

2022 JOINT EDUCATION NEED ASSESSMENT - LIBYA (JENA)

April 2023

About REACH

REACH facilitates the development of information tools and products that enhance the capacity of aid actors to make evidence-based decisions in emergency, recovery, and development contexts. The methodologies used by REACH include primary data collection and in-depth analysis, and all activities are conducted through inter-agency aid coordination mechanisms. REACH is a joint initiative of IMPACT Initiatives, ACTED and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research - Operational Satellite Applications Programme (UNITAR-UNOSAT). For more information, please visit [our website](#). You can contact us directly at: geneva@reach-initiative.org and follow us on Twitter @REACH_info.

SUMMARY

Based on the 2023 Humanitarian Overview¹ for Libya, it is estimated that approximately 156,000 children in the IDP, returnee, and other populations require humanitarian aid in Libya. A decade of conflict and violence has severely impacted educational infrastructure, resulting in the closure of many schools and the use of others as shelters for displaced families². The economic crisis has further exacerbated this situation, with periodic maintenance and the supply of stationary and textbooks being delayed due to limited resources, for instance, due to lack of funding, logistics challenges, and supply chain disruption. In addition, insecurity in school environments and long power outages have hindered the educational process. The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the situation, resulting in school closures and affecting 1.3 million school-aged children³, particularly due to challenges in accessing distance and online learning. Moreover, limited resources have been allocated to teacher development as well as support for inclusive education, leading to a lack of capacity to integrate children with disabilities into the formal school system. Past assessments conducted by the Education Sector, such as the Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA)⁴ in 2019 and INGO-led protection assessments⁵, have identified the need for more inclusive solutions and capacity-building to address these issues.

Despite regular nationwide data collection exercises in Libya, such as the Displacement Tracking Matrix led by International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the Multi-Sector Needs Assessment (MSNA) conducted by REACH, significant gaps remain in critical areas of education, exacerbated by the lack of a quality data system (Education Management Information System (EMIS)) to collect data, impacting on strategic planning processes within the Ministry of Education. Although the 2019 Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) did not cover the eastern region of Libya owing to a teachers' strike during the data collection period, the 2022 JENA was able to encompass all three regions of Libya. The primary objective of the 2022 JENA is to address persisting information gaps related to education needs and capacities within the formal schooling system. The findings obtained through the JENA survey may support programming decisions in the Ministry of Education and to international organizations, humanitarian, and development actors working in the education sector in Libya, with regards to findings to teachers and other school personnel as well as insights into the challenges and outcomes of the standard curriculum. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) data collected on the teachers' qualifications and teaching practices may be utilized to develop teacher training activities by the Ministry of Education.

The findings of the JENA may also inform the direction of the Education Cannot Wait – Multi-Year Resilience Programme (ECW – MYRP) 2022-2024. The overarching goal of the ECW-MYRP for Libya is to sustainably improve access to inclusive and equitable quality education for children in Libya. Within the ECW-MYRP P framework, REACH plans conduct multiple assessments, in education and child protection. The JENA will also provide analysis and input to the Collective Outcome 3.1 – Social & Human Capital Development of the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF)⁶.

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Enrolment and barriers to Enrolment

In general, the majority of participants reported that the principal drivers for accessing and maintaining continuous education in Libya included the **provision of free and mandatory** education⁷ per law, the

¹ OCHA, [Libya Humanitarian Overview 2023](#), December 2022.

² OCHA, Libya Humanitarian Access Snapshot -Education, OCHA 2021

³ OCHA, [Humanitarian Needs Overview Libya – 2022 Extension](#), December 2021

⁴ Libya [Education Sector. Joint Education Needs Assessment: Report](#), December 2019

⁵ WW-GVC, [Protection Analysis Report in the South of Libya](#), May 2022

⁶ UN Country Team Libya, [Libya: United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2025](#), October 2022

⁷ There are other limitations to the “free and compulsory” nature of education in Libya as indicated by the respondents in the assessment. For instance, Libyan children could face these barriers to enroll in public schools, the absence of necessary documentations and high education related expenditures.

integration of internally displaced persons, and the use of the television channel "Education Libya" for remote learning during the pandemic outbreak.

The Ministry of Education facilitated the integration Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) households by enabling respectively IDPs children to enroll and IDP teachers to work at the nearest school to their current place of residence. This policy was introduced with the aim of alleviating the negative impact of internal displacement on educational accessibility. Nevertheless, the absence of proper documentation continues to be a primary barrier for IDPs in accessing formal education, as the provision of documents is still mandatory for enrollment and attendance at formal schools⁸.

The majority of participants in the assessment reported that the primary challenge to the provision of quality education in Libya is the lack of resources at central level, impacting the budgeting and management policies at the baladiya level. Respondents reported insufficiencies in essential equipment, including computers, seats, laboratories, charts, and other teaching and learning materials. Respondents further identified some shortcomings at the national level, the supply of schoolbooks and textbooks is centralized and suffers from delays at the beginning of the school year.

Attendance and child protection risks

The majority of respondents in Libya have reported that school dropouts⁹ are limited, and largely be attributed to financial difficulties and the lack of motivation to prioritise education at the household level. Despite education being free of charge, families may still face the burden of transportation fees and other education-related expenditures, which may lead to children dropping out of school and working outside of the home to provide financial support to their families. Moreover, teachers have reported that male students sometimes opt to attend police and military academies as an alternative to secondary education, which would provide them with quick employment opportunities and integration into the labor market. As for girls, respondents have reported that female students tend to drop out of school due to child marriage and conservative social norms. Some parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school after they reach puberty, particularly before they start secondary education.

According to the testimony of Key Informants (Key Informants) and participants in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), several obstacles impeded access to education in Libya. The primary barriers identified were school closures, damaged or incomplete school infrastructure rehabilitation, inadequate municipal infrastructure, and adverse weather events. Respondents in both FGDs and KIIs reported that school closures were a major hindrance to education access. Due to conflicts or the COVID-19 pandemic, children and teachers were unable to attend school. The infrastructure of schools has been damaged by conflicts and wars in Libya. As a result, the damage has impacted access to education as buildings were not in suitable conditions and repairs have taken a long time.

Teachers' qualification

The predominant qualification for teachers appears to be a university degree, though graduation from a teaching program does not appear to be a prerequisite for teaching, as most respondents reported. Teachers typically do not receive any additional training prior to commencing their teaching careers and that there is a notable absence of continuous professional development opportunities. Respondents highlighted the urgent need for pedagogical training among newly hired teachers. Teachers also reported lacking training and development in the use of technology in the teaching process. In regards

⁸ Libyan Ministry Of Education, [مركز ضمان واعتماد المؤسسات التعليمية تحدّد المستندات المطلوبة لمعادلة المؤهلات العلمية](#), accessed on 25th April 2023

⁹ Both Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and UNESCO definitions were used in the assessment: A dropout is a pupil who was enrolled in the beginning of the school year and has left before the end of school year and was not enrolled elsewhere. A student who leaves school definitively in a given school year, according to INEE. While according to UNESCO, a dropout child is a child who was enrolled in a given grade at a given school year but is no longer enrolled in the following school year.

to in-service training, Key Informants conveyed that teachers do receive some training, although it is limited in both frequency and scope. Training and workshops are organized through the Local Education Board training center, which operates on a municipal level and functions under the Ministry of Education.

The Libyan curriculum and quality of education

In general, a majority of respondents reported that they do not consider the current curriculum in Libya suitable for meeting the requirements of society and the job market. Teachers have identified that the current Libyan curriculum is outdated, and there is a lack of coherence and clarity in the lessons and the information presented in the textbooks. The respondents noted that the curriculum requires resources for sciences subject that are not available at school level. Consequently, teachers reported difficulties in delivering the curriculum appropriately. Respondents recommended that the Libyan curriculum be modernized, and its modalities be improved.

Following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Education implemented several measures to mitigate its impact on education. One such measure was the adoption of a condensed curriculum as schools reopened. Furthermore, students were promoted to the next grade level without undergoing evaluation. Teachers have reported that these measures had a negative impact on the quality of education as the timely conclusion of the curriculum was prioritized over the quality and attention necessary to address the accumulated learning loss. The teachers also reported suffering from stress and exhaustion, which affected their mental and physical wellbeing. The implementation of the condensed curriculum necessitated the deletion of some lessons and modalities from the school program, which exacerbated the learning loss. The majority of teachers faced challenges when attempting to compensate for the learning loss, as they lacked the time and resources necessary to do so.

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List of Acronyms

DTM:	Displacement Tracking Matrix
EAWG:	Education Access Working Group
ECW/MYRP:	Education Cannot Wait – Multi-Year Resilience Programme
EMIS:	Education Management Information System
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
HNO:	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP:	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP(s):	Internally Displaced Person(s)
II:	Individual Interviews
INEE:	Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies
INGO:	International Non-Governmental Organization
JENA:	Joint Education Needs Assessment
KII:	Key Informant Interview
MoE:	Ministry of Education
MSNA:	Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment
PSS:	Psychosocial Support
PTSD:	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
SDR:	Secondary Data Review
STEM:	Science, Technology, Engineering and Math
UNICEF:	The United Nation International Children’s Emergency Fund
WASH:	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene

Geographical Classifications

Mantika: Administrative division corresponding to admin level 2. No data was collected at mantika level, however mantika selection was the first step of geographical sampling of areas.

Baladiya: Administrative division that can be translated as "municipality". It corresponds to administrative level 3.

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INTRODUCTION

Libya's education sector is facing substantial challenges that are impeding access to quality education particularly concerning gender disparities in educational outcomes. These challenges are multifaceted and include limited resources for teacher development, unfinished rehabilitation of schools, and barriers to distance learning. In order to address these challenges, there needs to be a prioritization of investment in the education sector.

A Secondary Data Review (SDR) was conducted to identify information gaps in education access for both boys and girls nationwide, analyse the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on the education system, evaluate teacher availability and capacity development opportunities, and assess the revision of public school curricula. The objective of this review was to provide stakeholders and partners with a comprehensive analysis of needs within the Libyan education sector from a recovery, stabilization, and development viewpoint, with a particular focus on access to basic quality education. The assessment aimed to examine current facilitators and barriers to education and learning, as well as the qualifications, capacities, and needs of teachers and education personnel, to equip education bodies and actors with the necessary information to plan and execute an effective response, including emergency intervention.

The report is divided into two main sections. The first section outlines the methodology of the study, including the geographical scope, sampling strategy, data collection methods, analysis, challenges, and limitations. The second section outlines the findings of the primary data analysis based on the INEE minimum standard domains, including Access and Learning Environment, Learning and Teaching Environment, and Teachers and Other Education Personnel.

The section on **Access and Learning Environment** provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors that affect access to education. This section specifically focuses on the impact of conflict and the COVID-19 pandemic on school closures, attendance and enrollment rates, and the inclusivity of education. Additionally, this section evaluates the learning environment, with a specific focus on the school infrastructure, and the overall school environment.

In the **Learning and Teaching** section, the teaching environment is examined, including the availability of teaching materials and resources in public schools, the support provided by external actors to mitigate the shortage of education materials, and the relevance and quality of the Libyan curriculum during and after the pandemic. This section also includes a discussion on the implementation of the "condensed" curricula that were introduced following the school reopening and the challenges related to implementation.

Finally, the **Teachers and Other Education Personnel** section provides information and findings related to teachers', attendance levels, qualifications and training and working conditions. The section seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the situation faced by teachers in Libya and the factors that affect their performance and ability to deliver quality education to students.

METHODOLOGY

The aim of this research was to enhance the understanding of the education situation in Libya by providing up-to-date data and analysis to education actors in Libya, to help inform decision-making and programming. The specific objectives of this assessment were to:

- Provide data and analysis to stakeholders and partners of the Libyan education sector from both a humanitarian and nexus standpoint (recovery, stabilization, and development), with special attention given to access to basic quality education.
- Provide stakeholders and partners with data and analysis on the qualifications and capacities of teachers and other education personnel.
- Provide Education partners with data to plan and execute education interventions.

- Identify future steps for assessments, including those under Education Cannot Wait’s Multi-Year Resilience Programme for 2022-2024.

To conduct the assessment, a two-stage methodology was adopted. In the first stage, a comprehensive review of secondary data on the education field in Libya was carried out, to identify information gaps and inform the design of primary data collection. The second stage involved conducting interviews with various stakeholders. Structured and semi-structured tools were employed to conduct key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and individual interviews (IIs), which provide insights into education needs, challenges, and priorities at the national, municipal, and school level in Libya, as well as for various population groups. At the national level, Ministry of Education employees were targeted with Key Informant Interviews. At the baladiya level, Local Education Board member were targeted with Key Informant Interviews; KIIs at school level targeted school principals. Teachers, and parents and caregivers were targeted through FGDs. In order to supplement the information gathered at the baladiya or school level, further interviews with parents were conducted to gather information pertaining to their socioeconomic status and school expenditures. These interviews were conducted with the same parents and caregivers who had participated in the FGDs.

The Secondary Data Report and research design were developed with the input of multiple stakeholders, including Education specialists at REACH HQ level who provided guidance on assessment design and were part of the SDR task force. The Cluster members in-country also provided comments and feedback during the drafting of the SDR report. The tools for primary data collection were shared with the Libyan Ministry of Education for review and updated based on their feedback.

Vertical Case Studies and their use in Education research

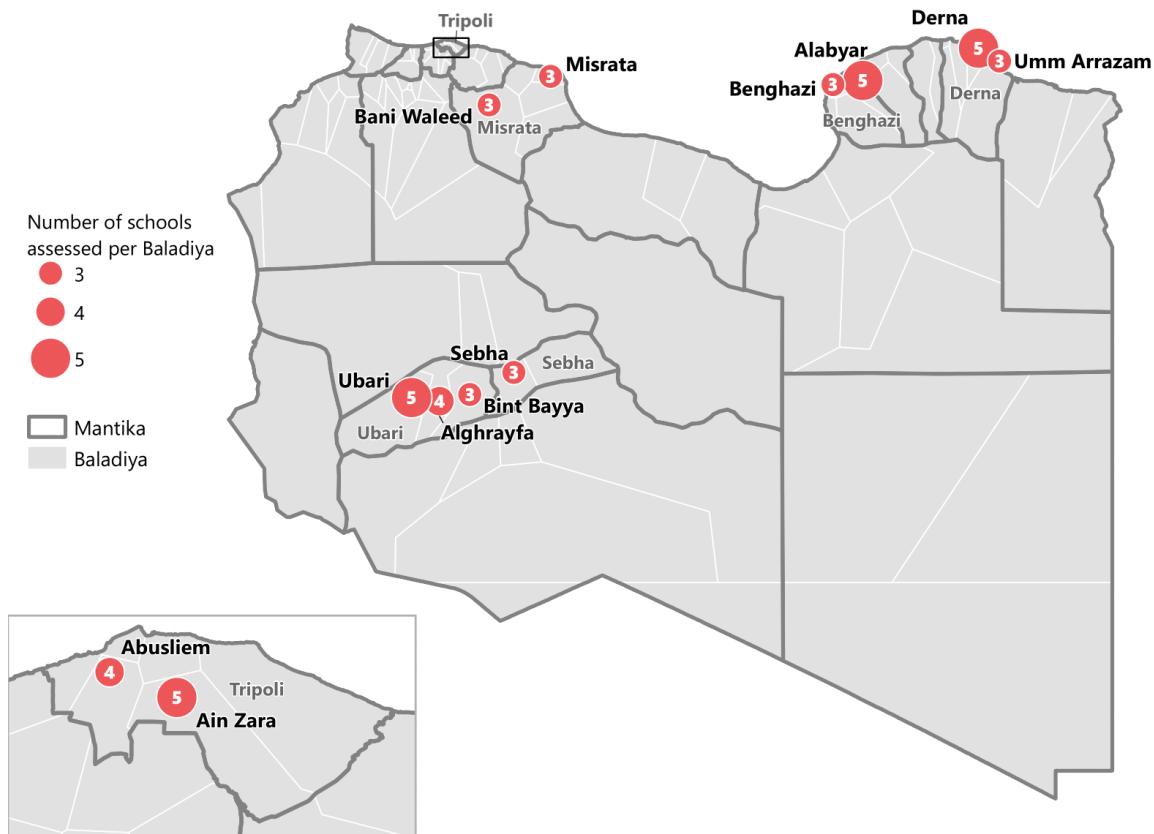
Vertical studies use a multi-level design in order to achieve a more complete and balanced understandings. A point of strength of multi-level analyses (Bray and Thomas, 1995) is that they consider their subjects from different angles facilitating a more comprehensive and possible more accurate presentation of the phenomena they address. Vertical case studies build up on the multi-level analysis to include the comparison among actors with different social locations in a vertically bounded analysis. The introduction of vertical studies in education research was proposed by Vavrus and Bartlett (2006) to reduce researcher bias, and increase the alignment between the constructs to research on (e.g. literacy) and the understanding of such of the respondents.

Geographical scope

The assessment covered twelve baladiyat (administrative level 3) among six mantikat (administrative level 2). The mantikat were purposively selected based on least access to high-quality education as per 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview data. The six mantikat of Benghazi, Derna, Misrata, Sebha, Tripoli and Ubari were initially selected. Within each mantika, two to three baladiyat (municipalities) were selected, based on the size of the baladiya and the number of schools present, the highest education needs according to MSNA¹⁰ and DTM¹¹ findings. Special attention was made to include both rural and urban baladiyat in the selection.

Further, the scope of the analysis is threefold, using the structure of the vertical case study approach. The first unit of analysis is nationwide, which is addressed through the scoping interviews with Ministry of Education officials at national level. Secondly, the baladiya level was investigated through the KIIs with public servants in the Local Education Board. Lastly, the school level was assessed with KIIs with school principals, and with 2 sets of FGDs held with teachers and parents. Also individual Interviews (IIs) conducted with parents gathered complementary information at household level.

1: Map of assessed schools per baladiya



Sampling strategy

The population of interest for this assessment encompassed school-aged children (between the age of 6 and 17). Due to child safeguarding considerations¹², REACH did not conduct interviews with children

¹⁰ REACH, [2022one Libyan population MSNA](#) (published May 2022)

¹¹ IOM-DTM, [IDP and Returnee report – Round 41](#), published July 2022

¹² The safeguarding considerations that ground REACH's policy on data collection with minors call for the preferring to use proxy respondents (such as parents and caregivers) in all cases where they are able to provide similar information. In the case of JENA,

directly; information for this population group was therefore collected through their parents or caregivers (through individual interviews and the participation in FGDs, Through its school-based approach, the JENA targeted teachers and education personnel in the assessed locations.

Formal schools within each mantika were identified purposively by the Ministry of Education, in consultation with REACH and UNICEF. A special attention was given to schools with special education needs (pre-identified by the Ministry of Education, the heads of the municipal education authorities, and the Education Sector). A random selection of schools was not possible, as Libya does not yet have a fully functioning Education Management Information System (EMIS), which could have offered a probability sampling of schools. In total, 42 official schools in the Libyan educational system.

Gender disaggregated data shows that 500 women and 427 men were interviewed. For Key Informant Interviews, 17 women and 68 men were interviewed. Individual interviews and FGDs with parents and caregivers, targeted 155 women and 122 men,¹³. Additionally, 328 female and 237 males participated in the teacher FGDs.

Data collectors ensured that respondents had clear and sufficient information about the research objectives and tools and all participants gave informed consent to participate. Data collection took place between the 13th of November 2022 and 17th of December 2022.

Table 1. Number of schools per baladiya

Mantika	Baladiya	Number of public schools assessed
Tripoli	Abu Selim	4
	Ain Zara	5
Misrata	Misrata	4
	Bani Waleed	4
Ubari	Ubari	3
	Alghreyfa	3
Sebha	Bint Beyya	3
	Sebha	3
Benghazi	Benghazi	2
	Al Abyar	3
Derna	Derna	5
	Umm Arrazzam	3

the research questions formulation allowed for similar information to be collected by adults informed on children's experience with teachers, learning, and school infrastructure. See also: IASC [Guidelines on Working With and for Young People in Humanitarian and Protracted Crises](#) (February 2021); UNICEF; [What we know about ethical research involving children in humanitarian settings](#) (June 2016); Global Protection Cluster; [Minimum standards for child protection in humanitarian action](#)

¹³ The numbers of IIs are the same as the number of participants in the FGDs, for that the participants in the IIs are the same profiles participating in the FGDs. The data collection occurred on the same day, as the IIs were conducted before the launch of the focus group discussions.

Table 2. Number of KIIs, FGDs, and IIs conducted

Data collection method	Target group	Total number of KII/FGD/II conducted
Semi-structured Key Informant Interviews	Ministry of Education Officials at the national level	4
	Ministry of Education Officials at the baladiya level (Local Education Board)	35
	School principals	46
FGDs	Teachers at school level	47
	Parents and caregivers of children enrolled in the school	47
Individual Interviews	Parents and caregivers of children enrolled in the school	215

Data Analysis

Cleaning and analysis stage entailed follow up with respondents and translation from the original transcripts in Arabic. Qualitative analysis was performed through NVivo following inductive coding and saturation grids. For more information on the methodology and analysis plan, please consult this assessment's Terms of Reference on REACH Resource center¹⁴.

Challenges and Limitations

During the data collection process, there were various challenges that were encountered. These challenges included extreme weather events and fragmented governance mechanisms between the western and eastern regions. Additionally, there were limitations to the study that need to be considered. Firstly, the sample composition of education personnel in the focus group discussions was not as intended. The initial plan was to involve non-teaching school personnel, but eventually, only teachers were included in the discussions. Secondly, the study's scope is limited by the absence of quantitative data collection at the school level, which makes it difficult to extrapolate the findings to the broader Libyan context. Lastly, the household-level quantitative information on families' education-related expenditures should be considered indicative only.

FINDINGS

Access and Learning Environment

This sub-section outlines the findings related to the main barriers and facilitators to access education, with specific attention to school closures in the past three years, attendance and enrolment, inclusion of children with disabilities in the public school system, information on school infrastructure and the school environment, and child protection risks inside the school and around the school's perimeter.

Enrolment

The Ministry of Education's statistics¹⁵ reports that 1,774,614 students were currently enrolled in basic education as of May 2022. Among them, 1,766,481 (99%) were enrolled in regular public schools; 3,780 were home-schooled, 1,427 were receiving evening education, and the remaining 2,926 are studying

¹⁴ REACH, [Joint Education Need Assessment Terms of Reference](#), November 2022

¹⁵ Ministry of Education, [Statistics](#), accessed on 25th April 2023

at home. The number of secondary education students as of May 2022 is of 317,222 students, of which 172,094 are following the scientific department, 36,870 the literary department, 108,237 are enrolled in first secondary school and 21 are enrolled in religious secondary education. Among secondary education students, nearly all (98%) were enrolled in regular schools, with the remaining 5,876 receiving education in house and 297 benefiting from evening classes.

(i) Legal framework and policymaking in school enrolment

Enabling access to education is closely tied to the provision of formal rights and policies. The legal framework¹⁶ allowing for compulsory and free education for all children is the main enabler for accessing education in Libya, according to respondents. Additionally, Key Informants highlighted other enablers such as allowing IDP children to enrol in any school in their location of displacement and allowing parents of Libyan children to enrol their children in the nearest school without necessary documentation.

(ii) Integration of children with disabilities

Children with disabilities are identified as the group most likely to face barriers to accessing formal education. The lack of schools equipped to provide adequate learning environments for children with disabilities is a significant barrier to their enrolment, according to the respondents. Crowded classrooms and a shortage of qualified teachers for children with disabilities are the primary obstacles at the school level. School infrastructures, needs to become more accessible to address the specific mobility needs of children with various motor impairments. Furthermore, WASH facilities need to be adapted to the needs of children with disabilities.

The Ministry of Education is making progress in supporting children with disabilities. There is a national policy to include all children with learning disabilities in dedicated special needs schools. The Ministry of Education has implemented a case-by-case assessment policy and a dedicated policy to pilot Endimaj¹⁷ schools, as the Ministry of Education aims to implementing this policy across all municipalities, Efforts in the formal school system to include children with disabilities schools are focused on integrating children with disabilities such as dedicated classrooms on the ground floor and awareness raising courses for teachers, school principals, social workers and counselors that would better respond to specific needs and reduce exposure to bullying and discrimination.

Barriers hindering students to regularly attend and continue their education

(iii) School dropouts

School drop out is reportedly low in Libya for children up to and including grade 9. Respondents reported that their institutions had not experienced any instances of students dropping out and that there was no recent correlation between school dropouts and conflict or displacement.

FGD participants highlighted that there is a higher prevalence of dropouts at certain grades due to financial issues, family problems, and neglect as the primary reasons for children dropping out of school. This finding is consistent with what was reported by Key Informants, according to whom, school-aged girls tend to drop out mostly at the secondary school level, driven by the lack of interest of families for their girls to pursue post-secondary education and child marriage which is often an economic decision

¹⁶ [Education Law No. 95 of 1975](#) provides that all children who six years of age are, both females and males, are commanded to enroll into schools. The law further reinforces the compulsory nature of education in Libya and sets the ground for report to the police in case of school withdrawal, or child labor.

¹⁷ Endimaj, or integrated schools, are pilot schools for the integration of children with disabilities in the classes.

made at the family level. In addition, girls may be motivated to leave school to apply for social protection schemes, such as the *"wife and children grant."*¹⁸

School-aged boys appear to be more exposed to dropout due to the need to work and contribute to the family's financial stability. Child labor is associated with financial issues and is one of the most commonly reported reasons for dropping out or non-attendance of school-aged boys. To address financial obstacles to school attendance and reduce dropout rates, respondents suggested providing students and their caregivers with financial support and transportation.

During the FGDs, participants provided recommendations to reduce the risk of student dropout. Sensitizing parents could help address issues with early marriage, and provision of financial support to female students through scholarships, along with psychological assistance from social service workers and counsellors could address girls dropping out of school. Respondents also mentioned the importance of sensitization and the involvement of social workers. In addition, financial support for families and students through grants and scholarships to limit the need for children to work and therefore reduce dropout rates among boys was also suggested. Respondents proposed improving communication with caregivers (through parents' councils) and students, finally other recommendations included improving teaching methods and equipment in schools such as recreational activities, a safe and healthy school environment, remedial classes, teacher training, and using modern teaching methods) and enforcing laws that prohibit early marriage¹⁹ in Libya.

(iv) Parents' expenditure in a school year

Financial hardships were found to be one of the leading causes for children dropping out of school and/or affecting their school attendance. In addition, parents and caregivers provided information on education expenditures.

The households under assessment comprised of between one and eight school-aged children, totaling 221 children. Four of these children were identified by their parents or caregivers as having disabilities, 91% of school-aged children were enrolled in formal schools in 2022, with 90% attending²⁰ classes therein.

Regarding primary employment, 32% of respondents identified as working in the education sector (inclusive of teachers, university professors, school principals, and administrative officers), while 12% are public officers²¹. Furthermore, 12% of respondents identified as daily workers²², with approximately 11% engaged in labor-intensive professions such as agro-fishery and transportation. A further 7% identified as skilled labor professionals such as accountants, bankers, and lawyers. On average, teachers in Libya earned around 1,500 Libyan dinars (LYD) per month in 2021, equivalent to approximately \$340 US Dollars. It is worth noting, however, that the salaries of teachers vary depending on factors such as experience, level of education, and location.

¹⁸ The Key Informants referred to the Wife and Children's Grant, which is a universal family allowance system provided by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) that provides financial support to all Libyan children and some Libyan married and unmarried women. As of 2021, it was the only universal child allowance in the country. The program was inactive for several years; however, it was meant to be reactivated in 2021. The legislative ground of the Wife and Children's grant is the Law No. 27 on Allowances for Children and Wives (2013). For more information on social protection schemes in Libya, please consult the relevant REACH study, Social protection system for children in Libya. Literature review, November 2021

¹⁹ Art. 6 of the Family Law stipulates that the minimum age for marriage for women and men is 20. The court may allow persons under 20 to marry if there is a specific reason, benefit, or necessity for the marriage.

²⁰ School attendance is attendance at any regular accredited educational institution or program, public or private, for organized learning at any level of education at the time of the census or, if the census is taken during the vacation period at the end of the school year, during the last school year (OECD, n.d.), [IIEP Learning Portal](#), [UNESCO](#)

²¹ Public officers are all individuals that work under governmental entities and institutions.

²² Daily workers are all individuals who are typically engaged in blue collar jobs with low wages and/or work odd jobs.

The majority of parents and guardians responded that they spent between 1000 LYD (207 USD) and 7,400 LYD (1525 USD) on education expenses for children per year in their household. The average amount was 2,000 LYD (400 USD), with an average per capita cost of 615 LYD (126 USD). This allocation of funds is relatively high, given that the average minimum wage per month in Libya is 1,000 LYD²³. This is in line with the data, which suggests that financial constraints hinder children's regular attendance at school and may even result in them dropping out.

For parents who are employed in the education sector, they reported spending between 700 LYD (144 USD) and 6,000 LYD (1237 USD) per year on education-related expenses. These results are consistent with data collected, as respondents reported financial difficulties that affected their performance in school and led them to seek additional sources of income.

When parents and caregivers were asked to describe what educational expenses they incurred, 86% highlighted learning materials²⁴. This finding correlates to findings, that, the lack of teaching materials was a challenge when teaching. This leads to the point as to who should be responsible for the learning materials, schools or parents. 69% of parents indicated that they incurred expenses on uniforms, followed by books (64%), and provision of food for their children (48%). Transportation costs, support for administration, and payment for extracurricular activities were also mentioned.

It should be noted here that the, given the small sample size, findings of JENA cannot be compared with the Libyan MSNA's findings, as the definition of educational expenses differs. The JENA definition encompasses a broader spectrum of expenditures, including transportation, extracurricular activities, food provisions, administrative fees, school books, educational materials, uniforms, and parents' council fees., The MSNA's definition of education-related expenses comprises only books, uniforms, school fees.

7% of the survey respondents indicated receiving financial support, In the academic year September 2021 – August 2022, financial support ranged from 100 LYD (21 USD) to 1,000 LYD (208 USD). Of the 215 respondents, 6% reported receiving financial assistance, from government entities, such as the Ministry of Social Affairs.

(v) School status and closures

Various respondent groups highlighted significant concerns regarding school closures due to conflict, COVID-19, weather events, lack of equipment, incomplete rehabilitation, and teacher strikes.

Respondents from Tripoli (Ain Zara baladiya) mentioned that sporadic clashes in the neighborhood led to ad-hoc short-term closures, while road conditions and weather events such as heavy rain or flash floods also resulted in closures in Ain Zara and Misrata. In Sebha tribal clashes in the baladiya had the effect of parents moving children from one school to another to avoid them attending schools with children from other tribes, intensifying the overcrowding of specific schools while leading to a diminishing student population in others. Respondents highlighted that armed conflicts affected students' attendance rates and academic achievements, resulting in the automatic promotion of students to the next academic year without passing required exams. Respondents highlighted the need to focus on children's mental health and well-being as a result of conflict and Covid-19. Respondents reported that armed conflicts have resulted in the psychological distress in school-aged children, including fear of attending. While almost all assessed schools employ social workers or mental health professionals, coordination between teachers and non-teaching staff to flag children at risk is mostly left to ad-hoc signposting of individual cases. Enhancing a structured coordination mechanisms will strengthen preventative measures to sustain the well-being of children.

²³ [Libya's HoR sets minimum wage to 1000 dinars - Libya Al-ahraar \(libyaalahrar.net\)](#)

²⁴ Learning materials consists of for instance, textbooks, notebooks, and stationary equipment

According to Key Informants lengthy rehabilitation works of damaged schools delayed the resumption of classes. For example, Key Informants in Bani Waleed, Benghazi, and Misrata, highlighted that some schools were still closed due to rehabilitation as of the end of 2022. Prolonged maintenance also resulted in students attending other schools exacerbating overcrowding, The lack of desks and seats, also cause additional setbacks in the reopening of schools, even when significant infrastructural and rehabilitation works are completed on time, as particularly reported by Key Informants in Abusliem.

A series of teachers' strikes have affected regular service provision between 2018 and 2021 as there were multiple instances of striking throughout these three years all across Libya. Libyan teachers participated in a protracted strikes asking for better and timely-paid salaries. The strike significantly affected the country's education system, delaying final exams and yearly school reopenings²⁵. The strike ended in March 2021 when teacher's union reached an agreement with the government.

The impact of Covid-19 on student outcomes

In response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Libyan Ministry of Education closed schools on March 15th, 2020. Gradual reopening of schools commenced on May 13th, 2020, with high schools being the first to reopen. Schools opened on a rotation basis in February 2021 and resumed full time teaching in May 2022. The rotation system entailed students attendance every other day; with three days of distance education delivered through the Ministry of Education's television channel and online classrooms.

The closure of educational institutions had several adverse effects on children, significantly affecting their social abilities, education, and mental health. The COVID-19 pandemic also highlighted the digital equity issue, with many children unable to access learning due to the lack of internet connectivity, IT equipment, and digital content. Digital inequity was an issue also for teachers, which experienced the same barriers to implement remote teaching²⁶. Respondents highlighted as well the teacher's lack of training on digital and remote teaching modalities.

Furthermore, some respondents have reported the frequent absences of students due to illness or fear of contracting COVID-19. While for teachers the biggest challenge was to maintain continuity in teaching while coping with absences, they also highlighted students' and a lack of motivation. Respondents shared this observation, noting that mentioned that the decrease in contact hours had led to a lack of commitment or motivation among students.

(vi) School infrastructure

Respondents were queried about gaps and needs in school infrastructure and equipment at the Baladiyat level. The majority of respondents identified school infrastructure and equipment as the two most significant areas in need of improvement. Officials highlighted several specific needs including the need for regular maintenance, repairs to damaged schools, improvement of sanitation and hygiene facilities, creation of green spaces and playgrounds for recreational activities, and drinking water. It was also noted that several schools were not connected to the sewage network. Schools also lack resources such as science laboratories.

²⁵ Reuters, [Libya school shut as teachers on swollen payroll demand better wages](#), published on the 24th October 2019

²⁶ In this report, *remote learning and/or teaching* references to the activities that were undertaken to substitute the face-to-face classes and interaction, but the content, the sender / audience involved (teachers and class), and teaching method, are the same of the classic face-to-face classroom, just held online. *Distance learning*, on the other hand, is used in this report to describe teaching modalities and activities that were put in place to complement remote teaching, such as the use of television channels and programs, radio, YouTube educational videos, and alternative sources of learning, that differ from face-to-face classroom in terms of content, audience, message sender, and medium used. (Hodges, C. B., Moore, S., Lockee, B. B., Trust, T., & Bond, M. A. (2020) [The difference between emergency remote teaching and online learning](#)).

Parents expressed satisfaction with the school environment despite overcrowding being a prevalent issue. However, some reported that their children had described the school environment as chaotic, unclean, or poorly insulated, with inadequate equipment such as doors, windows, chairs, and teaching materials, such as blackboards.

(vii) Children's safety and security of the school environment and its surrounding

Most of the FGDs participants agreed that schools provide a safe environment for children without any major risks. However, respondents identified residual risk factors for children's safety and security within and around schools.

The main finding is that there is a minimal report of safety threats occurring within the school perimeter, while in contrast the commuting from and to the school was considered risky for children. The most mentioned risk factors raised by Key Informants were road safety, the extreme weather events and poor road infrastructure, that pose significant risks to children's safety. In particular, respondents highlighted how intense rain and flooded roads are a prevalent concern and become a crucial movement barrier for children to reach schools, particularly in areas lacking proper infrastructure for rainwater drainage and poor road conditions. For instance, Key Informants in Umm Arrzam reported that Wadi Umm Arrzam's flooding during the winter makes it challenging and risky for children to attend school. Recurring medium to extreme weather events reportedly disrupts education continuity in Libya causing some schools to be entirely out of service. Secondly, respondents expressed concerns that road accidents could pose a risk to pupils when trying to get to school, particularly when crossing main roads with hazardous conditions.

In terms of security threats, respondents in Abu Selim, Sebha, Ubari, have expressed their concerns with regard to armed clashes. Respondents reported that the lack of safety in the cities has made students and teachers apprehensive about attending school. Additionally, some schools have been destroyed due to conflict-related violence, while others have experienced a high rate of dropouts due to the presence of violence. The residual yet protracted insecurity of some areas still poses dangers to children in the space surrounding the school, as reported especially by Key Informants and FGD participants Ubari and Sebha, who reported on the threat posed by the presence of armed actors, particularly in areas where localized clashes occur between militia. Apart from the risk of violence, armed actors in some areas also increase the incidence of armed robberies, targeting either the school or people on the street in the area surrounding it.

Regarding the hazards present in schools, respondents highlighted the presence of infrastructural risks within schools, regarding the unfinished rehabilitation works that pose a hazard to the physical safety of children. Specifically, this issue pertains to schools located in Sebha, where incomplete rehabilitation precludes the use of all classrooms, leading to overcrowded classrooms or the introduction of different shifts, and where damage to the school structure renders the environment unsafe for children and teachers.

Parents also drew attention to the risks of harassment, external adults entering the school, and physical violence against children (from schoolmates or adults). These observations are consistent with earlier research findings on violence in Libyan schools, which indicated that a considerable proportion of boys (90%) and girls (88%) in formal Libyan schools have experienced violence within their schools, homes, or communities.²⁷ Parents further noted the presence of corporal punishment in their children's schools, and many called for changes in teaching methods, specifically improvements in teacher-student

²⁷ MoP, BoS, UNICEF, Social Policy Research Institute (2020). Multidimensional Child Deprivation in Libya Brief—Education: A Life-Cycle Approach.

relationships. Some FGDs highlighted the need for teachers to abandon the use of corporal punishment, violence, and intimidation as methods to convey information and interact with pupils.

When inquiring about negative student behaviors in school, FGD participants expressed agreement that negative phenomena are largely absent in the school setting. Among the concerning behaviors, some parents highlighted that in their schools exam cheating, bullying, violence, and smoking are "widespread". Other negative behaviors mentioned tangentially were incidents of vandalism, drug use, and low attendance. However, very few noted that these behaviors had an impact on their children. Bullying seem to be particularly targeting children with disabilities, as parents of children with disabilities targeted through the FGDs stressed their preference for not enrolling their children in the public school system due to, among other concerns, the bullying children faced from peers.

(viii) Learning Environment

In regard to the learning environment, the FGDs conducted with parents yielded noteworthy insights into the infrastructure and interactions with teaching and school staff. The FGDs with parents and caregivers highlighted a polarization of opinions between overall satisfaction and overall dissatisfaction with the learning environment. While positive comments were expressed on the human environment on the school, fewer FGDs mentioned satisfaction with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) and health facilities and the school infrastructure which tended to be commonly cited as reasons for dissatisfaction. Most of the points raised focused on the unimproved condition of doors, windows, chairs, and teaching materials such as blackboards.

Secondly, parents raised concerns about relying only on frontal teaching methods and the need to engage the students with interactive activities. Thus, they recommended the adoption of non-traditional teaching methods and the integration of technology into the teaching process in the hope of moving beyond frontal teaching. Respondents highlighted the need to improve teaching methods and class activities. These two points emerged as the primary focus of the discussions. Parents and caregivers observed that children are inadequately stimulated, and suggested introducing activities such as arts, handicrafts, and music, trips to surrounding areas, competitions, and recreational activities. These activities were recommended as solutions to engage children in the learning process and make school a more appealing and enjoyable experience. A substantial share of FGDs highlighted the need to re-establish the sports quota, corresponding to physical education, while fewer FGDs emphasized the inclusion of life skills sessions in school activities.

Complementarily to improvement of activities, parental and caregiver recommendations also centered around the maintenance of the facilities, including the mitigation of classroom overcrowding, as well as fundamental developmental necessities such as the establishment of green and open spaces suitable for outdoor play. Of particular concern is the reported lack of potable water in three schools in Bent Baya (2 schools) and Umm Arzzam (1 school).

Finally, the vast majority of FGDs emphasized the need for improved IT equipment and laboratories where students can engage in practical application of the concepts and principles included in the Information Technology, Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics teaching syllabi.

Teaching and Learning Materials

According to respondents, teaching and learning materials either unavailable, or outdated. Most of the FGD reported unavailability of learning materials, half of the FGD expressed that the available materials are outdated and only in one-quarter of the FGD, respondents expressed satisfaction with teaching materials.

The lack of blackboards, writing utensils, maps, and textbooks were the main point raised by respondents. On another note, more technical teaching materials were also mentioned, such as headphones for foreign languages, air conditioning, or laboratories. The lack of teaching materials is particularly connected with the STEM focus of the curriculum adopted in the Libya. For example, respondents emphasized the challenge of teaching advanced scientific or information technology curricula without proper instructional resources such as computers and laboratories. Moreover, respondents expressed that they have not received any training on how to use new technological teaching materials, with only two FGDs held in Umm Arzzam noting that instructors received computer training. Third, participants in a few FGDs underscored that the limited resources provided by the Ministry do not allow for the provision of high-quality teaching materials. Thus, according to participants, the efforts of schools should be recognized for making the best of the available resources.

"[We are satisfied] to some extent because the lack of resources is not the responsibility of the school, but rather the entire educational system, which [is controlled by] the Ministry of Education"

Teacher in primary and secondary all-boys school in Bani Waleed

Support provided to mitigate the shortage of educational materials

Respondents highlighted the financial support they have been receiving to address the challenge of lacking appropriate education materials. The main support schools rely on is the financial contribution for the operational budgets received by the Ministry of Education. The operational budget help the school carry out its technical and administrative affairs, so that the school can address its urgent needs and requirements immediately. Along with operational budget disbursements, the Ministry of Education supports the schools through the provision of cleaning materials, stationery, and textbooks. However, it appears that such assistance does not reach equally all schools: some respondents reported that the support they received was limited to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) during the COVID-19 pandemic or to a few stationary or books. Operational budget disbursement were reported to not address maintenance works, with two schools reporting that teachers supported the financial cost of repairing works in the school: one principal reported that the school lacked basic infrastructure such as doors, windows, and lighting, and that the headmaster and staff had to maintain the school and provide for its needs through their own efforts.

In addition to MoE financial support, respondents have emphasized the support they have received from external sources. According to few respondents, private individuals – such as local businessmen, parents, and citizens – have provided support to their respective schools for the provision of furniture, stationery, and necessary equipment. Additionally, respondents in Derna reported that they had obtained support from the Derna Stabilization Fund Committee, for school rehabilitation. Health centers supported selected schools during the Covid-19 pandemic in terms of provision of PPE and cleaning materials.

Relevance and Quality of the Libyan Curriculum

This section presents the results and perceptions gathered from the Key Informants and participants of the FGDs (FGDs) regarding the Libyan curriculum. The findings will start from assessing the difficulties stemmed in the academic year 2020-21 for the implementation of remote teaching, and will present the findings related to the condensed curriculum rolled out in 2021-22, and the current curriculum implemented from 2022 onwards.

(i) Challenges in applying remote and distance teaching modalities to the standard curriculum during school closures (2020-2021)

Based on the results of interviews and FGDs conducted with respondents, it appears that the implementation of remote teaching has been uneven across different regions. Specifically, respondents

indicated that their school did not engage in any remote teaching or attempted to do so but encountered challenges that prevented them from continuing. The most commonly reported reasons were related to communication and IT challenges such as power outages, lack of internet availability, and economic impacted feasibility of distance learning both for parents and teachers. Respondents also noted the lack of prior knowledge regarding communication tools among both students and teachers, and that the communications between the teachers and parents on one side, and the interaction with students, were all reduced during the distance learning period. On the lack of distance teaching skills, one respondent noted:

The teachers have not received any training in distance learning mechanisms and remote learning management systems, where the application of these systems was suddenly imposed. They do not have sufficient basic information, guidance, experience, and knowledge to undertake this experience."

Respondent in Al Ghreyfa, male

It remains unclear whether remote teaching, where implemented, was equally accessible to all students across different grade levels.

The parents involved in FGDs provided additional information on how they did support their children during the remote teaching period. While in most FGDs parents echoed the same connectivity challenges reported by respondents, in many others some parents reported they had switched to distanced education completely by creating their own classes and scouring the internet for free educational resources. However, few also emphasized the disengagement of children who struggled to adapt to remote education and follow the classes, despite the means available. When asked about the specific challenges faced by children with disabilities during the distance learning period, only one FGD raised an issue directly linked to the child's condition, such as stress resulting from school closures.

(ii) Condensed curriculum (2021-2022)

During the 2021-2022 academic year, a condensed curriculum was implemented to support the alternation system, which involved students attending school in-person every other day and receiving 3 days of distance education. Respondents noted several challenges associated with the temporary curriculum.

One major challenge reported pertains to the fact that the condensed curriculum was reportedly rolled out in the middle of the academic year (February 2021). This had a disruptive effect on the teaching plans at the school level, and was additionally challenged by the delayed provision of the new textbooks to each school. Two respondents remarked that the Ministry of Education did not furnish the teaching books and materials in a timely manner, including at the start of the following academic year (August 2021).

Another consequence reported by respondents, was that teachers did not have sufficient time to adapt their classes to the revised curriculum ahead of the starting of the school year, which further impacted the educational achievements and motivation of the students. As one teacher explained, *"The curriculum was hard, and time was tight- I wasn't able to teach it- I didn't have training on how to teach it."* Furthermore, the compressed nature of the curriculum itself posed a significant challenge to complete it, as reported by several respondents. The difficulty of completing the curriculum added to other challenges, such as the psychological pressure, and physical exhaustion of teachers, which was noted by Key Informants.

The condensed curriculum was found to be challenging as well among students, as reported by the parents and caregivers. A majority of parents and caregivers observed that their children were experiencing learning difficulties from the time of school reopening onwards, with the primary obstacle

being coping with the intensity of the condensed curriculum. Some underlined the particular difficulty of closing the learning gap, and the fact that children experienced further challenges in specific subjects, as well as learning loss in basic literacy. Few respondents explicitly mentioned the hardship children encountered upon reopening, as reported, for instance, by one parent: *"My child forgot to read, even with attempts at home the level was poor."* Additional difficulties highlighted in the FGDs pertained to children's mental well-being, such as difficulty with readjusting to the routine, reluctance to attend school, the development of mental health problems, and loss of interest in learning. However, parents stressed the collaboration of teachers to address the learning loss accumulated. The main strategy employed was to dedicate classroom time to revising past topics and concepts. Other strategies adopted were reportedly remedial sessions outside of regular school hours (6/22), and seeking external support.

(iii) Standard curriculum, 2011-2020 / 2022-2023

This section pertains to the standard educational program currently being implemented during the 2022-2023 academic year. The main finding regarding the current curriculum is that there was a general discontent with the curriculum or pedagogical approaches employed to teach it.

The present curriculum is influenced by the Singaporean educational system, which emphasizes the use of active learning strategies and problem-solving approaches, heavily relying on educators' pedagogical skills to implement diverse teaching modalities. Additionally, it requires computers and other IT equipment, thereby imposing a significant financial burden on schools with constrained budgets, as is the case in the Libyan context. An overwhelming majority of educators reported that the curriculum was incompatible with the materials furnished to them. Respondents have also pointed out the impact on the quality of learning: as the learning process is confined to theory due to lack of equipment to practice with, it results in a negative impact on the overall effectiveness of the curriculum in schools. Additionally, they mentioned the difficulty and the sheer amount of content that must be learnt by students. One school principal in Ubari noted as well the long-term impact on employability:

"Unfortunately, [...] the lack of scientific laboratories and the absence of many capabilities in Libyan schools keep us away from the needs of the labor market a little. Where the laboratories in schools must be activated and provided to give the student his right to knowledge and to give the teacher the possibility to deliver the complete information."

Respondents from Ubari, male

Additionally, the majority of Key Informants reported that the curricula do not adequately address the current necessities of the labor market, nor do they possess sufficient capacity within the schools to be adequately implemented (due to the lack of equipment).

"We are paying close attention to the increasing number of university graduates, who are often clustered in certain specializations in large numbers, which will greatly impair their ability to find work in their field of specialties. This has led to frustration and the end of their passion. Libya's education process must be changed to include new and modern specializations in line with scientific advances; so that curricula and specializations meet the labor market requirements to provide graduates with job opportunities."

Respondent from Al Ghreif, male

One of the most frequently mentioned suggestions concerning the curriculum was a transition towards a more experiential approach to education, featuring greater levels of interactivity and reduced reliance on passive learning and memorization, which requires appropriate teachers' training and equipment. Nevertheless, according to two principals and several FGDs with parents, insufficient resources continues to hinder this shift.

A second point raised was that the short semesters are insufficient to accommodate all course content. Respondents specifically expressed a desire for a revision of the curriculum's timeline and teaching methods, as well as access to suitable teaching equipment and training. Respondents also emphasized the importance of consistency in the curriculum, which was also reported by fewer respondents. A small proportion of respondents have conveyed that during the academic year, minor changes were incorporated into the curriculum, which were implemented by the Education Inspection. Changes during the year were reported to have impacted textbooks delivery and teaching planning.

Parents' feedback from the FGDs echoed all points shared by respondents, highlighting that the need to increase teachers' training on activity-based learning, to improve materials, and to improve the supply chain of textbooks are all shared issues across the different education stakeholders.

Teachers and Other Education Personnel

This section will focus on the capacity of the workforce to meet the demands of schools, recruitment obstacles encountered, the causes and extent of teachers' absenteeism, measures implemented to address this issue, and the qualifications and training of teacher, and coordination mechanisms between the school personnel and with parents and caregivers.

Supply and demand of teachers

Previous researches conducted in 2019²⁸ revealed that the Ministry of Education in Libya has registered over 450,000 teachers, a significant majority of whom are female, which was observed as well in the gender disaggregation of teachers' FGD participants. A large number of female teachers participated in the FGDs, while male participation was comparatively low.

Data collection did not reveal a significant proportion of respondents reporting a chronic shortage of teachers. Key Informants reported more frequently that there were sufficient teachers available rather than a shortage. However, some respondents did report a shortage of teachers in their schools, mostly indicating a lack of specific profiles with respect to school grades and subjects. Secondary schools appeared to be the grade for which the shortage is most significant, followed by primary and elementary levels, as reported by Key Informants. In terms of specific subjects, Key Informants highlighted the scarcity of teachers in specific subjects such as Math, Arabic, and foreign languages.

Key Informants have identified multiple reasons for the shortage of teachers in the area under study. The primary reason identified is an imbalance in the staff turnover, meaning more teachers retire, change their location of residence following marriage, or go on maternity leaves (which is a concern due to the proportion of female teachers in the overall teaching workforce) than those who are newly recruited to take their place. One reason found for this imbalance was the unattractiveness of a teaching positions in the public sector in terms of financial compensation, due to low, delayed or unpaid salaries. Several respondents mentioned that some teachers (with MoE contracts) had not received salaries for several years, which led them to switch professions.

A second disincentive was found to be the lack of transportation or fuel availability, which makes it less appealing to work in remote schools or schools far from one's residence. Some respondents noted that the scarcity of transportation and recurrent localized shortages of fuel makes it extremely challenging to hire teachers, or that teachers are reluctant to teach during the final hours of the school day due to transportation issues, while another highlighted how the lack of fuel has impacted teachers' transportation alternatives.

²⁸ USAID, [Libya Ministry Of Education Human And Institutional Capacity Assessment Final Report](#), August 2019

Besides disincentives to join the teaching labor supply, some Key Informants noted the difficulty to match candidates' actual area of expertise with the demand for specific subjects. As the supply of teachers is centralized at MoE level, respondents have to draw from on the available supply whatever may be their actual area of specialization.

Few Key Informants have reported concrete actions being taken to address the shortages. One school principal mentioned that vacancies would be filled internally by increasing the workload of existing staff. Other principals have sought to collaborate with nearby schools by 'sharing' their teachers to fill gaps.

Attendance of teachers and absenteeism

The 2019 JENA indicated that absenteeism was diffused in the West region, with a 13% of teachers systematically being absent from school. While the 2022 JENA did not investigate directly attendance rates at school level, respondents mentioned some factors that play a role in teachers' absenteeism.

According to some respondents, reasons for absenteeism should be found in remuneration issues and transportation challenges, in line with the obstacles identified for recruitment of new teachers. Few Key Informants reported that low wages, high living costs, and delay in salary payment have led to teachers searching for other jobs (in parallel with an ongoing teaching contract) to earn a living and support their families.

Another Key Informant mentioned that contract teachers who do not receive their salaries are compelled to abandon their work at public schools and instead teach at private institutions. Delayed salary disbursements was the most commonly cited systemic issue that caused absenteeism, according to respondents. Conversely, in terms of transportation, some respondents and most of the teachers complained of inadequate transportation facilities which force teachers to stay home in case of fuel shortages, teachers teaching in schools located outside their municipality of residence, heavy rainfall during winter leading to road closures, and the lack of public transportation. One school principal remarked on this issue.

"The fuel crisis that the region suffers from, is one of the most important reasons why teachers do not attend school regularly, especially teachers who live far from the school."

Respondent from Ubari, male

It is noticeable that challenges to attendance and recruitment are similar. A marginal group of FGDs mentioned challenges that appear to be connected with motivation such as insufficient school equipment and poor infrastructure, and a shortage of teacher training.

Respondents stressed the need of systemic modifications at the human resource level that would increase attendance. One major factor was the timely remuneration of salaries and other financial incentives, along with other human resource-related issues such as the provision of transport, integration of health insurance, psychological support. The respondents additionally expressed their desire for improved working conditions that would in turn increase their motivation. Teachers sought to receive further training, have access to suitable teaching materials as well as adequate teaching and recreational spaces and facilities, feel appreciated (reported in one third of the FGDs), and have greater flexibility in their schedules.

Teachers' qualification and training

According to respondents typically lack prior training prior to commencing their teaching duties. Findings seem to point out that training efforts, where they existed, are scattered and delivered by a variety of actors. Generally, these training initiatives don't target the entire teaching workforce, focusing instead on limited subsets of personnel, such as specific subjects' teachers, or social workers and counsellors.

The MoE reportedly established centres at the baladiyat level to provide training primarily related to pedagogy, for teachers after they have initiated their professional careers. Furthermore, there are alternative training sessions focused on teaching modalities, although these are not usually intended for skill acquisition. MoE-led training efforts are coordinated at local level through the Local Education Board. The majority of respondents reported their participation in in-service teacher training, however, it appears that there is not one single institution responsible for the implementation of trainings in each baladiya, however, in the West, training appear to be under the responsibility of the Human Resource's Office, while in the East, it appears to be assigned to the Office of Guidance and Monitoring. In the South, there is no single office that appears to be mandated at a regional level.

Table 3. Responsible MoE offices at Local Education Board level for in-service training of teachers

Region	Baladiya	Local Education Board Office responsible for in-service teachers' training
South	Sebha	The Supervised Teacher Training Centre
East	Al-Abyar	Training departments
West	Abu Selim	Human Resources Office
West	Ain Zara	Human Resources Office Training and Development Unit
East	Al Ghreyfa	Office of Guidance and Monitoring
East	Derna	Office of Guidance and Monitoring
East	Benghazi	Office of Guidance and Monitoring Office of Training and Educational Development
South	Umm Arrzam	No training center
South	Ubari	Office of Guidance and Monitoring

The fragmentation of in-service training opportunities seems to be prevalent, based on the data reported by respondents. The professional development of teaching staff in the last three years appears to have happened sporadically and not in a coordinated manner. Respondents reported that their school's personnel participated in specific, one-off training courses, and the most reported training was on protection-related topics for social workers, indicating the prevalence of training efforts dedicated to social workers and counsellors in the school rather than to teachers. While not specified in all instances, NGOs typically organize protection-related trainings, and these sessions are usually conducted in agreement and coordination with the Ministry of Education. However, such training appears to be geared towards social workers and psychological counsellors, rather than teachers. Conversely, a majority respondents reported a lack of training courses due to insufficient space, MoE's idleness, and the impact of conflict. A few respondents also noted that teachers occasionally resort to privately organized training, driven by their own initiative. Concerning MoE's efforts, MoE Key Informants reported that during the 2020-2021 biennium teachers received training in computer science and remote teaching. However, one respondent observed that the training sessions were brief and targeted only a small group of teachers.

Similarly, the outstanding majority respondents emerged a lack of mainstreamed training efforts. In 41 out of 48 FGDs, respondents reported not having received any training in the past three years to improve their teaching skills. Respondents reported receiving training, the most frequent length of the training program was below seven days with only two instances where the training lasted six months. The most commonly reported training topics pertained to teaching skills, pedagogy, and training methods while a minority number of teachers who participated in the FGDs mentioned receiving training in their specific subjects²⁹.

²⁹ Other trainings reported by teachers in FGDs were course related: Sciences, English, IT, PSS, Arabic, and statistics.

Besides technical training, some respondents reported participation in training programs that pertain to occupational safety and protection from hazards, such as training on mine and explosives awareness, First Aid course, substance abuse prevention.

Some respondents expressed the desire to receive more training. Respondents particularly emphasized the need to enhance teachers' skills and competencies to effectively tutor children with disabilities and to address the issue of bullying suffered by children with disabilities, while fewer respondents mentioned training in teaching methods.

CONCLUSION

Access to quality education

Following the outbreak of conflicts and wars in Libya, a prolonged period of school closures ensued, which had a detrimental impact on the learning and teaching process in Libyan schools, leading to the emergence of a learning gap. In addition, the process of rehabilitating and maintaining damaged or looted school buildings during the conflict was slow and limited to certain establishments, which resulted in a delayed reopening of schools.

In addition to this, following the end of conflicts, students were promoted automatically without evaluation as a measure to move forward. While intended to reduce dropout rates, this policy had an adverse effect on the education level in Libya, resulting in a deterioration in the quality of learning, with students experiencing severe learning loss and reported deficiencies in reading and writing skills.

Data revealed that the reported decrease in the quality of education and the learning loss in Libya can be attributed to the lack of adequate learning and teaching methods and infrastructure. Schools suffer from a critical shortage of teaching and learning equipment. Additionally, both teachers and students are deprived of enough space to have a comfortable learning experience, with a limited number of recreational spaces available. The teaching methods employed are outdated, with a heavy emphasis on theoretical aspects, as schools lack the practical means to provide a more comprehensive learning experience.

The decrease in the quality of education in Libya is also linked to the relevance and quality of the Libyan curriculum, which, according to the findings, emphasizes the use of advanced teaching methods to enhance the learning and teaching experience, which cannot be experienced in Libyan schools where educational facilities lack modern teaching and learning equipment.

Although school dropout rates in Libya are relatively low, financial constraints remain a challenge, particularly for male students who may seek employment to support their households and female students who may be forced to discontinue their studies because their parents or caregivers cannot afford to pay for their education. Additional factors contributing to the dropout of female students are early marriage and pregnancy which is also linked to financial hardships, along with cultural norms. Children with disabilities, especially those with mobility impairments, are also among those who encounter barriers to education due to the lack of suitable infrastructure to accommodate their needs. Furthermore, children with cognitive disabilities, such as Autism, face difficulties as teachers are often not adequately trained to interact with them.

Child protection considerations

The occurrence of conflicts and wars in Libya has resulted in many children experiencing traumatizing events that have left them with lasting mental and psychological distress. Consequently, such children are more prone to leaving school out of fear of re-experiencing similar traumatic events.

While most of the risks for children’s safety are outside the school perimeters, there remains some endanger the well-being of students in schools, including but not limited to bullying and physical punishment, which have the potential to adversely affect children's academic performance and lead to dropouts.

Teachers’ qualification and work environment

According to the assessment, the lack of professional development opportunities for teachers is a significant challenge, both before and during the initial stages of their careers. This inadequacy is particularly problematic when teachers are required to transition to remote instruction, as well as when they return to in-person teaching. The data indicates that many teachers struggle to use technology effectively to facilitate communication and instruction with their students. Moreover, a considerable number of teachers lack the necessary pedagogical knowledge and skills to interact with and convey information to their students adequately.

The assessment further revealed that numerous barriers impede teachers' ability to perform well in their profession. For instance, inadequate salaries and delayed payments often cause financial hardship for teachers. Additionally, the lack of health insurance coverage and transportation exacerbates the challenges faced by teachers. Moreover, the poor infrastructure at the municipal level poses a significant risk to teacher safety, particularly during severe weather events such as torrential rain, which can lead to road flooding, resulting in school closures.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Improving the quality of primary and secondary education in Libya requires **a multi-stakeholder approach** that should include **the government, educators, parents**, and the **community**. Based on the findings of the assessment, and in collaboration with UNICEF, the following actions have been identified.

Policy making and Quality Education in Libya:

- 1) **Increase the operational budgets in schools:** By increasing operational budgets, Ministry of Education will have the financial means to invest in **modern technology, high-quality teaching staff, provide the school with teaching materials and learning equipment**, and **support the completion of pending rehabilitation works**. Such improvements will enable schools to provide a more engaging and enriching learning experience for their students and ensure that schools are well-maintained and safe for students, which can positively impact their overall academic performance and well-being.
- 2) **Revise the national curriculum:** the Ministry of Education needs to ensure that the curriculum content aligns with the available resources, take into account the learning capacities of Libyan children, and improve the delivery and quality of textbooks. This can be achieved through a thorough analysis of available resources and capacity of teachers, creating an engaging learning environment, reviewing and updating textbooks systematically, and leveraging technology to enhance teaching materials.

- 3) **Use of technology in school:** Technology can **be a powerful tool for improving education**, particularly in remote areas where access to traditional resources may be limited. The government should **invest in technology infrastructure**, and school's access to **computers and tablets**, to **facilitate remote learning**. Secondly, efforts should be channeled to **provide training for teachers** on how to use technology effectively in the classroom.
- 4) **Enhance teaching methods:** The education system should emphasize **critical thinking and problem-solving skills**, along with old-fashioned teaching methods. Schools in Libya should include **critical thinking** and **problem-solving** as core components of the curriculum. Teachers should be enabled to integrate activities that require students to think critically, analyze information, and develop solutions to real-world problems. Collaborative learning activities, such as group projects, discussions, and debates, can enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills. It allows them to work together, share ideas, and challenge each other's thinking, and will improve their motivation.
- 5) **Promote parental involvement:** Parents play a crucial role in their children's education. The government can encourage parental involvement by strengthening the role of parents' councils that educate parents on **how to support their children's learning at home**.
- 6) **Strengthen school-community partnerships:** Schools can collaborate with local businesses, non-profit organizations, and community groups to provide students with **additional resources and opportunities for learning**. This can include after-school programs, mentorship programs, and internships. The education system should work closely with businesses and industry to ensure that students are being prepared for the job market. This includes providing vocational education and training programs that equip students with the skills they need to succeed in the workforce.

Teachers' qualification and work environment

- 7) **Improve teaching environment:** Schools in Libya should provide teachers with **safe, clean, and comfortable working conditions**. This can include **well-equipped classrooms, access to technology, and appropriate teaching materials**. Teachers need access to **adequate resources**, such as **textbooks** and **teaching aids** to **provide high-quality education** to their students. Providing these resources can help improve the conditions of teachers and enhance their effectiveness in the classroom. Schools in Libya should establish effective **teacher evaluation and support systems**. This can help to identify areas for improvement, provide feedback and support, and promote ongoing **professional development**. Teachers may face psychological challenges, particularly in areas affected by conflict and due to the work conditions during and after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. **Providing psychosocial support**, such as **counselling services** and **stress management programs**, can help to improve the well-being of teachers and their ability to provide quality education. On a separate note, the Ministry of Education in Libya could improve incentives to join the national teaching workforce by **prioritizing salary increases and reducing payment delays**. This can help to attract and retain talented and dedicated teachers and improve their motivation and job satisfaction.
- 8) **Invest in teacher training:** **Professional development programs** for teachers can help improve their **teaching skills** and ensure that they stay **up-to-date with the latest teaching practices**. This can be done through in-service training, workshops, seminars, and mentoring programs. Besides technical training, teachers need professional development to ensure that they are

equipped with the knowledge and skills needed to support a child with disabilities and/or special needs. This can include training on inclusive teaching practices, cultural sensitivity, and working with students with disabilities.

Child protection and Inclusion

- 9) **Support children at schools after conflicts and the outbreak of Covid-19:** Children in Libya have experienced trauma and learning loss due to conflicts and pandemic. Schools can **provide mental health support**, such as counselling services and support groups, to **help children cope with their emotions and promote their wellbeing**. Additionally, schools can scale up the piloted catch-up and remedial programs to address these gaps in learning and ensure that children can progress academically.
- 10) **Inclusive education:** The Ministry of Education should develop inclusive policies and procedures that promote equal access to education for all students. This can include **establishing clear guidelines for identifying and supporting students with disabilities**, ensuring that schools have accessible facilities and resources, and providing adequate funding to support inclusive education.
- 11) **Improve access to education:** The government should work to ensure that all students have access to education regardless of their **socio-economic status, gender, or geographic location**. This can be done by providing transportation to rural areas, building new schools to mitigate the overcrowding in classrooms, providing scholarships to underprivileged students, and addressing cultural barriers to education, for instance, female students dropping out of school at the secondary education cycle. This issue could be mitigated through **promoting girl's continuity of education** by mitigating child marriage through **sensitizing parents and girls alike** on the importance of education.
- 12) **Improve girls' continuity of education:** girls were reported to drop out especially during secondary education, due to lack of awareness of parents and the issue of early marriage. An increased sensitization at school level of parents and girls along with teachers and psychosocial support personnel in school could improve girls' completion rate of secondary education and reduce the risk of early or forced marriages.