

JOINT EDUCATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT – LIBYA 2022

REPORT SUMMARY

Background

According to the 2022 Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO)¹, in 2021 nearly 160,000 children and 5,600 teachers were estimated to need education assistance in Libya. A decade of conflict and violence had destroyed or damaged educational infrastructure, forcing many schools to close while others have been used as shelter for displaced families. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic worsened the situation with school closures, affecting 1.3 million school-aged children, notably due to the multiple challenges to access distance and online learning. These barriers and bottlenecks are furthered with the limited resources allocated to teacher development and continued training to support inclusive education.

Moreover, disability was found to be the most prominent determinant of education deprivation in a 2020 UNICEF study² as 16% of girls and boys with disabilities were facing deprivation in 2020 as compared to 6% of the general Libyan school-aged population. This is mainly due to a lack of specific provisions for children with disabilities in schools as reported for 82% of the assessed schools in the 2019 Joint Education Needs Assessment (JENA) conducted by the Libya Education Sector in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and inter-sector partners in the West and South of Libya³, as well as the lack of trained teachers to provide learning for these children. Access to formal education for all aforementioned population groups appears to be particularly challenging in southern Libya as highlighted by WW-GVC's Protection Analysis Report⁴ in Fezzan. Indeed, 23% of respondents reported that the lack of access to education is the main reason for permanent displacement from and within the region. Moreover, while no significant gender disparity was noted in terms of school enrolment rates in Libya prior to 2011, the 2019 JENA findings outlined the lack of retention of female students progressing in education levels after primary school, although very little information to explain the factors behind this trend exist. Alongside this observation, there is no current gender disaggregated data or analysis for education, making it difficult to determine the impact that conflict and economic distress have on girls and boys.

Methodology

The research aimed to provide better information and analysis on the education needs of Libyan population, to help inform decision-making and programming for education actors in Libya. The research had four objectives, including providing better information on the needs within the Libya Education Sector, providing information on teachers' qualifications and capacities, providing information for Education partners to plan an effective response, and recommending next steps for future assessments. The assessment was carried out in two stages and used a mixed methodology of semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and structured individual interviews targeting

¹ OCHA, [HNO 2022 extension](#)

² MoP, BoS, UNICEF, Social Policy Research Institute (2020). Multidimensional Child Deprivation in Libya Brief—Education: A Life-Cycle Approach.

³ Libya Education Sector and Ministry of Education, [Joint Education Needs Assessment](#), December 2019

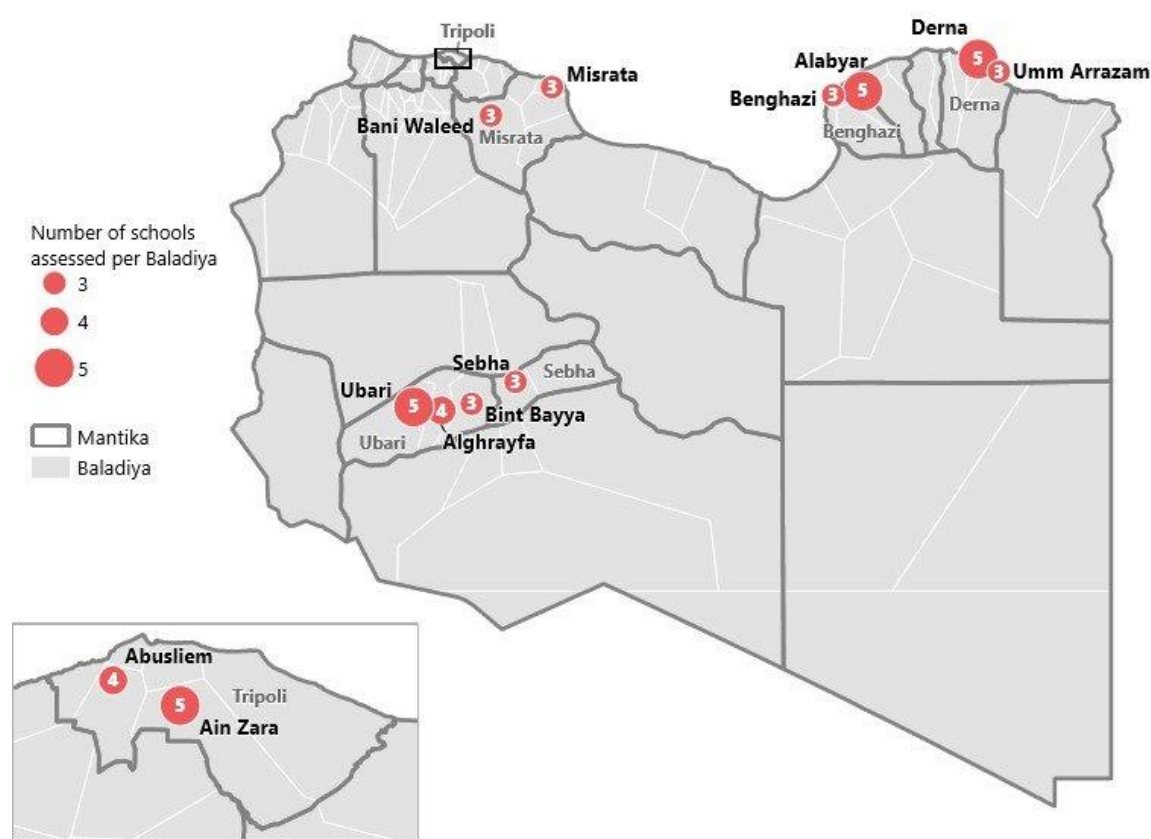
⁴ WW-GVC, Protection Analysis Report (Fezzan) 2022 (unpublished).

Ministry of Education officials, at national and baladiya level, school principals, teachers, parents and caregivers. The data collection took place between November and December 2022.

Table. 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

Map of assessed schools per baladiya



Key findings

Education is **legally mandated to be free and mandatory for all Libyan school-aged children**. The integration of IDPs and their children into the education system was a priority for the Ministry of Education. The policy of enabling IDPs' children to enroll and IDP teachers to work at the nearest school to their current place of residence has been introduced to alleviate the negative impact of internal displacement on educational accessibility. However, the absence of proper documentation continues to be a significant obstacle for IDPs.

The lack of resources at the central level is a significant challenge to the provision of quality education in Libya. This shortage of resources is an impact of inadequate budgeting and management policies at the local level, leading to insufficient essential equipment, including computers, seats, laboratories, charts, and other teaching and learning materials. Additionally, the supply of schoolbooks and textbooks is centralized, leading to delays at the beginning of the school year. The lack of adequate learning and teaching methods and infrastructure is identified as a significant cause of the reported decrease in the quality of education and the learning loss in Libya. There is a critical shortage of teaching and learning equipment, and 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.

Child protection risks also pose challenges to education in Libya. **While school dropouts are limited, they are largely attributed to financial difficulties and the lack of motivation to prioritize education at the household level.** Although education is free of charge, families may still face the burden of transportation fees and other education-related expenses. 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 are 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. 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. Children are more prone to leaving school out of fear of re-experiencing similar traumatic events. The risks for children's safety inside the school perimeters, including bullying and physical punishment, have the potential to adversely affect children's academic performance and lead to dropouts.

Several obstacles impede access to education in Libya, according to key informants and participants in focus group discussions. **The primary barriers identified were school closures, damaged or incomplete school infrastructure, inadequate municipal infrastructure, and adverse weather events.** The prolonged period of school closures due to conflicts and wars has resulted in a learning gap and a deterioration in the quality of learning. The process of rehabilitating and maintaining damaged or looted school buildings during the conflict was slow and limited, resulting in a delayed reopening of schools. The policy adapted by the Ministry of Education that entailed promoting students automatically without evaluation as a measure to mitigate the impacts conflicts and COVID-19 had an adverse effect on the education level in Libya, resulting in a deterioration in the quality of learning.

The qualifications of teachers also pose a challenge to education in Libya. While a university degree is the predominant qualification for teachers, graduation from a teaching program does not appear to be a prerequisite for teaching. While teachers do receive some in-service training, it is limited in both frequency and scope. Teachers typically do not receive any additional training before commencing their teaching careers, and there is a notable absence of continuous professional development opportunities. Both school principals and teachers highlight the urgent need for pedagogical training among newly hired teachers. Teachers also report lacking training and development in the use of technology in teaching. 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.

The Libyan curriculum and the quality of education are also issues facing education in Libya. **Most respondents reported that they do not consider the current curriculum suitable for meeting the requirements of society and the job market.** The current Libyan curriculum is outdated, lacks coherence and clarity in the lessons and information presented in textbooks, and requires resources for science subjects that are not available at the school level. 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.

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 channelled 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, analyse 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 parent's 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.