includes providing youth-friendly services to help control dropout rates and increase employability, create stronger synergies within communities, and build the local capacity of youth-targeted institutions.¹⁷

USAID Morocco - 'Advancing Learning and Employability for a Better Future' (ALEF)

- Aimed to make the curriculum more relevant to life: goal to improve the quality and relevance of primary and junior secondary schooling as well as of vocational training, thus contributing to the employability of Morocco's youth.
- The project introduced important content and skills drawn from the local economic and social setting to help students learn more effectively.
- The project trained national education experts on innovative, quality learning tools.
- Program ran from 2004-2009; however, experts trained under the program led the large-scale production of online courses after the coronavirus affected Morocco's education system.^{18,19}

UNDP - Ministry of Education: Solidarity Against COVID-19

- Created a platform to introduce and support efforts that people in countries around the region are making to stop the spread of COVID-19, show solidarity, and cope with the impacts.
- The initiative brings together local solutions that are creating essential health products, generating employment opportunities, and securing basic services for people.
- As part of the campaign, the MOE kicked off a website platform as a distance learning initiative aiming to support students to continue their education under governmental restrictions to control the spread of COVID-19.²⁰

USAID Advancing Disability Inclusion Education

- Interventions: a) reach pre-primary, primary and secondary education students; b) prepare youth for work and their higher education study; c) improve the transition to higher education and train personnel who support people with disabilities; and d) increase disability data collection and use.
- As a response to COVID-19: a) adapted digital courses that incorporated Moroccan Sign Language, and b) designed a project to establish a national deaf education teacher preparation and professional development program.²¹

UNICEF - Reimagining Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) in the Middle East and North Africa

- Since 2015, LSCE aims to improve learning and to invest in individual and social learning and economic development, through conceptual, programmatic and technical support.
- Operates through formal, non-formal, and informal learning: twelve core life skills are acquired and sustained.
- Initially implemented at grade 6 and centered on student development of a personal project, which is designed to develop into a student "portfolio" at the secondary level.²²

KEY SECONDARY-LEVEL TVET AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INTERVENTIONS

MCC's 'Morocco Employability and Land Compact'

- 'Integrated School Improvement Model' for delivering quality education focused on employability skills: includes soft skills, language skills, job-readiness skills, and technical knowledge.
- Education and Training for Employability Project consists of two activities, one that focused on enhancing the quality of secondary education and the other is focused on increasing the quality and convenience of TVET.²³

World Bank - Supporting the Economic Inclusion of Youth project

- "One-stop-centers," targeting out-of-school youth and adults.
- Provide career guidance as well as on-the-job training, identify the needs of the local private sector and equip young people with the relevant skills and information to access and maximize these opportunities.
- Managed under the supervision of Morocco's employment agency (ANAPEC).
- Centers designed to establish greater synergies between existing national programs, the private sector, and the relevant public authorities.²⁴

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