

# TORINO PROCESS 2018–2020

## LEBANON

### NATIONAL REPORT

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## ACRONYMS

<b>ALI</b>	Association of Lebanese Industrialists
<b>BP</b>	Brevet Professionnel.
<b>BT</b>	Baccalauréat Technique
<b>CAS</b>	Central Administration of Statistics
<b>CAP</b>	Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle
<b>CCBML</b>	Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Beirut and Mount Lebanon
<b>CEDRE</b>	Council for Economic Development & Reconstruction Investment Conference
<b>CPF</b>	Citizenship Education Conceptual & Programmatic Framework
<b>CRDP</b>	Center for Educational Research and Development
<b>CVT</b>	Continuing vocational training
<b>DGVTE</b>	Directorate General for Vocational Education and Training
<b>DOT</b>	Digital Opportunity Trust
<b>DS</b>	Dual System
<b>ETF</b>	European Training Foundation
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>GEMM</b>	Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean
<b>GEO</b>	Guidance and Employment Offices
<b>GIL</b>	Generation of Innovative Leaders
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>IEA</b>	International Education Association
<b>IECD</b>	Institut Européen De Coopération Et De Développement
<b>ILO</b>	international Labour Organization
<b>IPNET</b>	The National Training Institution for Technical Education
<b>IRI</b>	Industrial Research Institute
<b>ISCED</b>	International Standard Classification of Education
<b>IVET</b>	Initial vocational education and training
<b>KFW</b>	Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau

<b>LCRP</b>	Lebanon Crisis Response Plan
<b>LT</b>	Licence Technique
<b>MEHE</b>	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
<b>MOL</b>	Ministry of Labour
<b>MOSA</b>	Ministry of Social Affairs
<b>NEO</b>	National Employment Office
<b>NQF</b>	National qualifications framework
<b>NRF</b>	National Reporting Framework
<b>NVTC</b>	National Vocational Training Center
<b>OECD</b>	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>ProVTE</b>	Technical Assistance for a More Practice-Oriented VTE in Lebanon
<b>SDC</b>	Social Development Center
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>TS</b>	Technicien Supérieur
<b>TVET</b>	Technical Vocational Education and Training
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations Higher Commission for Refugees
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UNIDO</b>	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>UNRWA</b>	United Nations Relief & Work Agency
<b>VET</b>	Vocational education and training
<b>WARD</b>	Welfare Association for Research and Development

# 1. THE NATIONAL REPORTING FRAMEWORK

## BUILDING BLOCK A: COUNTRY AND VET OVERVIEW

### A.1: Country background

#### A.1.1 Introduction

Lebanon has been imperilled to various socio-political and demographic transformations over the years, geopolitical wars, and regional uprisings, all of which strengthened its ability to evolve, resist, and adapt to the new situations prevalent. However, the country could not isolate itself from the Syrian Crisis, which going through its eighth year and continues to have a large impact on the economy, environment and demography of the country. Witnessing a drop in the key drivers of economy, construction, industry, services and tourism, the country's economy slowed down, and fell from an average of 8% in growth between 2007-2010 to 1.5% growth in its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during the last six years<sup>1</sup>. In fact, the World Bank estimated that there was only a 0.2% growth in real GDP in 2018, associated with tightened liquidity that mostly impacted the real estate sector<sup>2</sup>.

Aside from the losses in fiscal revenue and sluggish economic growth, the country had to respond to influx of people fleeing the conflicts, overstressing its public services to address the needs of the population, and overburdening its infrastructure, amidst continual increase in influx of displaced people, exceeding the country's ability to meet such demand, and pushing more people into poverty.

Today, the Government of Lebanon, in its latest Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) Document updated in 2019 estimates that there are more than 1.5 million displaced Syrians in Lebanon, with 950,334 displaced Syrians registered, 475,075 registered Palestinian refugees, and 28,800 Syrian Palestinian refugees fleeing Syria.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, the Human Rights Watch estimated that, as per the World Report 2019, 74% of the 1.5 million displaced Syrians living in Lebanon lack legal status<sup>4</sup>. With regards to Palestinian refugees, the United Nations Relief & Work Agency (UNRWA) estimates in its latest published report on protection in 2019, that as of December 2018, 475,075 Palestinian refugees are registered with UNRWA but around 270,000 of them reside in Lebanon.<sup>5</sup> However, the Population and Housing Census in Palestinian Camps and Gatherings in Lebanon, conducted in 2017, under the umbrella of the Lebanese-Palestinian Dialogue Committee, estimated that there are 174,422 Palestinian refugees residing in Palestinian camps and gatherings in Lebanon. The number was officially adopted by the Council of Ministers in 2016<sup>6</sup>.

In terms of poverty, nearly 28.5% of the Lebanese, 69% of the displaced Syrians, 65% of the Palestinians and 89% of Syrian Palestinians live below the poverty line, with less than \$3.84 a day<sup>7</sup>.

Increased poverty rate underlies the increase in unemployment, with some groups of the active population unable to find a job and secure an income for their living. Today, the Lebanese labour market continues to be characterized by high unemployment rates. While the World Bank estimates

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<sup>1</sup> Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020, Lebanon, United Nations, 2019 Update: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68651>

<sup>2</sup> WorldBank, Lebanon Economic Monitor, Spring 2019: <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/757651553672394797/Lebanon-MEU-April-2019-Eng.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid

<sup>4</sup> Human Rights Watch, World Report 2019: <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/lebanon>

<sup>5</sup> UNRWA, Protection in Lebanon, Update 2019: <https://www.unrwa.org/activity/protection-lebanon>

<sup>6</sup> Central Administration of Statistics, Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee, *Population and Housing Census in Palestinian Camps and Gatherings in Lebanon 2017*, Beirut, 2018; <http://www.lpdg.gov.lb/DocumentFiles/Key%20Findings%20report%20En-636566196639789418.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Ibid

the national unemployment rate to be 11% as of 2017, the Ministry of Labour reports an even higher estimate, 25% national unemployment rate with 37% for youth under 35 years of age, and 18% for women since 2017<sup>8</sup>.

Coinciding with the finalization of this report, the Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 has just been published in January 2020, jointly executed by Central Administration Of Statistics (CAS), International Labour Organization (ILO) and funded by the European Union. The Survey results indicate a national unemployment rate of 11.4% with double this unemployment rate for youth (15-24 years old), at 23.3% and 35.7% among university graduates<sup>9</sup>.

Informality in businesses and employment became a significant feature and one that is growing in some sectors more than others. With the latest Syrian Refugee Crisis, the employment of the displaced people occurred entirely in the informal sector, according to the World Bank's estimate, increasing the rate of informality by 10% across all economic sectors.<sup>10</sup> This has resulted in reduced job opportunities, reduced quality of job types offered, and depression of wages in many sectors, particularly for low-skilled workers. The Labour Force & Household Living Conditions Survey estimated that informal employment is at 55% with 69% of people working in informal sector being males and 31% females<sup>11</sup>.

On the other hand, the political scene witnessed major changes since the last Torino Process Report, with formation of new government, on January 31st, 2018, representing the main political parties and placing economic growth at the heart of its strategy and commitment for the next five years. Two major steps provided evidence to this commitment: *Conférence économique pour le développement, par les réformes et avec les entreprises* (CEDRE), and Lebanon's Economic Vision Report produced by McKinsey & Company in 2018. The former gathered international donors at a conference pledging, through a Capital Investment Plan, for grants and soft loans amounting to \$11.8 billion in value for investment in infrastructure projects: transport, water sanitation, electricity, telecommunications, waste management, industry, and tourism<sup>12</sup>. Alongside this conference, a report, developed by McKinsey in 2018 at the request of Ministry of Economy & Trade, reflected the government's economic vision: increasing economic growth, reducing fiscal deficit and unemployment through "quick wins" such as development of an investment banking hub, establishment of a construction zone for pre-fabricated housing, investment in tourism, industrial zones, and agriculture by legalising cannabis and investing the materials extracted from it in the pharmaceutical sector, as well as the knowledge economy as it links to education<sup>13</sup>.

The Capital Investment Plan is expected to spur the economic growth wheel and create jobs reducing unemployment, but the implementation process has not yet started as the utilization of the fund is conditioned on a series of reforms the government should undertake at different levels, to increase transparency and reduce the deficit by developing a new budget that reflects such reforms and cuts on public expenditure – all of which remained pending until the new budget of the government is granted approval from the Parliament.

This introduction was first drafted in August 2019, updating figures again in September 2019 to be published soon after. However, the whole situation changed with the on-start of the Revolution in October 2019. Three weeks after the protests started, the Government resigned and a new government has just been recently formed awaiting the vote of the confidence from the Parliament.

Meanwhile, the economic crisis laid a heavy burden on the country, forcing a significant number of companies to slow down or close. Coupled with that was a financial crisis growing in intensity as

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<sup>8</sup> Arab Weekly Digest, Interview with Minister of Labour, Beirut, August 2017

<sup>9</sup> Central Administration Of Statistics, International Labour Organization: Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey, European Union Funds, January 2019.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid

<sup>12</sup> Salman J., Cedre Projects Aim to Create Jobs for Lebanese, Syrian Refugees, Al- Mashreq newspaper, March 2019: [http://almashareq.com/en\\_GB/articles/cnmi\\_am/features/2019/03/13/feature-02](http://almashareq.com/en_GB/articles/cnmi_am/features/2019/03/13/feature-02)

<sup>13</sup> Middle East Consultancy, McKinsey delivers 1,000-page report to government of Lebanon, July 2018: <https://www.consultancy-me.com/news/1118/mckinsey-delivers-1000-page-report-to-government-of-lebanon>

banks' liquidity shrank, capital controls informally applied. This made even more difficult for companies to conduct businesses thus downsizing or closing, slowed down productive sectors such as industry and agriculture unable to import raw material for their businesses. Whilst such impact cannot be yet quantified, some figures published by Infopro Research Company in February 2020 indicate that more than 220,000 have lost their jobs since October, an equivalent of 38% increase in unemployment<sup>14</sup>. Additionally, the number of companies closing down or ceasing operations increased by 12% where one third of all companies surveyed (around 600 companies) have downsized, reducing their workforce by 60%<sup>15</sup>. Also, more files for immigration have been applied without actual statistics yet revealed, just pointing to an increase in request for immigration among youth looking for a better future.

The Worldbank expects further increase in unemployment as well as poverty due to loss of jobs, stringent financial measures exerted by banks hindering people from accessing their accounts, rise of parallel exchange market devaluating the Lebanese pounds, causing an increase in price of imported goods. All these factors will trigger more inflation pressures that will mostly affect the poor and middle class<sup>16</sup>. Additionally, the Capital Investment Plan is not expected to materialize soon unless conditioned reforms are carried out, which according to experts will take longer time to be implemented.

## A.2: Overview of Vocational Education and Training

### A.2.1 Overview of VET: set-up and regulatory framework

The Directorate General for Vocational and Technical Education (DGVTE) is the sole decision maker in the sub-sector and monitors all VET related issues with the exception of accelerated vocational training which is provided by both the DGVTE institutions and by the National Vocational Training Centre and a number of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). As per Decree # 8349 issued on May 2, 1996, the DGVTE is responsible for the management of all VET related issues, specifically:

- Managing the vocational education and training schools and institutes
- Monitoring all the private vocational education and training schools and institutes
- Developing the whole vocational education system and upgrading it to fit the demand of the labour market and economic context

The DGVTE, according to the decree that established it, comprises seven different divisions, each with a mandate and responsibilities. Private VET trainers and institutions are obliged to follow the programs set by the DGVTE, and students from both public and private have to take the national examination endorsed by the DGVTE. Any new institution has to get accreditation from the DGVTE before opening.

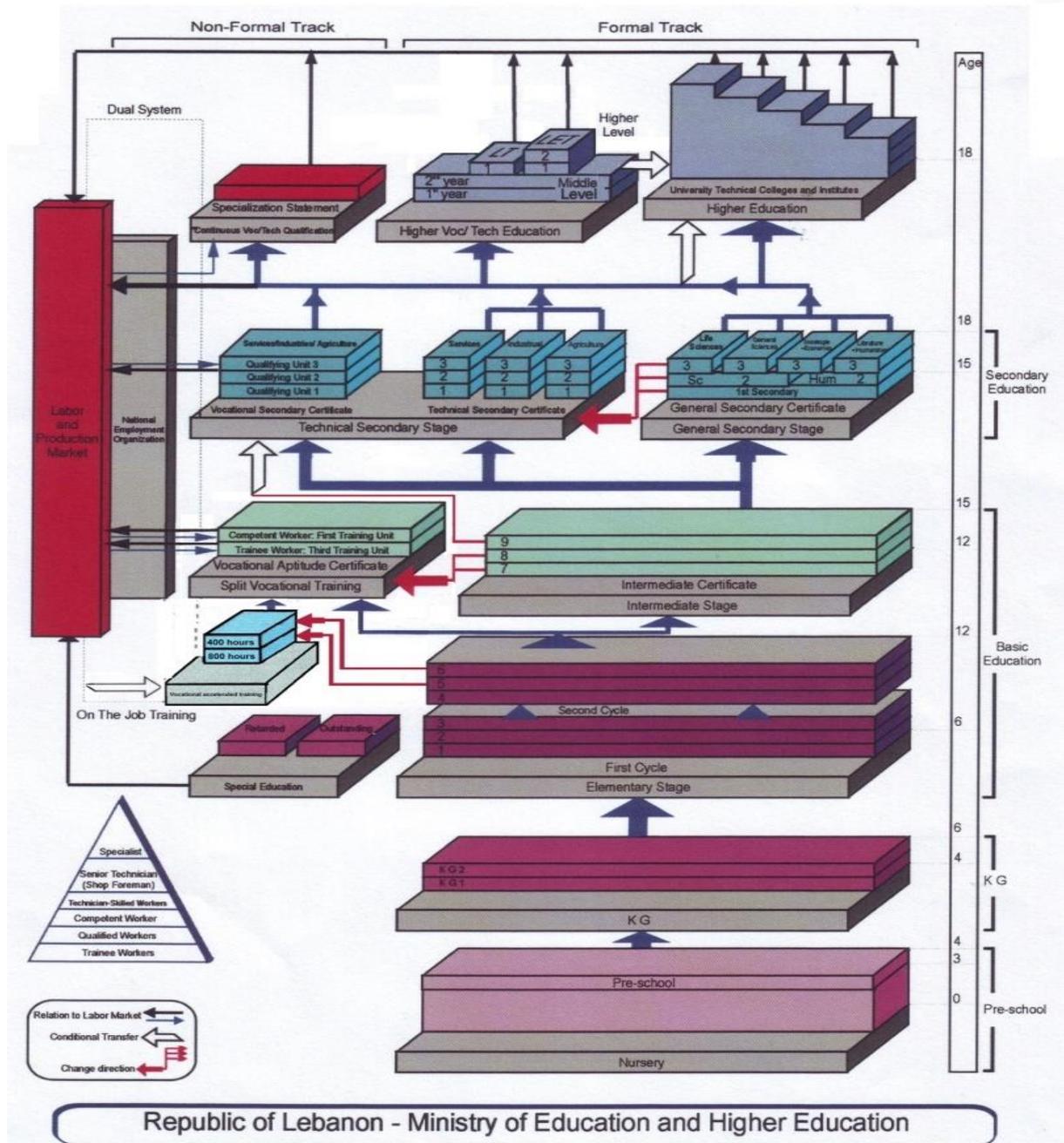
The formal VET system encompasses different pathways, which allow for a transfer from general to vocational education. At the lower academic secondary levels, students can start preparing for the VET education starting with the Brevet Professionnel (BP) level. Should the students wish to enrol at a higher technical secondary level, they require the BP to be eligible to pursue the Baccalauréat Technique (BT). The figure below provides an overview of the different TVET pathways that students can pursue to attain the different degrees.

<sup>14</sup> Info Pro Study: 220,000 Jobs Lost: <http://www.businessnews.com.lb/cms/Story/StoryDetails.aspx?ItemID=7423>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid

<sup>16</sup> Lebanon Economic Monitor, Fall 2019: So When Gravity Beckons, The Poor Don't Fall, World Bank, January 28, 2020: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/publication/lebanon-economic-monitor-fall-2019>

Figure 1 Visual Representation of the VET Education Pathways in Lebanon



NB: From a study conducted by WARD in 2020: how to understand TVET in Lebanon (not yet published)

Enrolment in the BT program requires students to have passed the official Brevet examinations. At the end of their studies, they acquire the BT diploma, a three-years program, which paves the way for entry into the labour market or the pursuit of further education, either at university or through higher technical education. In the case of the latter, BT graduates pursue a two-years program to attain the Technicien Supérieur (TS). Ultimately, they can go further in their studies for another year to obtain the Licence Technique (LT). This summarizes the path of the formal technical education<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> UNICEF, ILO, NEO, Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Affair, Labour & Agriculture, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocation and Education and Training in Lebanon : 2018-2022, January 2018.

Alternatively, there is also the option of pursuing vocational secondary education, known as the Dual System, with similar pre-requisites as the BT. Students can also pursue their studies at the TS, but have to complete at least one year of BT studies to obtain the BT. Within the dual system path, eight different occupations are available, within industry, trade and tourism sectors. The difference between BT and DS is that the latter involves both apprenticeships and vocational education simultaneously. Upon completing three years, students acquire the DS degree, which also allows them to pursue higher studies, such as the two-year Meister degree, which is the highest level in the vocational education path. The Meister Degree is also an option for students who have completed their General Secondary Diploma (Baccalauréat) with at least five years of practical experience.

These constitute the main formal VET education programmes, which last for two to three years and are still based on many curricula developed years ago, within the DGVTE.

The Ministry of Agriculture, through two BT degree programmes, also provides other technical education programmes: BT in Plant Production, and BT in Animal Production. Both are three years long. During the last year, as in 2018, an additional specialty was included: Landscaping, taught in the 11 agriculture technical schools of which 7 are currently operational and 4 are in the process of being operational. It is important to mention that before 2019, there was also a BT program in General Agriculture, but as all the BT curricula were revised and modified within the FAO Project framework, the BT in General Agriculture was cancelled, and a new BT in Landscaping was launched (it was also available before, but there was no demand for it).

The degrees also include internships and practical learning, in agribusiness companies, up to 120 hours of training. The minimum requirement for entry is the acquisition of the Brevet. As for the technical training, there are different training programmes that are open to all youth between 15 and 15 years of age wishing to learn more about these subjects, covering twenty five topics, related to animal production, plant production, and food processing, with 40 hours of training.

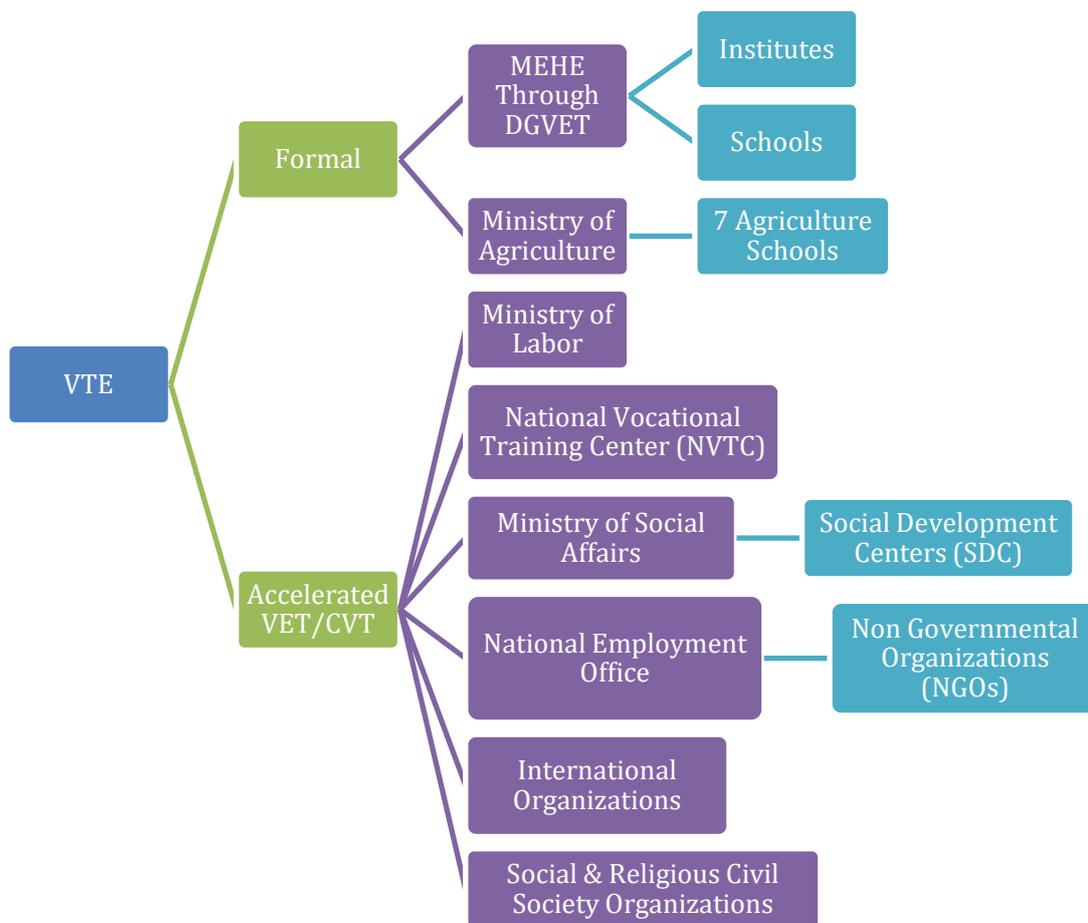
As an alternative to the formal TVET education, there is also the non-formal one mostly provided by both registered public and private schools. They offer short, mid-, and long-term courses not exceeding nine months and providing at the end of the course a certificate of attendance. This non-formal education is known as the accelerated vocational training for rapid integration in the labour market and allows the trainees (Lebanese or displaced populations) to generate income for sustaining themselves.

## A.2.2 Institutional and governance arrangements

The governance of the TVET system in the last two years has witnessed more involvement from the Ministry of Education and Higher Education through collaboration with the different international organizations as part of the support provided based on the National Strategic Framework for TVET 2018-2022. The Interim DGVTE Director General had a positive impact on the Directorate as a whole, by further enhancing the collaboration with different donors and organizations to improve VET at system level. The EU funded project ProVTE, implemented by GIZ, UNHCR, UNICEF, ILO, and IECD are among the main organizations providing such support, through curricula upgrading/development, refurbishing schools with equipment, developing new specializations based on market demand, supporting entrepreneurship in TVET schools, or involving the private sector in curricula development or in Work-Based Learning. Other ministries involved in technical educational and training are mainly the Ministry of Agriculture with FAO, the Ministry of Labour, and the Ministry of Social Affairs, in addition to the different local and international organizations, as shown in the figure below.

The figure below provides a snapshot of the current involvement of each ministry in technical education and training and their overlapping functions.

Figure 2 Overview of the VET Education Provision



The **Ministry of Agriculture** is the only ministry that is engaged in the formal vocational education and training through the Technical Agricultural schools operating as per the Law No. 87/8 issued in 1987 which governs the provision of formal technical education in the agriculture sector. There are eleven technical schools (seven currently active and 4 in process of activation), covering all geographical regions in the country. They are supervised by the Directorate of Studies and Coordination at the Ministry of Agriculture. Students have the choice to specialize either in plant or animal production and study for 3 years to obtain the Technical Baccalaureate (BT). Enrolment conditions are the same as those of vocational and technical education specialties, whereby the acquisition of the Brevet certificate is a pre-requisite. Students that obtained a BT from the agricultural schools can further pursue higher education and enrol in university, on condition that they obtain at least an average of 13/20 in their previous education. The number of students enrolling in the schools has been decreasing in the last two years, with 86 graduates for the year 2018-2019. This is mainly due to rural urban migration and the need to search for work outside rural regions, as well as the lack of attractiveness of the agriculture sector to the youth. On the governance side, coordination could be improved between the Ministry of Agriculture and the Directorate General in that aspect, especially if students wish to pursue further degrees or change their specialties. **However, this has changed, as the Decision # 451/M/2019 issued in 2019 by the Ministry of Education & Higher Education permits holders of BT degrees in agriculture to pursue higher degree, such as a TS degree in other specialties** like food safety, hotel management, marketing, accounting, jewellery design, graphic arts, lab studies and other specialties, that were not open for agriculture students before. This represents a major step forward, as it widens the options for the students and allows them to complement their skills with new knowledge and specialties that would increase their access to the labour market.

On the other hand, the **Ministry of Labour** is in charge of supervising the National Vocational

Education Center (NVTC) which conducts vocational training, namely accelerated vocational training with the main objective of improving skills of labour and increasing employability of non-skilled labour. The Center had mobile centres in rural areas to cover the training needs of population living in marginal areas, but the program was halted due to a shortage of funds and the ministerial decision to redirect funds to other activities.

When it comes to accelerated vocational training, the NVTC located in the Dekweneh complex, provides different training courses spreading over different periods: three, six, or nine months, and certificates are provided upon completion.

Having Minister of Labour as Chairman of its Board of Directors, the National Employment office also finances NGOs to conduct accelerated vocational trainings and workshops on various topics, such as electricity, mobile maintenance, etc., Information Technology, in addition to many others, over three, six, and nine months period with certificates accredited from the National Employment Office itself.

The **Ministry of Social Affairs** (MoSA) has two divisions concerned with the provision of vocational education and training: Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Social Development. The Department of Social Welfare targets the socially vulnerable and those in extreme poverty by providing them with opportunities to continue their education and enrol in vocational education and training, provided they hold a minimum of a Brevet degree. They provide full scholarships for the enrolled students, through contracts with social welfare organizations that provide the required education or through private VET schools. They mostly cover the tuition and transportation fees; however, they do not monitor students or follow-up to see whether they entered the labour market. The Directorate General accredits the curricula taught. On the other hand, the Department of Social Development is responsible for the supervision of all Social Development Centres (SDC), which in turn provide accelerated vocational training based on the needs of the communities in which they are located. The courses provided are usually short, not based on specific or standard curricula and are mostly focused on gender-stereotyped specialties such as cooking and beauty, and mobile maintenance. The two departments are not interlinked, and little cooperation exists between them as each has its own mandate but both operate under the umbrella of MoSA in charge of targeting the vulnerable and the poorest regions. **During the last two years, the Social Development centres (SDCs) have not provided any training given the limited financial resources available for the SDCs to them to carry out such trainings.**

The **Ministry of Industry** is not directly providing accelerated training, except within the framework of a project to increase the competitiveness of industrial enterprises. However, the ministry's strategy includes a component on promoting vocational education and training that can improve the skills of workers and increase the competitiveness of the enterprises. The ministry has been involved, jointly with the MoL in the provision of vocational trainings, through the Industrial Research Institute for welding and underwater welding, as per the identified demand in the market. Moreover, as the ministry is coordinating on the establishment of industrial zones within the Capital Investment Plan, there is an anticipation that further skills will be in demand, in addition to those previously mentioned. As such, different programs are being designed to match the demand, with the support of United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

For the provision of accelerated vocational training, there is a plethora of organizations, local and international, providing or funding skills training programmes, otherwise known as accelerated vocational training, namely as part of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP) and in an attempt to reduce unemployment through better linkages to the labour market. However, there is no clear reference or cooperation between such organizations and the DGVTE, which hinders the effectiveness of VET Policy implementation and further development of the sector.

### A.2.3 Basic statistics on VET

#### Initial Vocational Education and Training (IVET)

In Lebanon, there are 162 public vocational and technical schools offering TVET18. Additionally, there are 398 private vocational and technical educational institutes and training providers<sup>19</sup> authorized and

<sup>18</sup> UNICEF, ILO, NEO, Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Affairs, Labour & Agriculture, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocation and Education and Training in Lebanon : 2018-2022, January 2018.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid

monitored by the Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education (DGTVE). Approximately 71% of all TVET institutions are private and the remaining share is public<sup>20</sup>.

In both public and private vocational and technical schools in Lebanon, the academic year 2017-2018 witnessed the registration of approximately 83,046<sup>21</sup> students, as compared 83,168 students registered in the academic year 2016-2017<sup>22</sup>, representing only a decrease of less than 1% over the two years. The total number of registered students excludes those registered in the non-formal education in short-term vocational courses.

**Table 1 Distribution of the TVET Students in Public and Private TVET Schools (2017-2018) across governorates**

Governorate	Public TVET students (%)	Private TVET students (%)
Mount Lebanon	21.78	40.11
South and Nabatiyeh	19.37	20.55
North	36.17	23.73
Bekaa	22.68	10.46
Beirut	0	5.15
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Directorate General of vocational and technical education (DGTVE)

Among the 83,046 students, almost 59% were enrolled in public schools. Mount Lebanon and Beirut offered more student enrolment in private than public TVET schools<sup>23</sup>. The regional distribution of students enrolled in vocational and technical education showed that Mount Lebanon had the highest number of TVET students with 26,147 out of 83,046 TVET students, followed by the North with 25,243 out of 83,046 TVET students. As for Beirut, it accommodates the lowest share of students in vocational and technical education with 4%<sup>24</sup>.

**Table 2 Distribution of TVET students by degree programmes 2017-2018**

Award	Number of students	Percentage (%)
Licence Technique (LT)	3,455	4.16
Technicien Supérieur (TS)	17,049	20.53
Technical Baccalaureate (BT)	45,791	55.14
Dual System (DS)	1,013	1.22
Meister Degree	25	0.03
Brevet Professionnel (BP) – Vocational Certificate	15,713	18.92
<b>Total</b>	<b>83,046</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<sup>20</sup> European Training Foundation (ETF), Torino Process 2014 Lebanon, 2015.

<sup>21</sup> CentreFor Education Research, CRDP, Annual Education Statistics 2017-2018: <https://www.crdp.org/files/201904031143321.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> UNICEF, ILO, NEO, Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Affair, Labour & Agriculture, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocation and Education and Training in Lebanon: 2018-2022, January 2018.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid

<sup>24</sup> Unemployment in Lebanon – findings and recommendations Report Analysis for ECOSOC, prepared on behalf of GOPA. Available at:

<http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/Unemployment%20in%20Lebanon%20Findings%20and%20Recommendations%202019%20ECOSOC.pdf>

Source: Directorate General of vocational and technical education (DGTVE)

Among the 48.924 (59%) TVET students enrolled in Public TVET schools, only 8.772 (17.9) TVET students were enrolled in a Brevet Professional (BP), 889 (1.8%) TVET students in a Dual System Degree and 33 (0.1%) TVET students in acquiring Meister Degree<sup>25</sup>. Because of the limited number of targeted occupations, enrollment in the Vocational Path remained relatively low with 19.8% in public schools compared to 80.2% for the Technical Path also in public schools.

The following table provides further details on the students' enrollment in TVET education segregated by gender from 2009 till 2019.

**Table 3 Student Enrolment in TVET Schools by Gender**

Enrolment of students in TVET as percentage of the total enrolment in General Secondary education											
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
<b>Total</b>	29.08	27.43	31.63	26.48	27.30	27.23	26.17	24.24	27.65	25.94	M.D
<b>Female</b>	24.44	23.17	26.99	21.63	21.94	21.65	21.04	19.51	21.97	21.58	M.D
<b>Male</b>	34.21	32.20	36.70	31.81	33.18	33.37	31.75	29.41	33.65	30.74	M.D
Number of pupils per teacher											
<b>Pupil/teacher ratio</b>	9.20	8.94	9.31	M.D	8.21	7.74	M.D	7.67	7.88	M.D	M.D

Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Available at: <http://uis.unesco.org/en/country/lb>

Due to the prevailing social norms, which attribute some professions to men, an important gender bias still persists over the years. As per the table above, the participation of young women in TVET education was lower compared to young men with 21.58 % women compared to 33.65% men in 2018. However, in 2018, the CRDP annual Statistics report revealed a smaller gap among the TVET graduates, as 55% of the TVET graduates were males and around 45% females.

Regarding the TVET human resources, there are 15,015 TVET teachers in Lebanon, as per the official figures of the DGTVE for 2017-2018 with 1,521 teachers who are civil servants working on a permanent contract basis, and 13,494 teachers working on a contractual basis paid by hour. Given the variety of specialization in TVET schools and in order to infuse the workplace knowledge and experience into education, over 80% of teachers work on an hourly basis<sup>26</sup>. Women cover almost half of the TVET workforce.

### Continuous Vocational Education and Training (CVET)

CVET in Lebanon is the alternative track to the formal TVET education, known as the short-term education track and the non-formal one. Both private and public institutions provide the CVET where students get a certificate at the end of the training.

CVET or the Non-formal market-based skills training (MBST), or the accelerated vocational training, as more commonly known, is a key component of the LCRP. Accelerated vocational training offers short-term accelerated courses in order to promote employability and fill skills gaps in the labour market. Around 90 % of training short courses are free of charge and they last from 3 to 9 months. In 2014, over 14,600 individuals were registered in accelerated vocational trainings compared with only 4,300

<sup>25</sup> CentreFor Education Research, CRDP, Annual Education Statistics 2017-2018: <https://www.crdp.org/files/201904031143321.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> European Training Foundation (ETF) Torino Process Report, Lebanon, 2016.

students in 2015<sup>27</sup>. The annual LCRP report indicated that in 2018, different kinds of support was provided to 986 businesses and cooperatives, 763 individuals supported to establish their own businesses, and over 23,000 beneficiaries targeted through vocational trainings. As a result of such support, 2,365 jobs were created (2,217 were maintained and 148 created)<sup>28</sup>. Other figures stated by ILO indicated that only 3.7% of the 23,000 beneficiaries trained have found a job. In the absence of systematic tracer studies, the number of graduates placed in jobs and other labour market outcomes remains unknown.

As per the LCRP 2019 update, over 142,000 direct beneficiaries were targeted since 2015 but a limited number of jobs created: 4,625 jobs generated/maintained from 2015 till today, with 25,000 beneficiaries of temporary employment, and 4,974 beneficiaries of skills training accessing work from 2017<sup>29</sup>.

#### A.2.4 Vision for VET and major reform undertakings

The development and adoption of a National Strategic Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Lebanon, adopted in 2018, has been major milestone for the government in its effort and commitment to improve the education and TVET system in Lebanon and increase employability and employment of the active population. The strategic framework is attributed to joint efforts of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) with four Lebanese ministries – Education and Higher Education, Social Affairs, Labour, and Agriculture, along with inputs from other international organizations such as ProVTE and IECD. The overall vision of such strategy is to promote employability of the active population in Lebanon through improving their competences and qualifications, ensuring availability of competent workforce for the development of business in Lebanon, and finally contribute to inclusive and sustainable economic development, without leaving anyone behind. The strategy focuses on three main axes: “(i) expanded access and service delivery; (ii) enhanced quality and relevance of TVET provision; and (iii) improved TVET governance and systems”<sup>30</sup>. Those axes have been embedded in the national strategic framework in eight building blocks:

1. Equal access to TVET system,
2. Improved HR management system for Human Resources,
3. Developing National Qualification System based on competency approach,
4. Design quality assurance system for evidence-based planning and budgeting,
5. Integrating life skills and entrepreneurship in curricula,
6. Refurbishing of training equipment to improve practical training,
7. Increasing private sector involvement through employers' and workers' representatives to improve market relevance of training programs.
8. Developing a Diversified financing framework to seize different opportunities for training providers, through multiple partnerships.

### A.3: The context of VET

#### A.3.1 Socioeconomic context

As a result of the prevailing economic situation in the country, various social and economic trends have evolved which have various degrees of impact on the national economy of the country as a whole. These can be summarized as follows:

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<sup>27</sup> UNICEF, ILO, NEO, Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Affair, Labour & Agriculture, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocation and Education and Training in Lebanon: 2018-2022, January 2018.

<sup>28</sup> Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020: Annual Report 2018 : <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/70914>

<sup>29</sup> Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020, Lebanon, United Nations, 2019 Update: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68651>

<sup>30</sup> UNICEF, ILO, NEO, Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Affair, Labour & Agriculture, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocation and Education and Training in Lebanon: 2018-2022, January 2018.

## Protracted Crisis and Presence of Large Number of Refugees

The Crisis in Syria has had, and to some extent still has, a significant impact on the Lebanese economy, putting pressure on infrastructure and social and educational services, as well as competition over diminishing resources including human resources. This is mostly manifested in the competition in low-skilled jobs, leading overall to increased poverty, unemployment and Lebanese emigration.

### Increased economic slowdown

The political instability have affected the Lebanese economy, evident in the declining foreign direct investment coupled with reduced government revenues, and increased expenditures. In fact, the World Bank records a deceleration in the economic activity, whereby in 2018, the GDP growth in Lebanon grew only by an estimated 0.2% (compared to 0.6% in 2017) with inflation soaring to 6.1% in 2018, compared to 4.7% in 2017<sup>31</sup>.

What's more, according to the National Economics Accounts Report for 2010, market services, transportation and communications account for 39 percent of GDP, with industry accounting for 7.2 % and agriculture at 4.7 %<sup>32</sup>. The industrial sector alone employs around 140,000 people, or the equivalent of 25% of the local labour force<sup>33</sup>. The current economic uncertainty and the slowing of business activity have demotivated the enterprises to implement their expansion and growth plans. The high unemployment rate, combined to increased transportation barriers and limited access to funding is leading to a decreased cash flow for the enterprises and halting of activities as means of austerity measures for survival. Furthermore, the higher production costs for the industries continue to surmount adding further pressure on the enterprises' growth and opportunities for creating employment, as they have to rely on private supply of electricity, water and energy while continuing to pay for the government supply of such resources.

### Increased Poverty

Today, the Government of Lebanon, in its latest Syrian Crisis Plan estimates that there are more than 1.5 million displaced Syrians in Lebanon, with 950,334 Displaced Syrians in Lebanon, 270,000 Palestinian refugees, and 28,800 Syrian Palestinian refugees fleeing Syria.<sup>34</sup> From a poverty perspective, around 28.5% of the Lebanese, 69% of the displaced Syrians, 65% of the Palestinians and 89% of Syrian Palestinians live below the poverty line, with less than \$3.84 a day<sup>35</sup>.

### Reduced Job Opportunities with Higher Levels of Unemployment among Youth

Unemployment is one of the causes of poverty, with some groups of the active population unable to find a job and secure an income for their living. Today, the latest Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 estimates the national unemployment rate at 11.4% with double this unemployment rate for youth (15-24 years old), at 23.3% and 35.7% among university graduates<sup>36</sup>.

The recent GIZ publication on Employment and Labour Market Analysis (ELMA, 2019) reported a similar rate of unemployment among youth, 21.8% of upper secondary graduates and 31.6% of university graduates seeking jobs. Job opportunities, according to the study, are mostly available in low-skilled low wage jobs, and more limited in higher productivity sectors such as manufacturing, communications, and finance<sup>37</sup>. This results in increased competition in informal economy due to prevalence of demand for low-skilled low-wage jobs, increased skills mismatch amidst insufficient demand for highly skilled labour, and brain drain due to increased immigration of Lebanese seeking better opportunities outside their country. In fact, as per the World Bank survey, 41% of employed individuals work in jobs that are outside their scope of education and skills, linking to education as

<sup>31</sup> The World Bank. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/lebanon/overview>

<sup>32</sup> World Bank, Lebanon Economic Monitor: The Economy of New Drivers and Old Drags, Global Practice for Macroeconomics & Fiscal Management, Lebanon, World Bank, April 2015.

<sup>33</sup> Investment and Development authority of Lebanon, *Industry Key Facts & Figures, Sectors in Focus*, Lebanon, Investment and Development authority of Lebanon, 2015: [www.investinlebanon.gov.lb](http://www.investinlebanon.gov.lb)

<sup>34</sup> Ibid

<sup>35</sup> Ibid

<sup>36</sup> Central Administration Of Statistics, International Labour Organization: Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey, European Union Funds, January 2019.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid

main impediment. Additionally, 10,000 -15,000 highly skilled Lebanese immigrate country every year for better opportunities, which result in further brain drain<sup>38</sup>.

### Lower participation of women in Economy

Lebanese women play a marginal role in the Lebanese economy. Even though their participation in the economic sector increased over the last 15 years from 21% in 1997 to 25% in 2001, it remains low due to various obstacles women face, ranging between wage discrimination, job segregation, and cultural barriers<sup>39</sup>. In 2019 and according to the Central Administration of Statistics (CAS), the labour force participation rate was 49.2%, with 67.8% male participants and 25.6% female participants (one of the lowest female activity rates in the world), making it a male dominated labour market<sup>40</sup>.

Lebanese women participation in the economic sector is mainly concentrated in the informal sector; around 60% (57% of women and 62% of men)<sup>41</sup> of the workers in Lebanon are involved in the informal sector. This is particularly true for the agricultural employment.

When it comes to gender balanced distribution of jobs, manufacturing comes on top after agriculture (but includes seasonal workers as well), with transportation and construction sectors highly unbalanced, with majority of the workers in the sectors are pre-dominantly male with some exceptions for women in office work. As per the gender wage gap, it is lowest in services and trade sector, around 6%) and higher up to 38% in transport and communication<sup>42</sup>.

### Brain Drain

The Syrian Crisis and influx of refugees has aggravated an already hard situation resulting in a slow labour market growth and reduced job opportunities. Additionally, there has been reduction in the quality of job types offered where, despite need /demand for higher positions, only the low-skilled jobs are offered matching a low wage range, and decreased salaries, due to economic situation. This being the case, the considerable portion of Lebanese youth felt their expectations unmatched, and looked to the outside for better opportunities. This led to increased wave of emigration seeking better opportunities outside Lebanon. A study conducted by OECD in 2015 indicates that 10 to 15 thousand Lebanese emigrate every year, skilled people, with approximately 50% of emigrants have secondary education and around 25% have attained tertiary education<sup>43</sup>. This results in negative impact, leading to loss of human capital and workforce, as well as loss of talent and knowledge pool to match the required skills, especially the soft skills, and eventually slower economic growth.

Additionally the study conducted in 2017 by ETF on migrant support measures goes further to indicate that the majority of the Lebanese that emigrate every year are highly skilled and work in the main sectors of banking and finance, medicine and wellness, media, architecture, graphic design, engineering and hospitality. Of those residing in the Gulf countries, at least 35% of them acquire higher positions and director positions<sup>44</sup>. The same study confirms that the migration to such countries is due to the lack of job opportunities in the country and the wish to pursue better opportunities abroad, further leading to brain drain. In contrast, Lebanon is main target for foreign workers, particularly low-skilled labour from Asia, Africa and the Middle East<sup>45</sup>. Such foreign workers are mostly employed in construction, agriculture as well as domestic work, namely for women, and in rigid working conditions of long working hours and low wages. Employers tend to recruit such workers in

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<sup>38</sup> World Bank (2012): Republic of Lebanon: Good Jobs Needed. The Role of Macro, Investment, Education, Labour and Social Protection Policies (“Miles”).

<sup>39</sup> United Nations Development Program, *Lebanon Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, UNDP, Beirut, December 2013.

<sup>40</sup> Unemployment in Lebanon – findings and recommendations Report Analysis for ECOSOC, prepared on behalf of GOPA. Available at:

<http://www.databank.com.lb/docs/Unemployment%20in%20Lebanon%20Findings%20and%20Recommendations%202019%20ECOSOC.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> World Bank, Lebanon: Promoting poverty reduction and shared prosperity, a Systematic Country Diagnosis, World Bank, Beirut, June 2015.

<sup>42</sup> GIZ, Employment and Labour Market Analysis Lebanon, Beirut, 2019.

<sup>43</sup> Abdo N., Lebanon: Skilled workers for a productive economy, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Lebanon, 2015.

<sup>44</sup> European Training Foundation, Migrant Support Measure from An Employment and Skills Perspective (MISMES), Lebanon, 2017.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid

unskilled jobs as they ask for lower wages than Lebanese, do not need to be registered at the national social security fund, and can be laid off more easily than Lebanese workers<sup>46</sup>.

### A.3.2 Migration and refugee flows

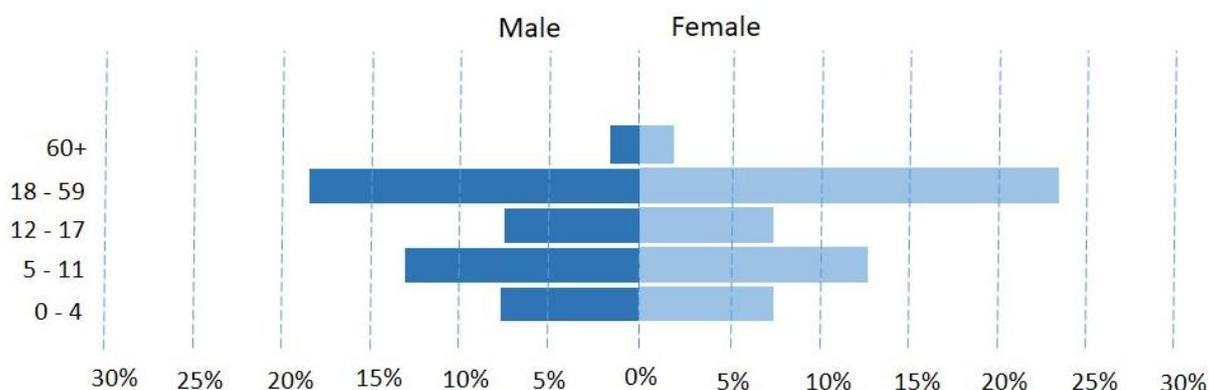
The year 2019 marks eight years since the conflict in Syria began. By hosting around 1.5 million Displaced Syrians who have fled their country, in addition to a large community of Palestinian refugees, Lebanon is home to the highest number of displaced people per capita in the world<sup>47</sup>.

#### A- Refugees Profile

Despite the efforts of the Lebanese Government, the international organizations and the civil society organizations in dealing with the crisis, the needs of the refugees are growing. The prolonged crisis is having an ever-stronger impact on Syrian and Palestinian refugees, mainly in terms of access to education, livelihoods, health, and shelter.

As of October 2018, the Government of Lebanon estimates that 1.5 million Syrians have fled the conflict in Syria to Lebanon, including 950,3341 registered as refugees with UNHCR, of which 25.2% are women, 19.4% men, 27.1% are girls, 28.3% are boys, along with 28,800 Palestinian refugees from Syria and a preexisting population of an estimated 174,422 Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon<sup>48</sup>.

**Figure 3 Demography of the Syrian Refugees Registered with UNHCR in Lebanon 2018**



Source: UNHCR. Available at <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/situations/syria/location/71>

Overall, the age pyramid represented in the figure above shows that the Syrian refugee population is young for both males and females. The majority of Syrian refugees are youth and children.

In terms of employment, Syrian refugees are characterised by high unemployment levels, most notably amongst women at 68%. Around 47% of Syrian refugees are economically active mainly in agriculture and construction, of which 92% have no work contract and over 56% work on a seasonal, weekly or daily basis<sup>49</sup>. Thus, most of the Syrian refugees working are mostly operating in the informal sector marked by low productivity and wages. ILO estimates that 92% of the refugees work in informal sector<sup>50</sup>.

<sup>46</sup> GIZ, Employment and Labour Market Analysis Lebanon, Beirut, 2019

<sup>47</sup> United Nations; Government of Lebanon, Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017 – 2020, 2019 update, Lebanon, January 2019. Available at <http://www.un.org.lb/library/assets/67780-035714.pdf>

<sup>48</sup> United Nations; Government of Lebanon, Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017 – 2020, 2019 update, Lebanon, January 2019. Available at <http://www.un.org.lb/library/assets/67780-035714.pdf>

<sup>49</sup> ILO Report- Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile. Available at [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@robeirut/documents/genericdocument/wcms\\_240130.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@robeirut/documents/genericdocument/wcms_240130.pdf)

<sup>50</sup> European Training Foundation, Migrant Support Measure from an Employment and Skills Perspective (MISMES), Lebanon, 2017.

Additionally, more than 68 % of displaced Syrians are living below the poverty line along with 65% of Palestinian refugees from Lebanon<sup>51</sup>.

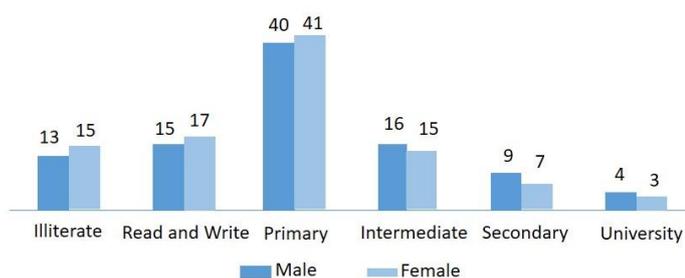
Regarding the educational attainment of Syrian refugees, it is generally low with one out of three is either illiterate or never attended school, 40% have a primary education, and only 3% achieved university education.

Through the RACE II plan, 2017-2021 (Reaching All Children with Education II) jointly developed between Ministry of Education and Higher Education and international community, the main aim is to improving access, quality, and systems of education for youth between ages of 3 to 18 years. This is done through subsidizing cost of education for children impacted by the Syrian Crisis, including tuition and other expenses, along with rehabilitation of school premises and improving quality of teaching in schools.

Results to date indicated that 205,239 (first and second shifts) and 4,905 non-Lebanese students have enrolled in the primary and secondary public respectively, schools during 2018-2019 (8,403 if including those in private subsidized secondary schools)<sup>52</sup>. As Such there was a 7.2% increase in enrolment of non-Lebanese compared to 2016-2017, even though comparing to the previous year 2017-2018 a decline of 3.89% was observed. For the Lebanese students, there was a 4.8% increase in enrolment in public schools in 2018-2019 compared to 2.34% increase in the academic year of 2017-2018<sup>53</sup>. The report estimated that figures approach the 48% of non-Lebanese/Lebanese enrolled in schools, supported by RACE I in public primary education.

As per the LCRP 2017-2020 update, generally, enrolment of non-Lebanese in secondary education remains low; around 6% only are enrolled in public secondary and TVET schools. This is mainly attributed to the lack of financial capacities of the refugees to finance their education and lack of funding beyond the compulsory education.

**Figure 4 Distribution of Syrian Refugees by Gender and Educational Attainment (%)**



Source: Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile, ILO 2013. Available at : [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_240134.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_240134.pdf)

According to the figure 4 above, males and females have similar educational levels. Around 40% of Syrian refugees have primary education, 15% intermediate, 8% secondary and around 3% reached university, with a practically low percentage of around 14% have never attended school and are illiterate.

As far as enrolment of Syrian refugees in the Lebanese schools, several studies reveal that the enrolment is low across all school levels. In fact, according to a study conducted by ILO in 2013, only 31% of surveyed children were actually attending schools in the school year 2012-2013, with no significant differences between males (31%) and females (30%)<sup>54</sup>.

<sup>51</sup> United Nations; Government of Lebanon, Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017 – 2020, 2019 update, Lebanon, January 2019. Available at <http://www.un.org.lb/library/assets/67780-035714.pdf>

<sup>52</sup> RACE II Fact Sheet: March 2019 Updates: <http://racepmulebanon.com/images/fact-sheet-march-2019.pdf>

<sup>53</sup> Ibid

<sup>54</sup> ILO Report- Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile. Available at : [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@robeirut/documents/genericdocument/wcms\\_240130.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@robeirut/documents/genericdocument/wcms_240130.pdf)

**Table 4 Gross Enrolment Rates of Syrian Refugees by Educational Level and Gender (%)**

Education Level	Males	Females	Total
Kindergarten (0-5 years)	3	3	3
Primary (6-10 years)	56	54	55
Intermediate (11-15 years)	16	11	13
Secondary (16-18 years)	16	24	19

Source: Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile, ILO 2013. Available at : [https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms\\_240134.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---arabstates/---ro-beirut/documents/publication/wcms_240134.pdf)

The table above shows that the enrolment is pretty critical at the kindergarten level with 3% for both males and females as well as at the intermediate level and secondary one with larger differences between males and females. At the intermediate level the enrolment is 16% for males compared to 11% for females, contrary to that, at the secondary level, females show higher enrolment rate than males with 24% compared to only 16% for males.

### A.3.3 Education sector context

Based on the information presented in UNESCO's TVET Country Profile for Lebanon published in 2019, 16.2% of the students enrolled in the secondary vocational program in 2016-2017 of which 39.2% were females, while 63.3% in a general education system, of which 50.8% were females<sup>55</sup>. The table below provides information on the enrolment in the lower secondary vocational programme, which is lower than the upper one with 6.6% compared to 27.7% for the upper one. This is not the case for the general secondary education where 71.2% are enrolled in the lower secondary compared to 55.8% enrolled in the upper secondary.

**Table 5: Participation in Education by Level and Programme Orientation for 2016-2017**

Category		Gross enrolment ratio (%)		Percentage of students who are female (%)	
Primary Education (ISCED 1)		93.4%		48.2%	
Secondary Education, all programmes	Lower Secondary (ISCED 2)	63.3%	71.2%	50.8%	50.4%
	Upper Secondary (ISCED 3)		55.8%		51.3%
Tertiary Education, all programmes (ISCED 5-8)		38.1%		55.7%	

<sup>55</sup> UNESCO, TVET Country Profile- Lebanon, compiled in collaboration with DGVTE at Ministry of Education and Higher Education, June 2019.

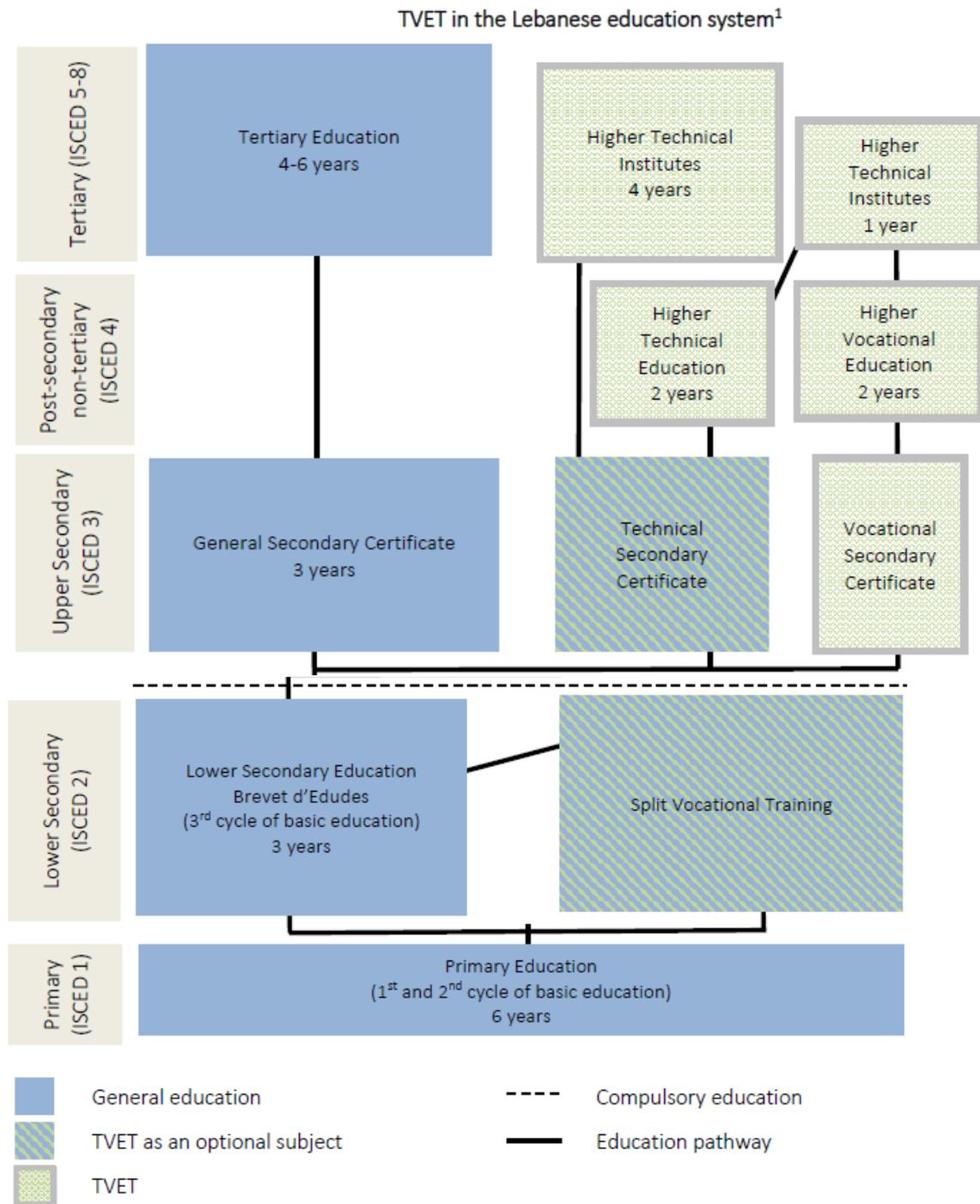
Category		Percentage of students enrolled in vocational programmes, both sexes (%)		Percentage of students in vocational education who are female (%)	
Secondary education, all programmes	Lower secondary (ISCED2)	16.2%	6.6%	39.2%	33.6%
	Upper secondary (ISCED3)		27.7%		40.8%

Source: TVET Country profile – Lebanon, June 2019. UNESCO and UNEVOC. Compiled in collaboration with DGVTE – Ministry of Education, Lebanon

As per UNESCO's TVET Country Profile, the transition rate for students from primary to secondary education stood at 96.23%, indicating that almost all students continue to the secondary education. While there are not official rates for transition from secondary into vocational, enrollment in TVET schools was around 26% of the total enrollment in secondary education in 2018, indicating a lower transition rate to the TVET education.

Additional to the diagram provided in the previous sections on the TVET system, the figure below provides also the visual representation of the Education pathways starting from academic on to the technical vocational education.

Figure 5 TVET System in Lebanese Education System



### A.3.4 Lifelong learning context

Lifelong learning, according to UNESCO's formal definition, includes access to learning for all people of every age, context, utilizing different modalities (formal and informal education), addressing wide range of learning-related needs and demands<sup>56</sup>. Linked to Sustainable Development Goals, Lifelong

<sup>56</sup> UNESCO Formal Definition of Life Long Learning: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/santiago/education/lifelong-learning/>

learning is embedded in SDG Goal 4 “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.”

At the policy level, there isn't yet a formal context for integrating lifelong learning and contribution of VET In the National Strategic Framework, life long learning is addressed as a cross-cutting element in the TVET sector. Still, it remains an issue, which should be highlighted and tackled by the different involved stakeholders.

Lifelong learning is also addressed within the framework of the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020, through different interventions to create job opportunities through supporting municipalities, industrial sector, infrastructure, and micro, small, and medium enterprises. Among such interventions is the provision of technical support to vulnerable people in marketable skills, as means of linking enterprise support to skills development to value chain development. This entailed developing different non-formal market based skills trainings addressing skills gap in the labour market, and work-based learning opportunities. In 2018, 23,000 people were targeted through vocational trainings that are market based, within 3000 enrolled in work-based learning opportunities and 11 receiving counselling to access employment<sup>57</sup>. The trainings would continue in 2019, but with more focus on enterprise support, to ensure growth thus capacity to create more job opportunities.

**One initiative important to mention is the one currently being developed by the Ministry of State for Information Technology (recently formed Ministry within the government formation in 2018) addressing life long learning and aimed at improving the employability of youth, particularly university graduates, given the challenges faced in the labour market. The initiative will work on two main axes:**

- Developing training programs with companies for increasing employability of the youth and providing on-the-job training with selected companies.
- Supporting entrepreneurship through creating technology hubs in the regions, namely those outside Beirut, which also include a job center and coaching center. The purpose is to create the right environment for technology integration and promote entrepreneurship for the different youths in these regions.

On advocacy level, the Ministry is working closely with the Ministry of Labour to grant start-ups grace period for exemption from the need to register their employees at the National Social Security Funds at the start of their businesses. This would provide additional incentive for youth to engage in start-up formation and creating employment opportunities.

Though the focus of the Ministry is on **university graduates in terms of increasing employability, they are open and willing to integrate VET students as well, and thus important to build upon and join in early stages for joint planning.**

Apart from entrepreneurship mainstreaming, other initiatives in life long learning are undertaken by international organizations such as the ILO, which developed a policy brief on life long learning in consultation with various stakeholders, with the brief in its finalization process.

### A.3.5 International cooperation context: partnerships and donor support

There are currently four major projects supporting the development of the VET sector in Lebanon in the period 2016 – 2021. Relevant information about projects are provided in the tables below.

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<sup>57</sup> Inter-Agency Coordination Lebanon, Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017-2020: Annual Report 2018 : <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/70914>

<b>Project Name: Generation of Innovation Leaders (GIL) in Lebanon</b>			
<b>Budget:</b>	\$13,575,468 (For the year 2019-2020)	Implementing period:	March 2018 – Dec 2020
<b>Donor:</b>	The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)		
<b>Description:</b>			
<p>GIL was created to address the inaccessibility of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills for the most marginalized sections of the youth population. This primary programme combines income-generating digital work opportunities, employability courses, and social innovation training. GIL also distributes resources and knowledge related to innovation and Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Mathematics (STEM), across Lebanon, reaching even the most remote areas.</p> <p>GIL has established a network of youth spaces called Innovation Labs, in partnership with local stakeholders. Through trainings, workshops and events, these spaces empower both Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth to improve their digital and entrepreneurial skills, while also providing the chance to network with like-minded individuals to discover hidden skills and new opportunities.</p> <p>Brief summary of the year 2018 achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Over 6,000 youth were trained in subjects such as digital skills and social entrepreneurship;</li> <li>▪ 500 social and business enterprises were mentored, and provided with up to 2,000 in seed funding;</li> <li>▪ The GIL structure and content was reviewed and evaluated, leading to a refined curriculum;</li> <li>▪ 1,000 young girls attended careers events across Lebanon taking part in STEM workshops to discover potential career paths;</li> </ul>			

<b>Project Name: Maharat Li Loubnan (MLL) Project – (Competences for Lebanon)</b>			
<b>Budget:</b>		Implementing period:	2017 - 2021
<b>Donor:</b>	The Institut Européen de Coopération et de Développement (IECD)		
<b>Description:</b>			
<p>The Maharat Li Loubnan project (Competences for Lebanon), entrusted to the IECD by the AFD over a 4-year period, aims to support the employability of vulnerable Lebanese populations and refugees (especially youth and women). For this, it is focusing on training in developing professions. Definitely, the technical training system is incapable in meeting the needs of enterprises and the requirements for accessing these courses are not adapted to populations in extremely difficult situations. The Maharat Li Loubnan (MLL) project purposes to contribute to overcoming the structural and temporary difficulties of vocational training in Lebanon. Beyond a wish to offer young people the resources to meet their needs The project aims to strengthen solidarity between communities and facilitate social harmony. It is deployed according to four lines of intervention</p> <p>The program is implemented in the region of Tripoli, in isolated areas and in villages, for rural and maritime activities such as fishing. In the frame of the MLL project, the first Start-Up Entrepreneur training was launched among young people who had followed certified short training courses in electricity, plumbing and air-conditioning unit maintenance.</p> <p>Brief summary of the year 2017 achievements according to every line of intervention:</p> <p>Line 1: Improve the socio-professional integration of vulnerable populations through the setting up of certified short training courses and support for integration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Opening of 3 new regions to certified short training courses in September 2017</li> <li>▪ 112 young people benefited from certified short training courses, 57% of whom were women, in the frame of MLL. 114 others for the Tripoli project</li> <li>▪ 58% of them found a job one month after completing the training</li> <li>▪ 50 trainers were trained in teaching practices and technical subjects during 11 sessions</li> </ul> <p>Line 2: Allow 300 vulnerable young people to try self-employment</p>			

- Launch of a First start-up training (SUT) in November 201
- 8 young people out of 15 from certified short training courses in Tripoli benefited from the business incubator's first Start-Up Training project in December 2017

Line 3: Overhaul of two technical baccalaureate diplomas: production maintenance and a second sector to be identified

- Launch of a new technical baccalaureate in maintenance and study to extend the training offering to a new sector in September 2017
- 42 students enrolled for training in maintenance for the 2017 academic year in the three pilot schools
- 18 teachers trained in teaching practices and technical subjects
- Two sectors requiring an overhaul were identified: nursing care and computer programming. The creation of a new technical baccalaureate is being studied

**Project Name: Technical Assistance for a More Practice Oriented VTE in Lebanon (ProVTE)**

<b>Budget:</b>	-	Implementing period:	2017 – 2021
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<b>Donor:</b>	European Union
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**Description:**

ProVTE is a project funded by the European Union (EU), and implemented by GIZ, aimed at improving the quality, relevance and responsiveness of the public VTE system to the needs of the labour market, and promoting and strengthening planning, coordination and implementation for a more practice-oriented VTE.

The project proposes and implements pilot long and short-term modular competence based trainings in selected public VET schools and institutes, in a way that the relevance and quality of practice oriented learning models are consolidated. In particular, the project ensures the participation and commitment of employers to ensure that the trainings provided by the training institutions as well as during the work-based learning offer job related competences. Other expected outcomes of the project are that awareness on practice oriented learning models is raised, that the information base for planning, costing and management of VTE is improved, and that planning and coordination capacities in the VTE sub-sector are improved.

The Project entails four main components:

1. Consolidating quality of the VET practice-oriented initiatives;
2. Improving of the information base for practice-oriented learning;
3. Promoting of practice-orientation in main streams of VTE in Lebanon, and
4. Improving planning and coordination in the VET sub-sector.

**Project Name: QUDRA- Resilience for Syrian Refugees, IDPs and Host Communities in Response to the Syrian and Iraqi Crisis**

<b>Budget:</b>	EUR 82.4 million	Implementing period:	2016 – 2019
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<b>Donor:</b>	EU & BMZ
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**Description:**

Funded by the European Union Regional Trust Fund in Response to Syrian Crisis "Madad" and the German Government in Lebanon, Turkey and North Iraq, the project aims to increase the resilience of the host communities, refugees, and displaced persons in five key areas:

1. Improving school infrastructure and access to extracurricular activities (e.g. sports);
2. Expanding and improving basic vocational skills;
3. Strengthening social stability through community-based services
4. Strengthening the capacities of local administrations.

5. Promoting dialogue and exchange of experience among the key stakeholders of the action

In Lebanon, the project has focused on 4 out of the five key areas with the exception of strengthening capacities of local administrators.

**Project Name: Youth Employment in Mediterranean (YEM)**

<b>Budget:</b>	EUR 2 million	Implementing period:	2018 – 2020
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<b>Donor:</b>	European Union
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**Description:**

Funded by the European Union and implemented by UNESCO, the project aims to support youth employment through improved skills anticipation and assessment systems, as well as through the promotion of quality and relevant TVET and regional collaboration. The project covers eight countries in the South Mediterranean region: Algeria, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine and Tunisia.

This is mainly done through:

- Strengthening national systems for skills needs assessment and anticipation: developing tools for skills anticipation that aid in policymaking.
- Promoting TVET education as a quality and attractive pathway, especially for women
- Establishing a regional platform for cooperation on assessing and anticipating changing skills needs

# BUILDING BLOCK B: ECONOMIC AND LABOUR MARKET ENVIRONMENT

## B.1: VET, economy, and labour markets

### B.1.1 Labour market situation

Based on the statistics of the International Labour Organization published in 2017, 44.2% of the working age population is economically active, and 21% attributed to female labour participation, as opposed to 66.9% among males, 15 years and above<sup>58</sup>.

When it comes to employment, there has been a shift in the employment structure in Lebanon with labour force shifting away from productive activities such as manufacturing or agriculture and more towards trade, services and construction. In fact, the latest estimates published on IDAL's website indicate that services, financial intermediation and insurance sectors employ 39% of the labour force, with trade employing 27% of labour force, manufacturing 12%, construction 9%, and Transport and Agriculture accounting for 7% and 6% respectively<sup>59</sup>. The McKinsey's Economic vision Report estimated that the productive sectors contributed to 26% of the labour force, namely agriculture (12%), manufacturing (11%), and Hospitality (5%)<sup>60</sup>.

As mentioned in the previous section, the unemployment rate characterising the Lebanese labour market continues to be high, estimated nationally at 25% with 37% for youth under 35 years of age, and 18% for women<sup>61</sup>. For the non-Lebanese, it was estimated, in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan Update 2019 that Syrian participation in labour force is around 334,919 people, where only 60% are employed. Yet the difference from the Lebanese labour force is that two thirds are underemployed, working less than 15 days per month<sup>62</sup>. Syrian Female Labour Force stood at only 16%, while figures are more drastic for Palestinian refugees, with 23% unemployed as officially indicated in 2015, and more than 52.5% of Syrian Palestinians are unemployed<sup>63</sup>.

In a nutshell, the unemployment rate has not decreased in the last couple of years, due to different challenges, whether on the supply side in terms of prevalence of opportunities for low skilled workers, and stagnant economy unable to create enough jobs to absorb the supply of economically active population in Lebanon between Lebanese, Syrians, Palestinians and Iraqis.

Among the main challenges are:

**Limited Private Sector Investment leading to stagnating Economy:** According to McKinsey's report, the productive sectors that are the primary source for job creation have been contributing only to 16% of the GDP over the last 5 years<sup>64</sup>. Foreign and domestic investment had dropped by around 30% over the last 7 years, with overall business environment deteriorating due to: political instability, corruption, lagging infrastructure, and difficulty in doing business. In fact Lebanon, according to the same report lost 46 ranks in 10 years in terms of ease of doing business<sup>65</sup>. Foreign investors are demoted by the restrictive governmental regulations regarding new businesses, and banks are practicing more austere measures in providing loans, with interest rates higher than other countries, amidst looming financial crisis. Without such investments, and with more enterprises running out of business, the situation is challenging and hindering for job creation.

<sup>58</sup> UNICEF, ILO, NEO, Ministries of Education & Higher Education, Social Affairs, Labour & Agriculture, National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocation and Education and Training in Lebanon : 2018-2022, January 2018.

<sup>59</sup> [http://w.idal.com.lb/en/doing\\_business/Labour\\_force/profile](http://w.idal.com.lb/en/doing_business/Labour_force/profile)

<sup>60</sup> McKinsey, Lebanon's Economic Vision, 2018: <https://www.economy.gov.lb/media/11893/20181022-1228full-report-en.pdf>

<sup>61</sup> Arab Weekly Digest, Interview with Minister of Labour, Beirut, August 2017

<sup>62</sup> Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, 2017-2020: 2019 Update:

<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68651>

<sup>63</sup> Ibid

<sup>64</sup> McKinsey, Lebanon's Economic Vision, 2018: <https://www.economy.gov.lb/media/11893/20181022-1228full-report-en.pdf>

<sup>65</sup> Ibid

**Growing Informal Sector:** Informality in businesses and employment became a significant feature and one that is growing in some sectors more than others. With the Syrian Crisis occurring and influx of refugees, the employment of these refugees occurred entirely in the informal sector, according to the World Bank's estimate, increasing the rate of informality by 10% across all economic sectors.<sup>66</sup> This has resulted in reduced job opportunities, reduced demand on high-level jobs offered, and depression of wages in many sectors, particularly for low-skilled workers. Based on the Central Administration of Statistics study published in 2009, the informal employment is found highest in agriculture, 92.4% followed by construction (80.7%), and transport (71.7%)<sup>67</sup>. For officially registered companies, they find themselves having to compete with informal ones that are not registered and thus have lower operating costs, all of which shift the competition to become price-based and thus looking for ways to cut down on staffing costs, being a major factor that contributes to higher operating costs.

**Proliferation of Skills Based Accelerated Trainings without efficient support to access jobs:** Most of the projects funded by donors in the last three or four years were mostly focused on labour intensive and accelerated trainings, for both refugees and host communities, sometimes without visible impact on the labour market or real upgrading of the skills. In fact, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan updated 2019 indicated that over 25,000 beneficiaries of temporary employment programmes from 2015 have been targeted and 4,974 beneficiaries of skills training accessing work/income opportunities from 2017 but only 4,625 jobs were generated/ maintained from 2015<sup>68</sup>, which indicates a main gap in the ability to absorb these skilled supply and create opportunities for them. While the majority of such jobs created are short-term, there is a significant gap in the information pertaining to the type of jobs created, the beneficiaries' profile of those linked to job opportunities and additional skills that are needed for further employability.

**Prevalent Skills Gap in Labour market:** Over 20 different labour market assessments have been generated in the last three years, including provision of employers' surveys by different organizations and in different regions. These assessments indicated a clear mismatch in both skills and professions between the demand and supply of workforce in labour market. Companies interviewed in these surveys highlighted the gap and shortage of technical skills, especially in the manufacturing sector, as key challenge in recruitment and retention of employees, impacting their growth and productivity. Equally important were the soft skills that were missing, especially among the vulnerable communities. While some international organizations carried out trainings including or specifically addressing soft skills, the need is much higher to be covered in short-term trainings with limited number of hours. It needed to be spread on a longer period with more customization based on the need and background of the beneficiaries.

In that issue, the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States (UNESCO Beirut Office) has organized in 2019 a regional workshop on "Enhancing institutional partnerships between the TVET institutions and the world of work in the Arab region", aiming to i) study the status of partnerships between TVET institutions and the private sector, ii) explore the possibility of expanding these partnerships, and iii) share best practices and models in the area of public-private partnership.

Whilst such challenges impact all active population, the informal sector has even further impact on women who face exploitation and discrimination in the informal sectors, more precisely in rural areas where women undertake productive tasks as part of their natural role, without any recognition or even remuneration, as they usually undertake these tasks as part of their social role, being wife or daughter (family workers) not as an economic activity. The prevalent skills gap affects more the youth population, especially in rural areas where access to education is lower than in urban areas, and job opportunities are naturally lower. Refugees are more vulnerable to the above challenges given the legal restrictions regarding right to work, to move, and the sectors in which they are allowed to work in.

### B.1.2 Specific challenges and opportunities: skill mismatch

There is a unanimous agreement among public and private sector organizations and ministries that skills mismatch is a prevailing characteristic of the Lebanese labour market nowadays, confirmed in the various interviews conducted during the Torino process bilateral and collective consultations with

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid

<sup>68</sup> Ibid

national authorities, relevant institutions and international organisations and donors. Vertical and Horizontal mismatches occur at different levels in the Lebanese Labour market. . When it comes to skills gap, i.e. where employers believe workers do not possess the right competencies to carry out their role, the World Bank estimates that 48% of the private firms highlight skill deficit as a major factor hindering their growth, as compared to 38% in the Middle East & North Africa Region<sup>69</sup>. The latest Employment and Labour Market Analysis conducted by GIZ stated that there is excess supply of workers at the upper level of the skills spectrum ( 200,807 individuals in academic studies in 2017), and shortage of skilled labour at the lower end of the spectrum ( around 85,224 in TVET education)<sup>70</sup>.

Over-education is another types of skills mismatch prevailing in the country, more evident among university students than TVET. Yet, a labour market study conducted and presented by IECD in 2019, within the overall framework of the National Strategic Framework for TVET in Lebanon, pertaining to Electrical Technicians in Lebanon, stated that 74% of the VET graduates holding a BT in Electro-techniques choose to go into higher education, either for a TS (50%) or University degree (50%)<sup>71</sup>, with the civil servant jobs especially armed forces employment that remains the most attractive option for them given what it offers in terms of salaries and other benefits. However, due to the weak language skills, graduates opt for universities that do not have tough entry conditions. Further evidence to the skills gap was revealed in the same study, under skilling, through interviews with more than 30 companies in relevant fields nationwide, companies indicated a mismatch between current TS graduate skills and market needs. Over 70% of the enterprises interviewed cited lack of skilled talent indicating shortage of technical skills. Program wise, according to the school directors, the most of the curricula are outdated with weak practical components and short of providing soft skills. This was evident in high absenteeism and shifting to other specializations. The same study also indicated a limited presence of women in the sector due to gender bias and perception of the companies that environment is challenging for women and that it's difficult for women to work the various shifts. This goes back to social perception of gendered roles and the orientation for women towards non-industrial conventional specialties at school. It also indicates that some women may possess the skills required but are not recruited for the cultural reasons, leading to also to mismatch.

Some policies implemented by the Government had a direct contribution to the skills mismatch. One evidence if the change introduced by the directorate general of Technical and **Vocational Education, as per the law #8590 published in 2012, the TS programs were shortened from 3 to 2 years**. This created challenges and contributed to under-education and under skilling for the students pursuing different specialties, including nursing: as it first condensed the program, and second prevented current graduates from being able to work due to legal texts that prevent them for exercising the profession if not fulfilling the required conditions. In the case of nursing, the Order of Nurses issued regulation that unless TS students obtain a "License Technique - LT" or bridge their studies with other academic studies and obtain a bachelor's degree, they cannot obtain permit to work, or be able to become a licensed nurse. For other industrial specializations, the situation is the same, confirmed through interviews with UNDP, IECD and others; the program is insufficient in duration to equip the students with the proper technical skills required for the labour market access, thus revealing skills shortages among such graduates.

Skills mismatch was also confirmed through other labour market studies conducted by international organizations including UNICEF, ILO, Mercy Corps, ETF, and others: skills mismatch, in terms of skills shortages, was a key feature marking the gap between supply of labour and demand for skills from private sector, which highlighted the shortage not only in technical skills but also life and employability skills, equally important for them. Among those, communication skills, team-work, and digital skills were most common shortages among VET graduates. It is important to mention that to-date life skills have not yet been mainstreamed in full mode into formal TVET programmes. When it's provided, it's more led by non-governmental organizations' specific programs targeting particular set of skills relevant to the project and remains individual initiative rather than mainstreamed into official curricula. However, within the NSF action plan, UNICEF has organized several workshops targeting participants from ministries and TVET institutions to identify and prioritise the life skills that should be integrated in

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<sup>69</sup> World Bank, Lebanon: promoting poverty reduction and shared prosperity, a Systematic Country Diagnosis, World Bank, Beirut, June 2015

<sup>70</sup> GIZ, Employment and Labour Market Analysis Lebanon, Beirut, 2019

<sup>71</sup> IECD, Technical Education Meeting: Labour Market Needs- Results of the Labour Market Study of Electrical Technicians in Lebanon, April 2019.

the curricula, as per the education level and teaching methodology. Recommendations have been presented to government for endorsement and life skills have been included in the national qualifications framework for TVET per level of learning which was endorsed through the Ministerial Decision #374 pertaining to national qualifications for TVET.

Skills shortages lead to hard-to-fill vacancies that have been highlighted in the different Labour market assessments, such as the ILO/UNICEF studies conducted on the printing and packaging, construction, and printing & packaging. For example, In the Printing & Packaging sector, skills shortages was highlighted among the surveyed enterprises where 62% indicated that there is a skills gap, technical skills gap among their employees, as well as 56% indicated technical skills shortage among new entrants, difficult to find in the market nowadays. Such shortages impacted the time needed to fill in vacancies, making some hard-to-fill. Around 20% of surveyed companies indicated vacancies take more than 2 months to be filled, mostly due to lack of qualified candidates, where often they end up hiring wrong profiles of employees and have to let go and go through the same recruitment cycle again until they find candidates with the right fit for the positions. Skills Obsolescing also existed specifically in the printing and packaging sector as the latter moved into the digitalization. Technicians and machine operators were the most demanded among the surveyed companies and most difficult to find or get hold of, according to the surveyed companies<sup>72</sup>.

ILO also conducted different studies related to Agriculture, jointly with FAO and Ministry of Agriculture in 2018 to identify trends in agriculture and implications on Labour market, along with another similar study conducted on agro-food in 2017 and hospitality back in 2010.

In the pilot initiative carried out by joint public–private task force and supported by the European Training Foundation (ETF), an Employer’s survey on the manufacturing sector (mainly to test the best way to have a national and regular survey) was launched to support the monitoring of labour market developments and skills needs and ideally to be complemented with the Labour Force Survey results, when available. Preliminary results of this pilot revealed gaps in technical skills, in maintaining and operating machinery and efficient use of resources, as well as knowledge of foreign languages. Teamwork and problem solving are the most required employability skills for future hiring. This was further evident in that 46% of the employers provided trainings to their current employees to cover particular skills gap (46%), namely in maintaining and operating machinery.

The main challenge is that VET students, according to the studies, experience skills shortages: do not have relevant and sufficient practical studies during their courses and since life skills is not mainstreamed, graduate with weak possession of employable skills further widening the gap between their qualifications and those requested by the employers. For vulnerable youth, this is more aggravated, according to UNDP as the current skills training are intensive over a short period of time, insufficient to acquire such skills and uncoupled with social support (psycho-social) for these vulnerable categories, rendering such trainings as “impactless”.

Additionally, the regional disparities in education access further dampens the mismatch, due to inequality in accessing education between rural and urban areas, and thus less opportunities to access the labour market. According to UNDP, Northern Lebanon regions, particularly Akkar and Dinneye, are the most vulnerable and vulnerability is more acute among youth, existing prior to crisis and increasing with influx of refugees.

### B.1.3 Specific challenges and opportunities: migration

As discussed in the previous section, the Lebanese labour market continues to be characterized by high unemployment rates, estimated at 25% national unemployment rate with 37% for youth under 35 years of age, and 18% for women<sup>73</sup>. This results in increased vulnerability among Lebanese population, increased competition in informal economy due to prevalence of demand for low-skilled low wage jobs, increased skills mismatch due to influx of low skilled refugees, and brain drain due to increased immigration of Lebanese seeking better opportunities outside their country.

The Syrian Crisis and influx of refugees has severely aggravated an already hard situation which has resulted in a slow labour market growth, reduced job opportunities, reduced quality of job types

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<sup>72</sup> ILO, UNICEF, NEO, Printing & Packaging Sector Study, August 2019

<sup>73</sup> Arab Weekly Digest, Interview with Minister of Labour, Beirut, August 2017

offered, and decreased salaries. Such factors did not appeal to the expectations of considerable portion of Lebanese youth and thus paved for increase wave of emigration seeking better opportunities outside.

A recent study conducted by OECD in 2015 indicates that 15 to 20 thousand Lebanese emigrate every year, with approximately 50% of emigrants have secondary education and more, 25% have attained tertiary education<sup>74</sup>. This results in negative impact leading to loss of human capital and workforce, loss of talent and knowledge pool to match the required skills and eventually slower economic growth.

#### B.1.4 Specific challenges and opportunities: digital transformation

Technology is advancing at a rapid rate and the global integration of technology in different sector is on the rise, with many experts and authors referring to this as the Fourth Industrial Revolution. Artificial intelligence, robotics, big data, cloud computing, 3D printing, and automation are all emerging in such transformation, which in the future will have an impact on the nature of the jobs, as well as labour market overall in terms of wages, skills required, social protection policies that need to be adjusted, so as to achieve economic growth<sup>75</sup>.

Digital transformation may contribute to skills mismatch especially for the industrial sub-sectors, but currently not as evident due to the fact that the majority of industrial enterprises seeking the modernization of the performance of their employees in the digital field, organize training courses for them to improve their skills to accompany such transformation. There are not yet statistics to validate the number of enterprises targeted by such modernization but it is an issue to raise for the future.

According to the World Economic Forum (WEF), 5 million jobs will be lost by 2020 as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, nanotechnology will be globally integrated across all sectors, yet such integration will also give rise to 2.1 million jobs, replacing manual and clerical work with digitalised ones. New jobs will be more embedded in marketing, social media, computing, engineering and architecture<sup>76</sup>.

#### B.1.5 Strategic policy responses involving education and VET

The development and adoption of a National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Lebanon has been major milestone for the government, as outlined in section A 2.4.

Currently an action plan for DGVTE has been developed ( 2018-2022) based on the NSF, Led by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, DGVTE, and with support of international organizations (ProVTE, UNICEF, ILO and IECD). It includes the different activities to undertake, as per the different building blocks, for the realization of the objectives and the different stakeholders that DGVTE will partner with, along with overall budget and implementing time frame. The main purpose of the action plan is to act as supporting tool for the Government of Lebanon in its decisions and how to prioritise the orientations of the donors that are/want to contribute to the Vocational and Technical Education system. It is important to mention that the action plan has not yet been discussed or endorsed by the Ministry of Education & Higher Education, but the activities already implemented by the different organizations go hand in hand with the proposed action plan<sup>77</sup>. The plan will be presented at the upcoming meeting of the Higher TVET council, in parallel with launching this report<sup>78</sup>.

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<sup>74</sup> Abdo N., Lebanon: skilled workers for a productive economy, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), Lebanon, 2015.

<sup>75</sup> UNDP Seoul Policy Center, Technological Change and Future of Jobs: Harnessing Positive Potential of Technology for an inclusive Future of Growth, South Korea, 2017:  
<https://www.undp.org/content/dam/uspc/docs/Technological%20Change%20and%20the%20Future%20of%20Jobs.pdf>

<sup>76</sup> Ibid

<sup>77</sup> Description and input on the action plan has been provided thoroughly by UNICEF compiled as per the different building blocks and shared with ETF for the Torino Process 2018-2019.

<sup>78</sup> Ministry of Education & Higher Education, General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education: DGVTE Action Plan for Implementation of the National Strategic Framework for TVET In Lebanon 2018-2022, Lebanon 2020.

The action plan is based on the building blocks outlined in the National Strategic Framework. For example, under building block No. 2 Human Resources Management, the National Vocational Training Center plan outlines its restructuring including the detailed activities of developing rules and procedures for recruitment and procurement as well as training the centre's staff. The study for restructuring conducted by UNICEF has been finalised and results discussed with the focal point of the centre the Director General of the Ministry of Industry, based on which training will occur and new cooperation programs will be established within the next three years for 2020/2022.

With regards to the building block No. 3, National Qualifications system, the plan outlines a development of TVET qualifications framework, while a National Qualifications Framework has been developed quite before for all educational schemes, 8 learning levels. Within the plan, DGVTE, with the support of UNICEF, developed the 8 learning levels of the TVET qualifications along with their descriptors. The chart includes work and life skills as well as language and digital skills. The TVET QF chart has been endorsed by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, accordingly to Resolution No. 374. For 2020/2021. The TVET descriptors will be used for many useful ends especially for the development of the new curricula. Within the same building block, the plan outlines support to building Capacity of the Department of Curriculum and Education Techniques in Technical Department of the DGVTE to adapt the occupation and qualification standards from other countries to Lebanese context in partnership with sector councils to identify skills need by economic sector. The building block also entails designing curricula and training materials, set-up of consultative committees in TVET institutions, establishment of sector skills councils that would jointly design of curricula , appoint evaluators of the assessment and certification competencies, and facilitate access of graduates to Labour market. This is the core mandate of the sector skills council, along with participation with other international organizations in implementation of DACUM workshops as well as accelerated training, centred on competency-based approach. All these subjects, with pilot applications, are parts of international organizations current work plans with the DGTVE.

Within the building block No. 4, UNICEF with the DGTVE works on Quality Assurance, self-evaluation process and the development and pilot implementation of an Education Management information System (EMIS) for systematic data collection that would support in future evidence-based policy formulations. Additionally, an establishment of an accreditation body is enlisted for certifying the trainers up to a three-year period, renewed based on compliance ,in addition to developing a Monitoring & Evaluation system aligned with the European Quality Assurance in Vocational Training (EQAVET) for annual assessment of schools, granted by inspectors, as well as undertaking traces studies and employer surveys for more benchmarking of performance of the different training programs, based on regions

For the Building Block No. 5, Life and Work Skills, 12 life skills for TVET are planned for integration in curricula determined as per the level of learning in TVET qualifications framework, and in plan to integrate them officially in curricula.

For the Building Block No. 6, Infrastructure and Equipment, the plan includes creation of centers of excellence, training of the trainers on the new equipment, training material, and education mapping to increase effectiveness and efficiency of the public TVET system. UNICEF, in cooperation with the automobiles importers association and the DGTVE equipped three centers of excellence with car maintenance and repair equipment.

Within the last Building Block No. 7, Involvement of the Private Sector, the plan outlines the support provisioned to the activation of the Higher Council for TVET, Development of Task Force with Association of Lebanese Industrialists, Task Force with Automobiles Importers Associations, and the activation of the consultancy committees in all the public TVET institutes/schools as well as the establishment of Sectors Skills Councils from ILO.

The achievement of results planned within the action plan for the different building blocks have been outlined in the different sections of the report relevant to the Quality Assurance, Involvement of the private sector, and curricula development.

It is also worth to mention that another three years action plan is currently being developed for MOSA, MOL, and MOA in close collaboration with international organisations, together with an action plan for each of NEO and NVTC for restructuring and improved performance. The plans will be discussed and approved with the respective Director Generals. The action plans for MOSA and MOA are still in development process to be finalised by the end of the 2019.

### B.1.6 The role of VET in remedies through active labour market policies (ALMPs)

The government did not yet put in place clear active labour market policies, however the Ministry of Labour has taken some initiatives towards that direction focusing on employability through retaining and expanding opportunities for those inactive population, namely by increasing the budget of the National Vocational Training Center (NVTC). The National Vocational Training Center, with financial support from UNHCR and technical support from IECD was able to organize more training courses than those organized by its own budget. In fact, the UNHCR initiative was within the framework of a project implemented by UNHCR focused on providing capacity building of NVTC to improve management, development of training curricula, and provision of trainings. The first component faced some challenges and could not be implemented as the management of the center did not see the need for this and as such was not implemented. For the second component, curricula development, IECD provided technical support and provision of short trainings on different topics including curricula development especially in electricity and air-conditioning. However, within its annual training program and with the support of UNHCR, the NVTC conducted training courses in heating and cooling, mobile maintenance, electricity, assistance for the elderly, computer and others. Five trainings were held on the topic of computer with 59 graduates within two years from 2016 to 2018, according to the information provided by the management of NVTC. For beauty trainings for women, 4 trainings were carried out in the last 2 years with 60 graduates. For the air-conditioning, only one training was conducted involving 11 graduates, all males, and for the electronics, four trainings have been conducted involving 43 graduates, with only 1 woman participating. In general, the number of graduates from all such trainings during the last 2 years was around 173 graduates with around 60% males and 40% females, mostly in the traditional specialties such as beauty & hairdressing. These were mainly carried out in Beqaa and Akkar, with 50% of the trainees Lebanese and 50% Syrians, trained over a period of three months. Within the same UNHCR project, other longer duration trainings were also provided in collaboration with Ministry of Industry: Welding (Electrical), and Welding (under Water). These trainings were provided over 6 months, based on an identified demand for such specialties, provisioned by the Industrial Research Institute (IRI), where trainees received certificated signed by the Ministry of Industry, through IRI. For the graduates of the trainings on Air conditioning and heat maintenance, the UNHCR is working with IECD to recruit the top graduates and provide them with further trainings to strengthen their skills. One positive outcome is that the Ministry of Labour recruited graduates of this training to fix the air conditioning system in the Ministry premises. One challenge though remained, in terms of meeting the quota for Lebanese trainees, as there was not high motivation for joining such trainings, except for the welding, which had good participation rates of Lebanese trainees.

While this was a positive step towards improving the employability of the youth and inactive population, it does not take out the need for developing clear labour market strategies and policies to have a system put in place, rather than continue being dependent on international organizations for such support.

### B.1.7 Identification of skills demand and its bearing on VET provision

There is still no official Labour market information system developed or even placed on the Ministry of Labour Agenda that would allow for systematic data collection and analysis on the trends in the labour market, including skills on demand, and supply of graduates along with their specialties. Some studies have been conducted by international organizations on ad-hoc basis; however, no official system for labour market information exists yet in Lebanon. Moreover, the mandate of the National Employment Office includes carrying out studies and providing recommendations for employment policies targeting the active population. Yet in the last years, this role has not been fully assumed due to financial restrictions, even though 30 new employees have been recently recruited for the Office. Today, the post of the Director General remains vacant, mostly due to several caretaker governments in the same year, and the bureaucracy governing the decision making in filling this vacancy. This may have influence in terms of slowdown of the activities of the Office amidst such vacancy in higher decision making level.

It is important to note; however, that the International Labour Organization recently finalised, jointly with Central Administration & Statistics (CAS) Labour Force Survey, viewed as a major achievement towards skills demand identification and basis for planning future interventions such as design of a national employment policy. A short summary of the results have been published whilst completing

this report and as such some of the information have also been referred to throughout the document, in view of accessing more updated information on the labour force in Lebanon.

In parallel, there were different studies conducted in the last two years relating to assessment of skills demanded in the labour market, and understanding better the mismatch to design interventions based on the findings. UNICEF and ILO have jointly carried out four sector studies, within the framework of the National Strategic Framework<sup>79</sup> and overall response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, to assess the skills needs and gaps comparing the market supply with demand, and guide youth to TVET programs as per the labour market needs, with decent work conditions. This would entail curricula upgrading to address the market demand for skills, in addition to other interventions such as establishing sector skills councils with representatives from the private sector to work on revising the occupations prioritized, based on the competences required for each occupation and address skills shortages through different programs. The studies have been carried out in four main sectors: public infrastructure, printing & packaging, crafts and healthcare. Such studies were part of project to support market-based career options for youth and support the National Employment Office in conducting nation-wide studies that help in collecting relevant labour market information identifying occupations and jobs to be targeted through skills training. The studies have been finalised but not yet published. Yet the steps following the assessment feed into the establishment of sector skills council.

In 2018, within the framework of UNESCO's Youth Employment project in the Mediterranean (YEM) funded by the European Union (EU), conducted a review on Labour Market Information system (LMIS) in Lebanon. The report indicated that Lebanon suffers from a lack of data both on regional and national level, which are prerequisites for a functional and effective LMIS. In order to find and collect this data/information, there has to be a system in place to connect this data/information, as well as human resources to run such system. A functional LMIS should be created to assist in job matching, job searching, and provide information about labour market needs.

In 2017 and 2018, IECD conducted also labour market assessments to identify the skills required in different industrial sectors, which based on the outcomes and introduced two new specialties at the BT level: Industrial Maintenance and Programming. This was part of the overall program funded by French Development Agency (AFD) to improve the youth access to employment. The case of IECD provides an example of how such skills demand assessments transformed into program development, incorporating such skills in the curricula and training the teachers in VET schools on the new curricula implementation. The industrial maintenance is now currently provided in 4 vocational schools: 3 public and 1 private, with around 100 enrolled. The Web programming has been accredited in 2018 and published officially in 2019 after being piloted in 5 schools in Beirut and Mount Lebanon. Both programmes followed the same process: Labour market assessment, followed by development of the curricula, technical training of the teachers (online and in-school with international experts), and then piloting in selective schools before officially introducing it in the DGVTE system. For the programming, as it is a relatively new specialty, the teachers will undergo a training of total of 500 hours over 3 years and discussion is still on-going to give accreditation and certification for the teachers, along with follow-up through the Guidance Employment Offices at the VET schools the first batch of graduates.

Recently, in an effort to address rising unemployment among youth and facilitate their access to labour market, a national Employer's Survey process was launched, through the joint efforts of the public and private authorities led by the Ministry of Labour. The main objective was to support monitoring of the labour market development and skills needs which would be completed by a Labour Force Survey. For that a Task force was set up comprised of the Chamber of Commerce of Beirut and Mount Lebanon (CCBML), Ministry of Labour (MoL), Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), National Employment Office (NEO), Ministry of Industry (Mol) and Association of Lebanese Industrialists (ALI) with the support of the European Training Foundation. The pilot survey was launched, targeting the manufacturing sector in order to identify a possible format for sustainable process of mapping employers' needs with the objective to adapt the training offer. In light of political context of the pending change of the Government, the pilot was hosted within CCBML and implemented thanks to its resources. The main findings from the first round of the employers' survey, highlighting the low response rate obtained and the main gaps in terms of lack of systematic labour

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<sup>79</sup> Such Studies have not yet been published thus cannot be cited fully in this report but validation workshops have been conducted and currently in the final editing phase prior to publishing.

market information, as well as skills gap namely in digital skills, innovation and foreign languages. Currently, the discussion is on-going between the task force and the private sector to highlight the challenges and strengthen the survey process to ensure a higher response in the second round.

Along the same lines, the results of the Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 has just been published in January 2020, providing a more updated overview of the labor market, demographics and sectors of employment, shedding more light on the employment in the informal sector as well. The Survey results indicate a national unemployment rate of 11.4% with double this unemployment rate for youth (15-24 years old), at 23.3% and 35.7% among university graduates<sup>80</sup>.

All such efforts have been put in place to support at system level youth employability and address the market needs through skills gap identification and adaptation of the curricula to meet those needs. However, such initiatives cannot replace the need for a Labour Market Information System, that is sustainable and continuous to feed in consistent manner the trends and performance of the labour market, signalling the direction in which action should be taken, and most importantly based on systematic quantitative data collection.

### B.1.8 Supporting migrants and refugees through VET

As previously mentioned in the report, migrants and refugees have received support in capacity building through enrolment in different short trainings carried out by national and international organizations. Through the remote units of the NVTC in Beqaa and Akkar, IECD provided trainings on air conditioning and heat maintenance, mobile maintenance, electricity, and assistance for the elderly, whereby 50% of the trainees were Lebanese and 50% Syrians, trained over a period of three months. Within the same project, other longer duration trainings were provided in collaboration with Ministry of Industry: Welding (Electrical), and Welding (under Water). These trainings were provided over 6 months, based on an identified demand for such specialties, provisioned by the Industrial Research Institute (IRI), where trainees received certificated signed by the Ministry of Industry, through IRI. For the graduates of the trainings on Air conditioning and heat maintenance, the UNHCR is working with IECD to recruit the top graduates and provide them with further trainings to strengthen their skills.

Moreover, within the framework of the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan, different market-based skills training were carried out for Lebanese as well as refugees. In the latest updates of 2019, 2,123 Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth (1,810 non-Lebanese) have enrolled in vocational education.

## B.2: Entrepreneurial learning and entrepreneurship

### B.2.1 Job creation and VET

Labour supply consists of new entrants' skills to the labour market, which comprises students and graduates from universities, vocational and technical (VTE) establishments, and schools. While there is no recent figure on the number of graduates accessing jobs, older figures provide a better indication, such as those estimated by the ILO, which indicates that Lebanese graduates seeking work constitute 86.2 % of total labour supply from universities<sup>81</sup>. However, updated information is not available on the percentage of university and TVET students accessing the labour market and the types of jobs they acquire in the Labour market.

The absence of Labour Market information system hinders further access to information that could provide insights on the jobs offered and the employment of youth including their educational background, whether academic or vocational. The Guidance Employment Offices (GEO) have been established within selected public and private VET schools to provide career guidance and link to employment for the TVET graduates. Concerning career guidance, orientation is carried out at the beginning of the academic year where two teachers from each specialty are present at the office and available for students who want to know more about the available specialties and conditions for entry. In terms of link to employment, the offices have developed database of graduates along with their profiles is developed, in addition to one for companies, as means of linkages to private sector.

<sup>80</sup> Central Administration Of Statistics, International Labour Organization: Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey, European Union Funds, January 2019.

<sup>81</sup> ILO, Review and assessment of labour market information, 2011

Matching is done first for internship during studies, and second for job acquisition, with the support of the offices, in CV preparation and job interviews.

The GEO offices submit monitoring reports to the Directorate every six months including statistics on number of jobs acquired and linkages with the private sector, as well as recommendations for improving the workflow process of the offices. The network grew from 8 offices to 23 offices nationwide with 4 additional in the pipeline. However, there are no accurate statistics still as to percentage of VET graduates setting up their own businesses. What is evident, is that majority of the VET graduates, at least 70% according to IECD pursue higher education either academic or vocational with the hope of increasing their chances of getting better employment opportunities with higher wages.

## B.2.2 VET policies to promote entrepreneurship

The promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment among VET systems remain a challenge as the entrepreneurial skills are still missing from the TVET official curricula. There is more focus on promoting entrepreneurship namely for youth pursuing university studies rather than VET students, still it is worth to mention a pilot entrepreneurship program that has been implemented in many TVET public institutes and schools. Without integration of entrepreneurship in curricula, VET students will not have the motivation nor the requirements nor skills to set-up their own businesses, given also the lack of support opportunities available for them, since they come from economically less advantaged backgrounds.

There was a commitment with the former Minister of Education to re-launch the policy dialogue on Entrepreneurial Learning and integrate entrepreneurship in the curricula of upper secondary schools for both general and vocational schools. The dialogue started in 2018 jointly with ILO and ETF involving also CRDP to build on the previous experiences and possibly use the Know About Business training package that was updated and piloted back in 2012-2013 by ILO and ETF. There is commitment also to continue with the new Minister with this dialogue. Additionally, ILO further conducted in 2019, with support from Norwegian funds, Training of Trainers (TOT) targeting 40 teachers on the Know About Business, within the framework of integrating entrepreneurship in TVET. The ToT was piloted in 27 schools, and based on that, a new decree is expected to be issued out so as to officially roll out the program in TVET schools.

Interventions in supporting promotion of entrepreneurship remain limited to non-governmental initiatives undertaken by international organizations such as UNICEF, ILO, IECD, UNESCO, and others. One interesting example to highlight is the Generation of Innovation Leader (GIL) funded by KfW and launched by UNICEF, works on empowering the marginalized Lebanese and refugee youth in Lebanon, aged 14 to 24 years, through trainings on social entrepreneurship and business management skills to start up their own businesses. In fact, the project's main objective is to address the inaccessibility of the modern 21<sup>st</sup> century skills marginalised youth population, through provision of employability courses, income generating digital work opportunities and social innovation, open to both Syrian and Lebanese youth, supporting them to develop their digital and entrepreneurial skills along with financial support to start up their businesses. Injaz, DOT, and Nawaya Network organizations implemented the project. With Injaz, the project managed to provide seeding funds for 300 students to start up their own business and enable growth to create more job opportunities for their fellow youth. With Nawaya network, the Impact Lab provided support to 36 start up projects, for both Lebanese and refugee youth, and found 68 full time jobs for trained youth who underwent their SE Factory technical training program. Overall, in 2018, more than 6000 youth were trained on digital and entrepreneurial skills, 500 social and business enterprises mentored, and 2000 provided with seed funding.

The Life Skills, and Citizenship Education Conceptual & Programmatic Framework (CPF) launched in 2017 in Middle East North Africa region, and led by UNICEF defines life skills as “cognitive and non-cognitive, higher-order, transversal and transferable skills for learning, employability, personal empowerment, and active citizenship”<sup>82</sup>. In that aspect, UNESCO provided a review of the life and

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<sup>82</sup> Welfare Association for Research and Development, Reviewing life and Work Skills for Youth in Lebanon, UNESCO, November 2018:  
[http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LifeandWorkSkills\\_01.pdf](http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LifeandWorkSkills_01.pdf)

work skills for Lebanese youth, through a study conducted in 2018, and developed Life and Work skills curriculum outlines. This methodological framework has been developed to serve TVET in general, particularly for the non formal vocational education/accelerated vocational training. In 2019, a training of trainers was conducted, where two trainings were held with the different volunteers, around 50 youths who work in non-governmental organizations, human resource managers, and academics.

These examples show interventions carried out by international organizations supporting entrepreneurship in marginalised areas and for youth with different educational background: academic or vocational, while providing them with mentoring and financial support. But overall, entrepreneurship remains dependent on individual initiatives rather than structured and integrated within the vocational education system.

The main interventions to date remain focused on linking youth to job opportunities, namely training to link to existing work opportunities rather than supporting and motivating to start their own businesses. This may be due to the current economic situation that is challenging for new businesses, especially if in productive sectors as the seed investment is large and many not be easily accessible for the VET graduates. But above all, there aren't official statistics that provide insights on the success rate of entrepreneurs in Lebanon, their profile including educational background and coverage. The absence of such data is a challenging factor for any policy that needs to be developed for promoting self-employment among VET graduates.

## II. 'Open floor'

Entrepreneurship has been growing and booming in Lebanon with different organizations supporting youth to become entrepreneurs, but more promoting support for those with university degrees or during their university studies rather than VET students. As such, VET students do not have the requirements to set-up their own businesses nor the motivation or encouragement to take such step. However, one initiative piloted by local organization, IEA, tackled this need and created positive impact by encouraging VET students to step forward and unleash their creativity in developing ideas that could be scaled up to successful businesses. This was the success of the Coder Maker, piloted in 2018 in 5 different VET Schools.

The Coder Maker is a program for integrating technology in teaching, which started six years ago, launched by the International Education Association (IEA) and implemented by the Toueini Foundation (The organization affiliated with previous Minister of Telecommunication and current Member of Parliament Mr. Nicholas Sehnaoui). With funds from Canadian Organization IDRC, the coder maker was piloted in 2018 in 5 different VET schools, training students to acquire innovation skills, through creative learning and eventually become entrepreneurs. The trainings cover 60-80 hours, involving teachers as well, and then students are asked to submit a project for evaluation. The potential, according to the association, was tremendous and students displayed high creativity in the project idea and design. For example, among the VET schools piloted, one team in Saadnayel School in Beqaa worked on smart glasses for the blind, another one in Dhour Chweir in Mount Lebanon worked on developing smart traffic lights, other in Batroun worked on smart wheelchair, some other worked on smart irrigation system. These ideas, if supported further, could turn into successful businesses where the Intellectual Property can be property of the schools and generate funds, thus additional income for the school.

The coder maker, according to the IEA, helped the students overcome the fear of failure, especially that those coming up with creative ideas were the « losers or those with low performance » at schools. The trainings provided to teachers also stimulated the passion among teachers to give, and the aim is to have coder maker integrated in all VET schools. However, the process was not smooth and main challenges relate to the sustainability of this initiative given its dependency on donor funds, the mentality of the schools directors to integrate creative learning among students, and the binding structure of the VET system. However, this pilot provided a successful example of integrating entrepreneurship within the VET teaching system, and how students can be supported to sharpen their creative skills. In fact, Minister of Education & Higher Education, as per the meeting with the association, requested funding to have this Entrepreneurial learning in VET schools, and 50 teachers

will be trained as a pilot project to be expanded to other schools. The implementation date and process is yet to be determined.

### III. Summary and analytical conclusions

#### 1. Policy challenges

**High unemployment and weak job creation** Unemployment rate characterising the Lebanese labour market continues to be high, estimated nationally at 25% with 37% for youth under 35 years of age, and 18% for women<sup>83</sup>. For the non-Lebanese, it was estimated, in the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan Update 2019 that Syrian active participation in labour force is around 334,919 people, where only 60% are employed. The unemployment rate has not decreased in the last couple of years, due to different challenges, whether on the supply side in terms of prevalence of opportunities for low skilled workers, and stagnant economy unable to create enough jobs to absorb the supply of economically active population in Lebanon.

**Growing Informal Sector** Informality in businesses and employment became a significant feature and one that is growing in some sectors more than others. With the latest Syrian Crisis, the employment of the displaced occurred entirely in the informal sector, according to the World Bank's estimate, increasing the rate of informality by 10% across all economic sectors.<sup>84</sup> This has resulted in reduced job opportunities, reduced quality of job types offered, and depression of wages in many sectors, particularly for low-skilled workers. The informality is affecting more acutely females.

**Shortage and mismatch of skills** The informal sector has even further impact on women who face exploitation and discrimination, more precisely in rural areas where women undertake productive tasks as part of their natural role, without any recognition or even remuneration, as they usually undertake these tasks as part of their social role, being wife or daughter (family workers) not as an economic activity. The prevalent skills gap affects more the youth population, especially in rural areas where access to education is lower than in urban areas, and job opportunities are naturally lower. Refugees are more vulnerable to the above challenges given the legal restrictions regarding right to work, and the sectors in which they are allowed to work in.

**Lack of Entrepreneurship Education Integration in the TVET System** The promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment among VET systems remain a challenge as the entrepreneurial skills are still missing from the TVET official curricula. There is more focus on promoting entrepreneurship namely for youth pursuing university studies rather than VET students. VET students do not have the motivation nor the requirements to set-up their own businesses, given also the lack of support opportunities available for them, since they come from economically less advantaged backgrounds. Interventions in supporting promotion of entrepreneurship remain limited to non-governmental initiatives undertaken by international organizations such as UNICEF, IECD, UNESCO, and others. There is commitment to integrate the Entrepreneurial Learning Framework already developed by ETF, ILO, and CRDP, but to date, awaits concrete steps towards such adoption. Meanwhile, the life skills determined and endorsed by the Ministry as per Decision No. 374 may include entrepreneurial skills but the piloting and testing will be carried out in the next phase of 2020/2021.

#### 2. Factors contributing to policy challenges

The country's economy is experiencing a slow down, an average of only 0.2% growth in real GDP reported in 2018. There has not been significant investment that would create job opportunities and boost the economic cycle. Despite the opportunities granted through the CEDRE conference, such opportunities have not yet been materialised, awaiting serious commitment to reforms from the government. This has pushed some companies out of business, confirmed through different interviews but without official statistics on the actual number, and for the remaining ones, challenging their growth plans, putting them on hold until further notice.

If the economy is not growing and investments are not occurring in productive sectors, then companies will not be able to grow and expand, which means limited job opportunities. Not only that, but this also makes it difficult for entrepreneurship to flourish and youth motivated to start their own

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<sup>83</sup> Arab Weekly Digest, Interview with Minister of Labour, Beirut, August 2017

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

businesses. This difficult economic condition also favours the growth of informal sector where working conditions are not entirely suitable, be it in wages or benefits or other, leading to exploitation and prevalence of low skilled jobs in the economy, recruiting people not necessarily fit for the job, but at lower wages and tough working conditions, further pushing people to look outside the country or leave for better opportunities, widening further the skills gap between what's on offer and skills available.

All of this makes it very difficult to develop policies that can reduce the gap and pave the way for a clear linking process between the education and the economy. Youth can be trained but if not linked to job opportunities then will deviate into other channels that can secure them a better living, such as seeking abroad or pursuing further studies in universities or others.

### **3. Solutions and progress with implementation**

There is a need to work on promoting investments through creating favourable business environment and supporting small and medium enterprises in their journeys towards growth, either through accessing new markets or investing in new lines that would help them improve their business and increase productivity. This can then create the incentive for private sector to identify the skills needed which can then be communicated to education systems signalling change in curricula, training methods or others which would better orient the youth and prepare them for accessing the labour market.

The National Strategic Framework is a major step in that direction and with participatory process of developing action plan for implementation, there is hope that interventions will be designed to better address youth and further increase their employability. Working with the private sector is already a major component of the action plan, through developing sector skills council. Through involving private sector representatives, this would help undertake analysis of skills utilization, prioritise the ones required for modernising the business, revise the occupations and address additional skills requirement namely the work and life skills. In that context of the ProVTE project, for example, the Lebanese Contractors Syndicate has identified 33 occupations in the construction sector, and is cooperating in the definition of competence and assessment standards for each occupation, which are then being used for the training standards/curricula development. Similarly, UNICEF is working with Association of Automobile Importers to do the same. ILO will be working similarly on the health and printing & packaging, in addition to public infrastructure, hospitality and agro food; all of which help to showcase to government how interventions can be developed to reduce skills mismatch and employability between provided TVET and the needs of the Lebanese Labour market.

But still missing is the need to have a labour market information put in place to accompany such interventions and form a strong base for future labour market and education policies. Additionally, linking the different initiatives together, there is a need to share experiences of the different pilot projects conducted by UNICEF, IECD and ProVTE, as well as others, to identify lessons learnt, feed such information into the work of the sector skills council by better defining its roles and responsibilities in relation to TVET education along the different TVET education levels.

In 2018, within the framework of UNESCO's Youth Employment project in the Mediterranean (YEM) funded by the European Union (EU), conducted a review on Labour Market Information system (LMIS) in Lebanon. The report indicated that Lebanon suffers from a lack of data both on regional and national level, which are prerequisites for a functional and effective LMIS. In order to find and collect this data/information, there has to be a system in place to connect this data/information, as well as human resources to run such system. A functional LMIS should be created to assist in job matching, job searching, and provide information about labour market needs.

Along the same lines, the results of the Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey 2018-2019 has just been published in January 2020, providing a more updated overview of the labor market, demographics and sectors of employment, shedding more light on the employment in the informal sector as well. The Survey results indicate a national unemployment rate of 11.4% with double this unemployment rate for youth (15-24 years old), at 23.3% and 35.7% among university graduates<sup>85</sup>.

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<sup>85</sup> Central Administration Of Statistics, International Labour Organization: Labour Force and Household Living Conditions Survey, European Union Funds, January 2019.

#### 4. Recommendations

- Improve the business and skills acquisition environment

Creating jobs requires economic growth, and this can be achieved through providing environment that can attract investments, and transform them into successful projects that achieve growth and create jobs. There is a need to simplify the business procedures and reduce bureaucracy in the business, while increasing transparency. Additionally, there should be lobbying for the government to work on a strategy (joined forces of the different ministries) for targeting the informal sector and ensuring proper working conditions for the workers and new entrants into the labour market. When conditions are favourable then investment would occur but more importantly, youth would be more willing to join labour market in such conditions.

On the skills level, improving business environment also requires the preparation and integration of skilled labour to accompany the growth. This should be done in close collaboration between private sector and vocational institutes/schools, identifying the current gap in skills, the demand for skills that would be needed in the future and then designing and developing the curricula accordingly. It should be done in a systematic way by i) prioritising the sectors with potential such as renewable energy or environmental sector or other, ii) identifying the potential types of jobs that can be created, and then iii) tailoring the programs to equip the youth with skills that would link them to such sectors. Also, forecasting number of jobs created and supply needed to avoid surplus should be considered.

- Align TVET programmes to the demands of the labour market

As the first step, Labour market information system should be prioritised and put in place which will enable the TVET system identify the demands of the labour market and develop programs that target such demand. While this is a priority, more involvement of the private sector should occur, through cooperation in undertaking employers' surveys to properly identify the demand and highlight the gaps that need to be tackled. This would then translate, in the same manner of UNICEF and GIZ - ProVTE, pilots through representatives of employers to develop training programs that match the demand. This process has already started where IECD and GIZ are working based on recommendations by sectorial skills teams which would then develop to sector skills councils when established, so as to develop or upgrade training programs that match the market demand.

- Joining Forces with employers to engage in internship and job creation

A network should be established, via the GEOs to help youth access internship opportunities and work based learning, but with continuous updates and higher reach of youth, through website or applications that can inform the student of the opportunities, in terms of location and company profile. It should have free access along with messaging support to receive updates on the latest opportunities.

- Providing incentives for starting up new businesses

This would include identifying sectors with economic potential, regions witnessing harsh economic conditions, and reviewing the current government regulations to identify bottlenecks and simplify so as to act as incentives for starting up new businesses. The ministries of Trade, Labour, Industry, and Finance can provide certain incentives for SMEs and businesses who commit to increasing their workforce (and maintaining it) over the next 2 years. Such incentives can include exemptions from certain taxes or exemptions from the need to pay stamp duties upon the request of legal documents.

# BUILDING BLOCK C: SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT AND INDIVIDUAL DEMAND FOR VET

## C.1: Participation in VET and lifelong learning

### C.1.1 Participation

The main challenge in the participation still lies in the poor attractiveness of the VET system for youth, the poor perception of the population regarding the vocational education and the misconception linking TVET with academic failure and poor quality education. This is evident in the low enrolment rate, estimated at 27.6% rate of total enrolment in education, according to UNESCO statistics in 2017, increasing only by 14% from the previous year<sup>86</sup>. Additionally, female participation is lower, around 22% as compared to male enrolment of around 34%<sup>87</sup>.

Moreover, the tightened economic situation further challenges the interest of student to pursue technical vocational education, given the reduction in job opportunities, low wages prevailing accompanied with poor working conditions, all of which drive the youth away from the system, seeking university education with the perception of accessing better opportunities and higher wages.

### C.1.2 VET opportunities for vulnerable and marginalised groups

Female Youth, and People with Disabilities remain the marginalised in the access to learning opportunities in Lebanon, and ones that need to be targeted in a more customised approach taking into consideration their contexts.

Overall, the findings from the Torino Process 2016/17 are still valid pertaining to the provision of opportunities for people of different geographical, educational, and social backgrounds, regardless of the gender and nationalities. The Torino Process Report in 2016/2017 indicated that the VET system has been successful to some extent in providing learning opportunities for people from different geographical and cultural background, but that it was hard to measure since there weren't any studies that support the findings or results. For the Lebanese, regional disparities and centralization remain an impediment against social inclusion, whereas for the Syrians, reliance on interventions from international organizations were main opportunities allowing them to access short-term employment opportunities (cash for work or others) that have increased their resilience, but residence and work permits, as well as work restrictions to specific sectors remain main obstacles against employability and more integration in Labour market. For the Palestinians, UNRWA has been supporting different vocational education schemes along with career guidance starting at schools, and employment service centres for graduates and Palestinian refugee jobseekers that support counselling for job placement and training on soft skills.

From a statistics point of view, the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan update 2019 highlights that on average, 2,123 Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth (1,810 non-Lebanese) have enrolled in vocational education<sup>88</sup>. However, the same document indicates that female youth, specifically non-Lebanese ones are at a higher disadvantage of accessing learning opportunities, whether academic or vocational. The reason is that 76% of the Syrian Households are categorised as poor with 58% of those living below minimum survival level. This forces the households to prioritise education of boys over girls, preventing them from continuing their education and triggering them into early marriage, or getting exposed to sexual and gender-based violence. However, there are not statistics related to the inaccessibility of the female youth to education.

Among the Lebanese, participation rate of female youth in the TVET is around 45% in 2017-2018, though higher rates than fellow Syrian female youth, with 55% pursuing BT level and a very small percentage going higher in their studies. They have been mostly focused on specialties related to

<sup>86</sup> UNESCO Stat: <http://uis.unesco.org/country/LB>

<sup>87</sup> Ibid

<sup>88</sup> Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, 2017-2020: 2019 Update: <https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68651>

beauty, childcare, nursing, and accounting, complying with gender stereotyping in the specialties, dictated by society, as most suitable for women.

When it comes to People with Disabilities, the National Strategic framework indicates that majority of the public TVET schools and institutes still do not fully integrate special arrangements for people with disabilities, be it in the curricula or in the school infrastructure, reducing their accessibility to TVET system, and pushing them further into marginalization. Moreover, all the new institutes have been built taking into account the accessibility of persons with special needs. For old buildings, many measures have been taken within the possible

For the Syrians, accessing the TVET system is still reliant on support from international organizations, in linking to the labour market within the sectors in which the Lebanese government allow them to work in, amidst the increasing restrictions and tension for pressuring the return to Syria by the government. It is important to mention here that there are no barriers for Syrians to access TVET but provided they meet all the entry requirements that are common to all.

For the Palestinians, the situation has not changed much as they still face major restrictions, impeded to work in 39 professions. UNRWA, supported by the external community has engaged in dialogues with different syndicates, such as Nursing (included in the 39 professions mentioned above), that have shown more openness to recruit Palestinians, though no official declaration has yet been announced. The main aim is to have formalised work arrangements and improve working conditions for the Palestinians. To date, Palestinians are more integrated in the informal sector, which makes it difficult to assess opportunities for them. There is still lack of labour market information system on national level that would help to identify sectors where opportunities exist and those accessible for Palestinians.

### C.1.3 Policies to improve VET access and participation

The National Strategic Framework for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is considered the main and only policy adopted for improving the overall TVET education system, particularly in one of its three main access: expanded access and service delivery; which includes revision of the legal, technical and infrastructural barriers hindering equal accessibility to all the population, promote participation of marginalised communities among women, people with disabilities and refugees through awareness campaigns and promoting opportunities in non-traditional occupations, and improve infrastructure for accommodate for the needs of people with disabilities including adapting training methodologies. The action plan, in process, would highlight the different activities and interventions that would help realise the building blocks abovementioned.

### C.1.4 Promoting VET access and participation for vulnerable and marginalised groups

There are little developments in the approach for promoting access of learners to formal system of VET since the last Torino Process round in 2016/2017, whereby the public and private vocational institutes/schools across Lebanon are charged with providing orientation for new students wishing to enrol in technical and vocational education. But at same time, increasing number of private universities gives students easier options for continuing their educations, rather than forcing them to put more efforts into succeeding in their VET education. When students fail in the official exams of the Lebanese University, they tend to apply to private universities because admission is perceived to be easier. The educational system in these universities is based on credits, thus enabling them to study and work at the same time, considering the high expenses incurred, and thus obliged to work their way through.

Within the Lebanon Crisis Response plan, the Lebanese Government, with the support of international organizations, will work within the livelihoods component on improving workforce employability through providing education for youth in need (vulnerable) and who have not been able to access education opportunities. These will be targeted with different short term accelerated trainings for the Syrian refugees within the sectors they are allowed to work in, and for the Lebanese through life skills training support, work-based learning and career guidance, contributing also to reduced tension between refugee and host communities. Additionally, there is plan for harmonizing and more formalizing the content and modalities of accelerated vocational trainings in Lebanon. On this subject, ILO, with support from Norway has plans to conduct a Vocational Training pilot with private provider in two occupations in construction-public infrastructure. The pilot would follow and apply the non-formal

market based skills training guidelines, across its four phases: market analysis and skills gap identification, curricula design and implementation, post-training support and monitoring/evaluation and aligned to the 21 core principles identified for non-formal market-based skills training. Once completed, the pilot will provide a scalable model for delivery based on these Guidelines and hopefully towards putting in place a Standard Operating Procedures for these type of trainings.

### C.1.5 Flexible VET provision in support of participation in VET

The Lebanese Government has still not yet adopted the Lebanese National Qualifications Framework (LNQF) developed in 2012 by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, with the support of the ETF through funds from the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The adoption of the LNQF is also stated in the strategic framework, to be achieved, namely focusing on grading the different diplomas and establishing additional links between them. LNQF is not limited to TVET and its strategy, but shall include the qualifications for all education levels, including diplomas and certificates issued in the country.

**The Decision # 374/M/2019 Issued by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education adopts the LNQF for VET, of 6 levels as defines the descriptors of its chart.** The Decision defined the Chart including the different TVET learning level and Descriptors set along with monitoring schemes as per the ones indicated in the National Strategic Framework, based on the joint work between UNICEF, DGVTE and focal point of TVET in the MEHE. However, the application would start in the academic year 2019-2020.

It is worth mentioning that the main objective of the LNQF is to standardize the number and type of qualifications offered through the different specialties in Vocational and Technical Education field. During the last Torino Round in 2016, the qualifications system has not been embraced due to lack of institutional arrangements put in place and lack of involvement of the stakeholders in integrating the system accordingly. However, the latter has now been resolved, given the interest of the stakeholders in adopting but remains pending the approval from the government and commitment to adopt it officially, on a national level.

### C.1.6 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Since the Lebanese National Qualifications Framework has not been fully adopted yet, there are not any national validation policies and mechanisms put in place for the non-formal and informal learning. International and local organizations conducting different accelerated vocational trainings grant their trainees certificate of completion, either signed by the head of the organization itself, or if conducted with the support of the National Employment Office then certificate is validated by the Office itself. For trainings conducted by the National Vocational Training Center, the Chair of the board of directors signs the certificates. Additionally, some also provide trainings, in collaboration with Chambers of Commerce, which also provide training certificates. Additionally, the Chambers have their own training center, covering different topics that are in demand by the market and members as well.

## C.2: Equity and equal opportunity in VET

### C.2.1 Success of learners in VET

There are not official statistics that provide information on the success of learners in TVET in terms of employability. The only information existing relates to the number of the VET graduates in that particular year along with their distribution based on the degree pursued and the specialties. For example, the CRDP publishes annual information on the number of students enrolled in both academic and vocational education, at all levels, but only states the success and failure rates for the official exams at the baccalaureate and brevet levels. The Control and Examination Department of the DGVTE collects the data on the enrolment and success of the VET students at different levels and specialties.

In 2017-2018, the number of students accessing the VET education system was 83, 046 students, 55.14% at the BT level, 20.53% at the TS level, 18.92% at the BP level, and 4.16% at the LT level. On average, the success rate was 76.2% across all levels, with highest success rates in exams reported

at the BP Level (94%) and lowest for LT level, with 56% success rate<sup>89</sup>. In terms of BT, 14, 364 students enrolled and success rate was around 76%, and 70% for TS students (6819 students sat for official exam at 70% success rate).

### C.2.2 VET learners in need of additional learning and training support

Women, People with special needs and Refugees require more attention and particular support in terms of accessing TVET and benefiting from it.

Regarding women, the participation of Lebanese female youth in TVET is significant but most of the learning is focused on gender- stereotyped specialties such as paramedical, artistic, hospitality, services or computer specialties more than purely industrial specialties.

For people with disabilities, some schools have been equipped with facilities for hosting people with physical disabilities, but there are not, according to the National Strategic framework special arrangements for people with non-physical disabilities (mental), be it in the curricula or in the school infrastructure, reducing their accessibility to TVET system, and pushing them further into marginalization.

For the Syrians, accessing the VET system is still reliant on support from international organizations, within the sectors allowable for work namely Construction, Agriculture, and Environment, amidst the increasing restrictions and tension for pressuring the return to Syria.

For the Palestinians, the situation has not changed much as they still face major restrictions, impeded to work in 39 professions. UNRWA, supported by the external community has engaged in dialogues with different syndicates, such as Nursing (included in the 39 professions mentioned above), that have shown more openness to recruit Palestinians, though no official declaration has yet been announced. The main aim is to have formalised work arrangements and improve working conditions for the Palestinians. To date, Palestinians are more integrated in the informal sector, which makes it difficult to assess opportunities for them.

### C.2.3 Measures in support of equity in VET

Currently, there are not any policies put in place for safeguarding equity in VET but, as indicated in the previous Torino process review 2016, the Ministry of Social affairs, through the department of Social Welfare provides full scholarships for vulnerable and extremely poor students accessing the VET schools.

The National Strategic Framework has included components to monitor the performance of students enrolled in place, but still in planning process to be looked after in the next Torino Process review round.

Along those lines, UNICEF has continued to support enrolment fees, since 2016 and till present time, of Lebanese and Non-Lebanese youth in the TVET public schools and institutes with funds from the German and Netherland governments.

### C.2.4 Inclusive education and VET

The Lebanese government committed to inclusive education first via the endorsement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly the 4th sustainable development goal pertaining to education “inclusive quality education for all and promote lifelong learning”.

Such goals are also embedded in the National Strategic Framework, particularly SDG 4.3 “equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university”, and SDG 4.4 “substantial increase in the number of youth and adults who have relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs and entrepreneurship”.

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<sup>89</sup> Official Figures on Enrollment and Passing of Official Exams reported by the Department of Exams and Control at the DGVTE for the year 2017-2018.

## C.3: Active support to employment

### C.3.1 Employability of VET graduates

This has been discussed in details in Sections B1.2, B1.3 & B1.6 Skills mismatch is a prevailing characteristic of the Lebanese Labour market, highly impacting the employability graduates. TVET speaking, the change introduced by the directorate general of Technical and **Vocational Education, as per the law #8590 published in 2012, the TS programs was shortened, from 3 to 2 years**. This created challenges for the students pursuing different specialties, including nursing as it first condensed the program, and second prevented current graduates from being able to work because of the loss of the conditions required to practice the profession. In the case of nursing, the Order of Nurses issued regulation that unless TS students obtain a “License Technique LT” or bridge their studies with other academic studies and obtain a bachelor’s degree, they cannot obtain the required license to work, or become a registered nurse. For other industrial specializations, the situation is the same, confirmed through interviews with UNDP, IECD, UNICEF and others, the program is insufficient in duration to equip the students with the proper technical skills required for the labour market access.

The main challenge in TVET Education is that students do not have sufficient practical studies during their courses, and since life skills is not mainstreamed, graduates don’t possess the employable skills the matter that widen the gap between their qualifications and those requested by the employers. For vulnerable youth, this is more aggravated, according to UNDP, as the current skills training are intensive over a short period of time, insufficient to acquire such skills and uncoupled with social support (psycho-social) for these vulnerable categories, rendering such trainings impact less.

Employability of the Syrian refugees is very low, with high unemployment levels amongst women at 68%. Around 47% of Syrian refugees are economically active mainly in agriculture and construction, of which 92% have no work contract and over 56% work on a seasonal, weekly or daily basis<sup>90</sup>.

### C.3.2 Economic factors with an impact on transition

This has also been discussed in the previous sections, B1.1, B1.2, and A1.1. The main economic factors that impede the entry of TVET graduates in the Labour market are namely the limited private sector investment, the growing informal sector, and proliferation of accelerated vocational trainings.

Foreign and domestic investment had dropped by around 30% over the last 7 years, with overall business environment deteriorating due to corruption, lagging infrastructure, and difficulty in doing business. In fact, Lebanon, according to the same report lost 46 ranks in 10 years in terms of ease of doing business<sup>91</sup>. Without such investments, and with more enterprises running out of business, the situation is challenging and hindering for job creation.

Informality in businesses and employment became a significant feature and one that is growing in some sectors more than others. With the latest Syrian Crisis, the employment of the displaced occurred entirely in the informal sector, according to the World Bank’s estimate, increasing the rate of informality by 10% across all economic sectors.<sup>92</sup> This has resulted in reduced job opportunities, reduced quality of job types offered, and depression of wages in many sectors, particularly for low-skilled workers. Based on the Central Administration of Statistics study published in 2009, the informal employment is found highest in agriculture, 92.4% followed by construction (80.7%), and transport (71.7%)<sup>93</sup>.

Most of the projects funded by donors in the last three or four years were mostly focused on labour intensive and accelerated trainings, for both refugees and host communities, without visible impact on the efficiency of the labour market or upgrading of the skills- rendering participation as minimal which indicates a main gap in the ability to absorb these skilled supply and create opportunities for them.

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<sup>90</sup> ILO Report- Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profile. Available at :[https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@robeirut/documents/genericdocument/wcms\\_240130.pdf](https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@arabstates/@robeirut/documents/genericdocument/wcms_240130.pdf)

<sup>91</sup> Ibid

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid

### C.3.3 Overview of policies in support of employability and transition to employment

This has been tackled in sections B1.6 in reference to the joint collaboration between Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Industry, and UNHCR for conducting accelerated trainings on different topics targeting Syrian and Lebanese Youth as well as extended trainings on Welding, over six months period. Also tackled in Sections B1.7 regarding the introduction of two new BT specialties: Industrial Maintenance and Web Programming with the support of IECD and based on labour market assessment, as well as GIL project through UNICEF targeting entrepreneurship opportunities for vulnerable youth accompanied by mentoring and seed funding.

### C.3.4 Career guidance

On the government level, career guidance and training is ought to be provided through the Department of Orientation and Counselling at the DGVTE as well as additionally through National Employment Office, the official entity that is required, by law, to provide job matching and career guidance with the aim of reducing unemployment rates. The Department of Orientation and Counselling at the DGVTE is charged with providing orientation and counselling for prospective students on the specialties to pursue based on their background and aspirations. Currently, this Department is short of staff, having only 3 staff members as opposed to the demand for at least 16 staff members, and thus unable to carry out the orientation nationwide, noting that the guidance and orientations are services that need reliable information to be consistent. The guidance and orientation is now mostly at the school level, providing a small pamphlet on the specialties available and conditions for entry. Regarding job matching, for NEO, whilst receiving support from international organizations such as ILO and others, the resources remain limited for the office, hindering the fulfilment of its mandate. Moreover, the labour market assessments conducted reveal a large gap in the relation with the private sector, as the latter is not fully aware of the NEO and its role as a job matching institution, a challenge in the communication and visibility of the office, which should be further strengthened as it is the national entity that has provides equal access to all job seekers to the job opportunities available as well as guidance and training to increase their employability.

Career Guidance for VET is currently provided through Guidance Employment Offices (GEO) established in 2012 within the framework of the GEMM Project, Governance for Employability in the Mediterranean funded by European Union and implemented by the European Training Foundation, ETF, and IECD who provided technical support as part of pilot project to set up career guidance and employment in public TVET institutes/schools. Today there are 23 offices, whereby GIZ's ProVTE project supported the addition of 8 new GEOs, spread nationwide. The main services such offices provide are more on the job matching side, following up on the graduates and linking them to job opportunities, whilst continuing the follow-up. The offices also provide guidance by the job matching component is having more utilization among the graduates. Annual reports are provided by these offices and submitted to the DGT VET, containing information on the number of trainings provided to students, number of internships provisioned, and job descriptions or vacancies collected. There is still room for progress and need to focus on creating a common platform for all these offices to exchange information, and bet better connected so as to direct students based on the opportunities available. There is also need to expand the number of offices to other TVET schools, and link them to National Employment Office to increase effectiveness and coverage.

## II. Summary and analytical conclusions

### 1. Policy challenges

**Poor Attractiveness of the VET system for Youth** There is a poor perception of the population regarding the vocational education and the misconception linking TVET with academic failure and poor quality education. This is evident in the low enrolment rate, estimated at 27.6% of the total number of students in the secondary education level, according to UNESCO statistics in 2017, increasing by 14% from the previous year<sup>94</sup>.

**Low female participation for non-Lebanese and People with Disabilities** Female youth, specifically non-Lebanese ones are at a higher disadvantage of accessing learning opportunities,

<sup>94</sup> UNESCO Stat: <http://uis.unesco.org/country/LB>

whether academic or vocational. The reason is that 76% of the Syrian Households are categorised as poor with 58% of those living below minimum survival level. This forces the households to prioritise education of boys over girls, preventing them from continuing their education and triggering them into early marriage, or getting exposed to sexual and gender-based violence. For the Lebanese females, the participation rate around 22% is lower when compared to male enrolment of around 34%<sup>95</sup>. But above all, the participation of females is mostly in gender-oriented specialties such as nursing, beauty, and others, with lower presence in non-traditional industrial specialties such as electro-technique or mechanics or other.

When it comes to people with disabilities, there are no statistics but the infrastructure missing from the schools further hinders their integration in the VET system.

***Lack of Adoption of Lebanese National Qualifications Framework.*** The Lebanese Government has still not yet fully adopted the Lebanese National Qualifications Framework (LNQF) developed in 2012 by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, due to lack of institutional arrangements put in place and lack of involvement of the stakeholders in integrating the system accordingly. National Qualifications for TVET with its charts and descriptors have been developed according to the NSF and endorsed by the Ministry of Education & Higher Education as per Resolution # 374.

***Limited Career Guidance and Orientation for Youth & VET Graduates*** career guidance should be provided through the Department of Orientation and Guidance within the DGVTE and training is provided through the National Employment Office, in addition to the GEOs set up in 23 VET schools. However, the department is short of human resources to fulfil its role and the link between NEO and GEOs needs to be strengthened and due to limited financial resources, the NEO is unable to fulfil its role completely. Moreover, the labour market assessments conducted reveal a large gap in the relation with the private sector, as the latter is not fully aware of the NEO and its role, a challenge in the communication and visibility of the office.

## **2. Factors contributing to policy challenges**

The main issue is that all such abovementioned factors are interrelated and contribute to the intensity of challenges facing policy-makers to address them in isolated manner. The poor attractiveness of the VET is related to the cultural factor and perception that VET is only for failing students or who come from underprivileged backgrounds. For youth, VET is unattractive because of the low wages prevailing and perceived tough working conditions. But, this is due to first lack of awareness of the youth and their community on the importance of VET and its contribution to the overall economy. Moreover, the lack of proper career guidance and orientation hinders students from pursuing career paths that match their expectations or guide them on specialties that can grant them access to Labour market or even insights on the skills required for matching their qualifications with the job demanded. More often, students are not aware of the opportunities available on the market, and thus do not know where to look. They also do not have access to information that enlightens them on the employment rate of VET graduates or success stories that motivate them to join. On the demand side, the prolonged gap in the communication between the public and private sector further added to the challenges: the private sector is not always aware of the government institutions doing job matching, thus no communication to channel their demands for specific skills. The public sector lacks access to statistics and information that can inform them of the performance of labour market, skills in demand and identify the need for undergoing changes, whether upgrading curricula or designing new trainings or other. The result is the situation today. The major issue in fact is the weak ability of the VET management and policy makers to develop a holistic approach that not only addresses the challenges but also the influencing factors that contribute to such challenges.

## **3. Solutions and progress with implementation**

The National Strategic Framework is considered the main and only policy adopted for improving the overall TVET education system, particularly in one of its three main access: expanded access and service delivery; which includes revision of the legal, technical and infrastructural barriers hindering equal accessibility to all the population, promote participation of marginalised communities and ensuring the adoption of the Lebanese National Qualifications Framework For TVET. So, this is an important step towards increasing accessibility and inclusion.

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid

However, the career guidance and orientation process need to be strengthened and requires the joint efforts of the different public sector entities and private sector representatives to address the misconceptions but also to raise awareness of the youth on the different paths available for their perusal and career options once they graduate. Currently, this is being done on an individual basis, either through international organizations or local organizations receiving donor funds. But, this is not done in a coordinated manner nor with a common vision, thus more focus should be placed on the counselling and guidance.

#### **4. Recommendations**

##### Increase attractiveness of the VET through Success Stories

There is a need to work on the attractiveness of the VET among the youth, through long-term planning and different approaches combined to achieve that. One approach is conducting awareness campaigns on the VET System, labour market trends and how VET can cater to the needs of the private sector and increase access of its graduates to labour market. This would require also paying particular attention to the low female enrolment and promoting education among women in non-traditional specialties, thus breaking stereotypes and increasing chances of generating income for them and their families. Identifying labour market trends and needs also requires an operating labour market information system, thus a pre-requisite for that. Increasing awareness for people with disabilities require upgrading in the infrastructure and curricula, which will be tackled through the strategic framework. Awareness campaigns should be carried out by the DGVTE but with input and support from the private sector, utilising the experience of private sector councils associations.

##### Align and Strengthen Career Orientation & Guidance

Close coordination should occur between the GEO offices at VET institutes/schools and the National Employment Office. A continuous referral system should be done, along with first ensuring linkages between the GEO themselves. Orientation for particular specialties should be done by the GEO and then referral of the graduate to NEO can occur upon graduation, where by NEO would have a strong network with private sector for matching and guiding graduates, based on assessment on the additional trainings they need to undertake for increasing their employability. Additionally, through linking with private sector directly or in collaboration with NEO, GEO can facilitate internship opportunities for the students. The common platform among GEO is needed first to exchange information on the potential existing opportunities and have students apply even if outside the region, so as to increase chances of employability and also exchange experiences with the different private sector, identifying those cooperative and those that need more targeting in communication. CRDP is also in process of developing a strategy for career guidance and orientation with the support of Kitabi Project, USAID funded, targeting primary and secondary education including TVET schools. Thus there should also be alignment and collaboration to ensure that the component related to TVET is complementary to GEO and NEO work.

# BUILDING BLOCK D: INTERNAL EFFICIENCY AND OPERATION OF THE VET SYSTEM

## D.1: Teaching and learning environment

### D.1.1 Teaching and learning methods, including work-based learning

There has been some changes in the teaching and learning methods in 2018, as result of the efforts of the international organizations such as UNICEF, GIZ - ProVTE, and IECD in updating the curricula, including more practical learning, and training the teachers on the implementation of the new curricula. This has occurred for some topics, such as Car Maintenance & Repair, and Construction.

So far, and as part of the action plan, UNICEF worked on development of 8 accelerated training curricula in eight different disciplines which have been endorsed by the DGTVE. Within the same training program launched by UNICEF, ProVTE developed two accelerated training modules that have been used by the UNICEF program, and another twenty training modules developed in the construction sector. However, for the rest of accelerated training curricula, most of them remain outdated; learning methods remain mostly theoretical, with little opportunities for practical learning and internships. This is mainly due to limited capacities for upgrading curricula and teaching quality, the limited financial capacities of DGVTE schools that prevent them from further investment in upgrading teaching methodologies through more equipped labs/workshops as well as limited networking with private sector that would provide internship opportunities for the student to practice what they learn in the workplaces.

This applies also to private schools that usually abide by the curricula or follow the same structure, thus same learning methods. However, the international organizations, such as UNICEF, IECD, or GIZ-ProVTE have kind of followed different implementation modalities, competency based, with some variation in the implementation, which may add a further layer to the existing challenges and weaknesses in the learning methods as well as evaluation of the learning methods afterwards. Within the action plan developed for the NSF, a competency based approach has been recommended for adoption when developing TVET Curricula, adopting a modular based system in TVET secondary education and a credit system in the post-secondary education, similar to the system applied in the Lebanese University and other private universities. As an example of the variation in methodology outlined above, both GIZ-ProVTE and UNICEF are working on the curricula development using the competency based approach. UNICEF is working on occupation standards using DACUM workshops to define the duties and tasks of the occupation, and then the skills required to perform those tasks, with curricula designed based on modular system.

ProVTE is using a different approach (not DACUM) training the teachers to implement the new curricula, but with a third party (private sector) who carries out the evaluation for both students and teachers in order to improve quality of the system. UNICEF 's evaluation of teachers are through self-evaluation rather than third party. For IECD, the French system is followed, with online and in-school training of teachers taking place, and accreditation from French affiliated agencies.

The International organizations agreed between them and with the national committees working on the modernization of the qualification system on a framework of the competency-based modular system. The main features of the new system designed for the Technical Baccalaureate are the following: (As Provided by UNICEF)

Semester is adopted and each semester represents a competency-based module that leads to a defined competency while preparing at the same time the student to pursue his studies in the next semester (module)

A competency-based module comprises several teaching modules or units of different natures (General education units like math, physics, ethics etc., technical units, practical work units and internship units)

The internship in the workplaces is ruled by a student's work contract that identifies the rights and the obligations of both the student and the employer.

During his/her studies the student is subject to formative and summative evaluations in the school and a final official exams evaluation after he/she terminates with success the six competency-based modules. The final evaluation is done by certified assessors and is based on well-defined qualification standards and assessment standards. The diploma is given to the candidate who demonstrates that he/she acquired the specified qualification standards.

The school may deliver at the end of each CB module, upon request from the student, a school certificate that certifies that the student acquired the skills and competencies described for this competency-based module.

The student may obtain a qualification certificate from the employers after being evaluated by a private sector recognized employer or association. The employers or association allowed to provide the qualification certificates are named by the concerned sector skills council.

**On the other hand, the development of a curriculum has to follow the following steps:**

Employers through the sector skills council of the sector within which the curriculum is situated nominates experts who practice the profession or job to work with the Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education on the development of the curriculum intended to be developed.

This committee shall refer with the educators appointed to the national and international occupation standards related to the profession or the job for which the students or trainees are to be prepared and shall collect the information related to these standards for reference purposes.

The DGVTE organizes a special workshop in which the experts nominated by the employers participate in determining the occupation standards for the profession or the specific job that is targeted by the educational curriculum. Duties and tasks related to the profession or job will be determined. The workshop could be a DACUM one.

The Committee of Experts and the Curriculum Committee of educators designated shall work together to identify the knowledge, skills and competencies that the student or trainee must acquire during the period of his/her preparation for the performance of the duties and tasks related to the profession or job. During this step they refer to the collected national and international occupation standards.

Based on the concluded knowledge, skills and competencies, and according to the level of learning specified in the TVET qualifications framework and its descriptors, and the general framework of the curriculum level and diploma (Technical Baccalaureate for example), the educators determine the learning standards (learning materials) or educational units. The curriculum describes in detail the general, basic, specialized, supportive and practical work units as well as the internship in the workplace and all other details that should be specified as learning standards, including teaching methods, teaching aids and other details related to the implementation of the practical works.

The Curriculum Committee shall present the results of its work to the Committee of Experts to express its opinion, observations and validation.

The Curriculum Committee of educators shall determine the evaluation criteria and the qualification standards, which include the details of the formative evaluation, the summative evaluation and the final evaluation in accordance with the rules of procedure of the vocational and technical education institutions, and the final evaluation to grant the official diploma according to the official examinations system and rules. The assessment standards that describe how the assessment and exams will run are also determined in the curriculum.

After the finalization of the curriculum and its initial approval by the officials of the Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education, the Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education will submit the final draft to the Sector Skills Council for opinion and endorsement.

Following the implementation of the above steps, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education - Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education issues the official curriculum that has been prepared or developed. The Minister of Education and Higher Education shall sign the decisions related to the curricula of higher technician and technical license diplomas, while the Director General signs the decisions that issue all other curricula from technical baccalaureate and below.

With regards to work-based learning, the UNESCO published a study last year on “Reviewing Work-Based Learning (WBL) Programmes for Young People in Lebanon”, conducted by WARD Organization in 2018. The study indicated that in Lebanon, there is still lack of clear structure for apprenticeship and work-based learning. The percentage of work-based learning hours of the different TVET specialties ranges between 6%-15% for industrial specializations and goes up to 40% for health-related specialties, at the TS & LT levels such as number of work-based learning increases to 44%<sup>96</sup>. The study highlighted that there is also shy involvement of the private sector in provision of apprenticeship programs, namely in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the students’ skills improved after the training. Additionally, such programs were only available through donors’ funding, which cease after the funding is completed, combined with lack of selection criteria for the apprenticeships location to evaluate whether they fit with the students’ context.

There is not yet legislation put in place for work-based learning. Internship and apprenticeship are two different forms of learning but interchangeably used for same meaning. Within the National Strategic Framework, there is more focus on the integration of practical learning, through increasing internships and practical teaching hours of up to 35% of the total number of teaching hours for the different training topics.

Current work-based learning is provided within the seven agriculture schools under the management of the Ministry of Agriculture, supported by FAO and AVSI organizations in collaboration with ILO. Within the two BT specialisations: Animal and plant production, which involve internships for students at agribusinesses in the different regions, specifically on the nursery and dairy topics. AVSI is in charge of linking with the private sector, using their own network for placing the students, through an agreement that clearly states the training settings, objectives, and the learning outcomes (what the students need to learn in the training). Additionally, one person from the Agriculture school team does the follow-up with the private sector, conducting an evaluation towards the end of the training, along with report submitted by the students themselves. According to Ministry of Agriculture, this works in schools that have sufficient human resources, but with those that are short of staff, monitoring is not carried out. Moreover, a manual and toolkit for implementation is currently being developed building on international practices and adapted to Lebanese context. This would also involve an orientation workshop for the Ministry of Agriculture’s officers which was already carried out with implementation underway. In parallel, the ILO in collaboration with MoA and FAO has been working with the Chambers of Commerce to promote partnership with the private Sector for Workplace-Based Learning (WBL) in Agriculture. A workshop was organized in February 2019 in this regard. Based on that a Memorandum of Understanding has been drafted for an agreement between MOA and Chambers of Commerce regarding engagement and contribution of private sectors in the agricultural education system in particular in WBL (apprenticeship/internship/on the job training). The MOU is currently under review with another meeting to be organized among different stakeholders to be organized early next year for further discussion. Main challenges is that the private sector is not motivated to work directly with the agriculture schools, thus explains the need to have third party catalysing the link, AVSI in this case through their own networks.

### D.1.2 Teaching and learning environment

There has not been a significant change in the teaching and learning conditions since the last Torino process review in that the limited financial resources allocated to schools from the DGVTE, still hinder the investment in upgrading the infrastructure of the school and equipping it to provide better practical trainings. Around, 93.8% of the overall Directorate’s budget is allocated for personnel salaries and benefits, leaving as little as 7% for supplying equipment, training, and maintenance needs<sup>97</sup>.

UNHCR, through its educational support provision, had allocated US\$ 2,000,000 for supporting Vocational Education and Training. Within such support, UNCHR provided equipment and materials for 20 public schools along with having the suppliers train the teachers who will use such tools. The Minister of Education and Higher Education approved the selection of the public schools in 2018. However, according to UNHCR’s Associate Education Officer, many equipment and tools were not

<sup>96</sup> UNESCO, Work Based Learning Study: Reviewing Work Based Learning Programme for Young People in Lebanon, WARD association, October 2018:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LB.pdf>

<sup>97</sup> European Training Foundation, *Pre-Identification Report: Linking Education & Training To Practice and Needs of The Labour Market*, European Training Foundation, Beirut, June 2015.

used and remained untouched, as the Directors indicated there wasn't a perceived need for them given that they are not yet providing trainings on topics which would require use of such equipment. While the demand was provided by the schools and submitted to the Ministry who in turn communicated to the UNHCR, the Officer in charge indicated that equipment are still unused to date. This reveals a gap in the inability to match the teaching & learning needs with the adequate equipment to improve the learning process.

According to the DGVTE, there are 162 public institutes/schools operating within a budget of 186,450,105,000 L.L (less than 1% of the total governmental budget) and around 250 private institutes/schools that operate on their own although related to the DGTVE.

When it comes to the private TVET institutes/schools, there is not really supervision or monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning, despite having specific Divisions and Departments within the DGTVE to supervise and monitor the education provided in the private schools. To further explain this, there are two entities concerned with the supervision of TVET education in private schools: The Division of Education Monitoring and Orientation, and the Department of Control and Examinations, which is part of that division.

The Division of Education Monitoring and Orientation in the DGTVE is the division responsible for monitoring and supervising the work of the private and public institutes/schools as per its mandate, amongst other activities.

Within this division, the department of control and examinations is responsible for the application of the Ministerial Decision allowing the institute/school to start providing educational and training services. The institutes and schools are asked to present to the DGTVE on yearly basis all the information on the students, teachers and administrative staff. The department also performs inspection visits to check on the teaching environment, students, and the infrastructure of the school.

However, due to the shortage of human resources in the department, the visits are not carried out and only the list of students, who sit for national exams, is acquired for each school. This was further confirmed in an interview with the head of the Department, the staff of the department of control and examinations comprises 8 employees while there is a need for at least 35 employees. Overall, the Division of Education Monitoring and Orientation has currently 3 employees while the need is for 16.

This shortage of staff, according to the chief of the department has been existing for 10 years without clear reasons to this shortage, other than insufficient overall budget. Moreover, the department operates with a data collection system that is different from that used by the public institutes/schools. For example, in the private institutes/schools, statistics on the teachers and students per institute/school and per specialty are collected and shared through a system that is different from that used for public institutes/schools. Thus, difficult to quantify and share automatically for example the number of students and teachers (as well as ratios) in total in the private educational sector.

In principle, the private institutes/schools adopt the official curricula developed by the technical department at the DGVTE, with more leeway in the choice of books to provide as study material. Accordingly, the tools used may differ from those utilised within public schools. Moreover, 95% of the private TVET institutes/schools are non-industrial (accounting, food safety, nursing, etc.) and only 5% have industrial specialties thus do not require high investment in infrastructure as those providing industrial specialties, which require investment in workshops, labs, equipment and teaching material<sup>98</sup>.

### D.1.3 Policies to improve training/teaching and learning methods in VET

The National Strategic Framework anticipates the improvement of the human resource management system for the TVET sector, training teachers and instructors on pedagogical skills and those involved in industry on technical skills. Within the NSF building blocks, actions focus on providing standard pedagogical training certificates for all teachers and instructors; train them through in company training every two years through public-private partnerships and linking performance with financial rewards.

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<sup>98</sup> Interview with Mr. Ghassan Chaito, Department of the Technical Cooperation within the Technical Division at the DGVTE.

## D.1.4 Improving the training and learning environment

The National Strategic Framework includes a building block on providing equipment and material to enable trainees to acquire practical education. The allocation of such equipment will be made based on assessment of the institutes/schools in terms of employment outcomes for their graduates, as these will be prioritised. Within the same component, the strategy includes focusing on strengthening the public private partnerships for increased on the job training and donation of job-related equipment to training centres, as well as increasing budget for materials and tools for competency based programmes in line with labour market demand, and stimulate the integration and use of information and communication technology (ICT) where applicable to improve learning process.

## D.2: Teachers and trainers

### D.2.1 Composition of the workforce of VET teachers and trainers

The Centre for Educational Research and Development, CERD, publishes annual statistics on education indicators including the number of profile of teachers in the public and private education system. However, this is only for the academic primary and secondary education levels, while there aren't such statistics available for the VET teachers. As per the DGVTE statistics for 2017-2018, the number of teachers reached 15,015 teachers, with 1521 teachers full time and the rest, 13494 are contractual, paid on hourly basis. However, there are not further statistics regarding the gender, age, or academic qualifications, which signals a gap in the need for full-fledged annual educational statistics system for TVET, similar to that adopted for the academic one.

The fact that more than 80% of the teachers are contractual makes it difficult to engage in initiatives targeting upgrading of teaching methods and teachers' skills for different reasons, first due to instability in their positions since they are contractual thus not motivated to invest in further professional development when it will not be reflected in terms of salaries, second, they may have other jobs and thus not have time to commit to such trainings, and finally, may not be mandated to attend trainings as they are contractual, not part of the overall full timers.

### D.2.2 Entering the teaching profession in VET

In line with the laws and regulations pertaining to the recruitment of public servants, TVET teachers have to pass a national examination set by the civil service council for their appointment or recruitment. Once succeeded, teachers become full time employees as part of the TVET human resources system and receive a contract as civil servants. The rise of contractual or part-time teachers was first a way to allow for members from private sector to teach and transfer experience to the students. Also, it was a solution amidst delays in recruitment process of full timers (government prioritising other actions over recruitment of public employees, or lack of enough number of applicants or unequal representation of regions or religious sects that are perceived as important in such recruitment processes). To compensate for such delays, part-time or contractual TVET teachers are hired, by the DGTVE upon proposal from the institutes/schools' directors. As UNESCO stated in its publication on work-based learning in Lebanon, there is no legal framework for organizing the recruitment of TVET teachers on contractual basis, and thus no pre-requisites or criteria for selection of teachers, which may remain informally and sometimes dependent on political loyalty and family ties<sup>99</sup> rather than on professional qualifications as it should be. To note that there is a decree for the hiring of teachers to teach on hourly base and determines the conditions that must be met in them, and determines the fees for teaching according to the degrees and the experience of the teacher.

### D.2.3 Employment status of teachers in VET

As indicated above, the total number of TVET teachers in 2017-2018 reached 15,015 teachers, with 1,521 full time teachers and the rest, 13,494 contractual, paid on hourly basis. Currently teachers for the elementary up to the secondary education, earn within a range of 19,000 L.L up to 27,500 L.L per hour, while the post-secondary education teachers earn within a range from 31,500 LL to 46,000 LL. It is important to mention that the post-secondary education teachers, who have a university degree

<sup>99</sup> UNESCO, Work Based Learning Study: Reviewing Work Based Learning Programme for Young People in Lebanon, WARD association, October 2018:  
<http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LB.pdf>

rather than a VET degree, earn within a range from 65,000 LL up to 100,000 LL. The figures are lower for private schools and range between 20,000 L.L and 30,000 L.L per hour<sup>100</sup>.

When it comes to the contractual teachers, there are two types of teachers: those who are recruited from outside the education system of the DGVTE contracted to teach certain number of hours on particular topic, and those who are public servants working in ministries or other governmental institutions including the DGTVE central administration and institutes/schools, aiming at obtaining extra income through teaching<sup>101</sup>.

#### D.2.4 Quality of teachers and trainers in VET

There has not been a change in the status of the teachers since the last Torino Process Review in 2016 which stated in its report that there aren't shortages of teachers in the VET system, but rather shortage of provision of highly qualified trained teachers. Additionally, the report stated that there is an absence of application of standards and qualifications set by the DGTVE, and the only criteria met is the undertaking of public exam set by the Civil Service Council.

The teachers still vary in their academic background and a significant number of such teachers are recent university and TS graduates, without adequate work experience that qualify them to become competent teachers at VET schools<sup>102</sup>. To date, there has not been yet a comprehensive assessment of the teachers to identify their needs and challenges, be it in limited exposure to work, out-dated competences or lack of professional development.

The National Training Institution for Technical Education, IPNET, is the official institution in charge of training and graduating teachers for the vocational and technical education. However, currently the institution is unable to fulfil its role, since 2014, due to limited financial capacities, limited recruitment and availability of qualified trainers for implementing the training programmes for teachers, especially concerning technical subjects. Currently, the IPNET is functioning as a normal technical institute preparing the students to obtain the TS and LT degrees.

#### D.2.5 Attracting and retaining teachers and trainers in VET

There has not been a change in the status of the teachers since the last Torino Process Review in 2016, whereby the report stated that teachers were provided with little incentives to continue their professional development and motivate themselves to improve their performance. The only form of incentive was the extra hours reward to both fixed and contractual teachers; however, the ceiling is up to 10 hours per week for the civil servant workers.

Due to the dormancy of the IPNET due to the reasons abovementioned, the teachers are not undergoing any trainings or professional scheme development. Additionally, there are no incentives to pursue trainings based on personal initiatives, thus remain status-quo, with some aiming to shift to administrative roles and having a fixed position with an administrative function since it provides more financial and social security for them and their families rather than work on professional career development. To mention that there is no legal mechanism that organizes the continuous training of the TVET teachers pedagogically and technically.

#### D.2.6 Steering, motivating and supporting professional development

Supporting Professional development of the teachers remains a challenge for the VET system, given the limited financial and human resource capacities of the IPNET, and the limited exposure to the labour market that would identify the specialties and trainings required for strengthening the skills development of teachers to train on such specialties.

One initiative to highlight under this topic is the training and certification of the VET teachers and trainers, carried out by the EU funded project ProVTE implemented by GIZ in the frame of the delivery of short trainings in occupations in construction by 4 schools in Beirut, the South and the North. The practical training of teachers has been fully backed by ProVTE private sector partner – a large

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<sup>100</sup> DGVTE Statistics for 2018-2019.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid

<sup>102</sup> UNESCO, Work Based Learning Study: Reviewing Work Based Learning Programme for Young People in Lebanon, WARD association, October 2018:

<http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LB.pdf>

construction company- who appointed one of their site managers to deliver the ToT and furnished the school workshop with materials and supplies. In addition to the technical skills, teachers acquired methodological competence including planning and methods of work, social competences and communication, and personal competence and responsibility. At the end of the ToT, teachers underwent a professional assessment by an independent professional certification body who delivered qualification certificates to passing candidates. Only teachers who have earned the qualification certificate were allowed to deliver trainings. In the pilot phase, the ProVTE built the capacities and cooperated with an internationally recognized assessment and certification body, APAVE. ProVTE cooperates or share experience with international implementing partners, such as UNICEF and Qudra) and NGOs who are in turn applying the same methodology for the professional assessment and certification for trainers in the construction sector.

This is one example of an initiative that could be replicated and possibly scaled up, as teachers first can strengthen and build new skills relevant to the industry, become more knowledgeable of the industry's requirement, as well as acquire certificate that is nationally recognized and enable them to progress in their profession.

### D.2.7 Ensuring the quality of teachers in VET

The evaluation system for monitoring and assessing teacher effectiveness has not undergone any significant changes since the last Torino Process review in 2016, whereby the report indicated that there was an annual evaluation carried out for teachers, systematically, but concretely not effective and little was done to standardize and improve the quality of the evaluations.

There is still an annual evaluation carried out for teachers, systematically, but concretely not effective and little more could be done to standardize and improve the quality of the evaluations. The method of evaluation is more qualitative and subjective, based on the evaluators' (directors of TVET institutes and schools in this case) own perspectives and general consideration of factors such as teaching method, interaction, and adherence to curricula agenda. All evaluations are documented and sent to the Directorate General of TVET along with the annual report that each director has to present according to the rules of procedures at the end of the academic year; however, no decision is taken regarding teachers who receive bad evaluation or good ones unless not renewing the teacher's contract in case of hourly based contracts if the teacher fails to fulfil his duties.

## D.3: Quality and quality assurance

### D.3.1 Quality and relevance of education and training content in VET

Assessing the learning and training content in VET requires different information, quantitative and qualitative pertaining to the profile of the students, profile of the teachers, the contents and evaluation schemes and the actual employment rate of these VET graduates.

In 2018, UNICEF, with the technical support of ILO, conducted a tracer study covering the students that participated in the skills training programme of 2017. The sample covered 2,063 adolescent and youth from 8 different governorates and covering seven sub-sectors/topics<sup>103</sup>. Similarly, ILO is preparing a Tracer study in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture Currently, ILO is preparing for a similar exercise with MoA.

The Tracer Study revealed that the majority of the adolescent and youth (78.4%) were not working prior to undergoing skills trainings. Of the ones who were working, the majority within them (42%) were Syrian refugees followed by vulnerable Lebanese (38 %) and Palestinian refugees (12 %)<sup>104</sup>. After 3 months of completing such trainings, 37.4% of the youth got employed: 18.5% self-employed and 11% seasonally employed, with 38.7% looking for work and the remaining involved in further learning (6.3 % enrolled in additional skills training; 16.1% enrolled in school; and 8.1 % enrolled in university).

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<sup>103</sup> The main topics covered according to UNICEF: : a) Artistic, Cultural, Graphic and Multimedia (7.2 percent); b) Business and Management (9 percent); c) Information and Communication Technology (11 percent); d) Electrical and Electronics (9 percent); e) Cooking (10 percent); f) Hairdressing and Beauty (26 percent); and, g) other (21 percent).

<sup>104</sup> Input from UNICEF Provided for sharing with ETF for Torino Process Report 2018-2019.

Regarding the skills match between training and employment, 65% of the sampled youth indicated they had used the knowledge gained in their occupation to a great extent. This was even higher for those in digital training, 77%.

Moreover, ILO has launched Trace study, currently underway, in collaboration with FAO, AVSI, and MOA and expected to be completed by February 2020. This intervention aims at putting in place evidence based mechanisms to evaluate systematically the impact of the agriculture Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes. The study will target a sample of graduates from BT and short term courses for two cohorts (2016-2017 & 2017-2018).

Aside from the tracer study conducted by UNICEF and ILO, there are not any Tracer studies for TVET graduates, that officially indicate the enrolment rate, success rate in examinations and number employed or found job in the market relevant to their specialties. The different labour market assessments conducted to date identified skills mismatch, high unemployment rate among youth, reflecting an inadequate supply of graduates, over supply of university graduates but shortage in skilled VET graduates and in particular fields.

The negative perception of the VET system by the parents and the community further deepens the gap and drives students away from this system, favouring an academic one that would, in their own perception grant them better work opportunities. So far awareness, in terms of guidance and orientation remains weak and unattended. But again, if not backed by data that indicates the level of employment of such graduates, it remains weak.

The National Strategic Framework includes different building blocks focused on improving the quality of education and training of the VET system, focusing on the public TVET system but will spill-over effect to the private since the latter adopt the same curricula set by the DGVTE. But, one important feature to highlight is the need to strengthen the institutional capacity so as to have the flexibility and capacity in adapting to new changes in the country, and most important have the tools to plan for the future and set the roadmap. For example, the capital investment plan which foresees the investment in infrastructure, communication and productive sectors, as well as economic vision entailing the support of establishing industrial zones and utilizing alternative energy sources. All will require a bundle of skills and resources which have to be accounted for through upgrading curricula, or integrating new training programmes along with training teachers and promoting more collaboration with private sector.

When it comes to the private TVET schools, the situation is different as there is more flexibility in management and facilitation in adopting new specialties. For example, the BT programs in Web Development and Industrial Mechanics developed by IECD have been piloted in private (around 3) as well as public schools (around 2) given the former has more flexibility in adopting it. Yet, the planning or introduction of new specialties for the private schools requires approval from the DGVTE (if new curricula) and in some cases if the program did not have high enrolment for two consecutive years, the DGVTE has the right to discontinue the program. Yet, through the interviews, the large number of private schools provide the same specialties, without much differentiation in the teaching or learning methods. The main differentiation is geographic location and fees.

### D.3.2 Defining the quality of learning outcomes

The TVET Qualifications Framework's chart has been developed and endorsed along with the full list of levels, descriptors and their indicators, endorsed in decision # 374. However, it is important to mention that the draft Lebanese National Qualifications Framework (LNQF) developed in 2012, which includes general, and TVET education has never been endorsed.

### D.3.3 Quality assurance processes in VET

While the Lebanese National Qualifications Framework (LNQF) developed in 2012 has not been endorsed yet, the National Qualifications Framework for Technical vocational education and training has been developed within the National Strategic Framework for TVET and endorsed with a Ministerial Decision issued this year, as previously mentioned, with the full description of the various descriptors including knowledge, skills, competencies, life skills, digital skills and language skills.

Currently, the DGVTE is the responsible for quality assurance of the whole TVET system in terms of students' appraisal, teachers' evaluation, and accreditation of TVET providers whether public or private.

For the students, appraisal occurs in form of end of year examinations for progress to the following years or levels. The tests are carried out all at the same time, at the end of each year for all students, but the methodology of preparation and the objectives behind the assessment remain traditional, and lack the reference to testing applied knowledge. In the new NFSF strategy, there are clear suggestions that all students or trainees enrolled in IVET and CVET have interest in being professionally assessed and certified by a recognized certification body to increase their chances of being employed and better remunerated.

For the teachers, there are laws that govern the training, and evaluation of teachers and service providers but none of the laws are being implemented. Delivering modules in construction in the specific frame of ProVTE, are certified by a third party assessor, APAVE, as described earlier.

In that regards, UNICEF with the DGTVE is working on developing self-evaluation criteria for TVET institutes and schools and a guideline/manual that defines the self-evaluation process, how it should be performed, the axes of evaluation and the evaluation criteria. The guideline/manual for self-evaluation will be published soon and piloting with 13 TVET schools and institutes will take place prior to distributing it to all.

Regarding the VET schools, all public and private VET institutes/schools are obliged to send the names of their students at the beginning of each year to the directorate general, so as to have the students sit for the public examinations and obtain official diplomas. However, regarding the accelerated training, this is not compulsory for the private schools.

For the accelerated vocational trainings, there is limited quality assurance due to the proliferation of the service providers, namely through the LCRP framework, and the relevant ministries governing their operations. Currently, official diplomas and certificates are provided by the Directorate General of TVET, the Ministry of Agriculture and the National Vocational Training Centre. The National Employment Office stamps the certificates issued by the NGOs that receive financial support from the Office. However, there are no common criteria adopted by the diplomas and certificates' providers, thus it is difficult to ensure quality assurance mechanisms for the accelerated vocational training.

#### D.3.4 Creating and updating VET content

The Department of Curricula and Education Techniques at the DGVTE is responsible for designing and updating VET programmes and curricula. The department also specifies the teaching methodology and proposes the official examination questions and forms. To date, some curricula remain outdated, and if updated, not developed on competency-based standards, and nor responding to the labour market demand. Additionally, there has been limited involvement of the private sector in the curricula development process.

The initiatives undertaken by the international organizations such as IECD, UNICEF, and GIZ provide pilot experiences that can be replicated and endorsed at a national level, which involve assessment of labour market to identify skills needed, develop the training curricula, based on competency standards with the involvement of the private sector ( the experience of sector skills council envisioned in the national strategic framework), training the teachers on the new curricula and integrating more practical learning ( higher ratio of practical to theoretical learning). The sector skills councils that will be established will have an important contribution to VTE content, by confirming occupations and developing national occupational standards, confirming competence (qualifications) standards, guiding the assessment and certification of competences, and orienting the activities of the schools through private representation in the school boards.

The NSF action plan also entails the establishment of Sector Skills Councils. Also, a private sector committee has been established by the Association of automobile importers to work with UNICEF and the DGTVE on the development of the Cars Maintenance and Repair. The main aim is to provide information on the trends and policies shaping the sector along the employers' needs in terms of skills and competences to capture such trends and opportunities for the future. The private sector TVET committees are considered as advisory bodies for the Minister of Education and Higher Education, the Higher Council for Vocational and Technical Education and the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education, mainly in linking TVET education to Labour market needs and identifying skills and competences for the different professions.

### D.3.5 EU key competences

Currently, these EU competences are not well reflected in the VET programmes, as previously mentioned in the different sections abovementioned.

### D.3.6 Policies to strengthen quality assurance

The National Strategic Framework includes the implementation of the national qualifications system for TVET, in addition to supporting the DGVTE in granting the Department of Curricula and Education Techniques the needed autonomy to adapt international standards and best practices to the Lebanese context, design curricula and assessment with a competency based approach, and establish sector skills council to jointly work with the Department on identify the skills needed by economic sector and develop the curricula to address the skills need.

## II. Summary and analytical conclusions

### 1. Policy challenges

*Lack of Investment in Teachers' Professional Development* – There has not been a significant change in the teaching and learning conditions since the last Torino process review. There has not been a comprehensive evaluation of the teachers yet to identify their needs and challenges, be it in limited exposure to work, out-dated competences or lack of professional development. The teachers vary in their academic background and a significant number of such teachers are recent university and TS graduates, without adequate work experience that qualify them to perform their duties properly at VET schools<sup>105</sup>.

*Lack of Investment in systematic tracer studies for TVET Graduates:* Aside from the tracer study conducted by UNICEF, there are not Tracer studies at national level for TVET graduates, that officially indicate the enrolment rate, success rate in examinations and number employed or found job in the market relevant to their specialties. The different labour market assessments conducted to date identified skills mismatch, high unemployment rate among youth, reflecting an inadequate supply of graduates, over supply of university graduates but shortage in skilled VET graduates and in particular fields.

*Variation in Support for Curricula Upgrading and Implementation:* The approach followed by the different organizations in curricula updating is similar, competency based, as indicated in the NSF. However, the international organizations have kind of followed different approaches, competency based, with some variation in the implementation, which may add a further layer to the existing challenges and weaknesses in the learning methods as well as evaluation of the learning methods afterwards.

*Need to strengthen the Monitoring and Evaluation of the Teaching & Learning by the DGVTE for the public and private schools:* The Division of Education Monitoring and Orientations is the one responsible for monitoring and supervising the work of the private schools in addition to public schools. Within its mandate, the Division issues license or approval for setting up the private schools, based on inspection visits, and acquires list of the students enrolled in the programs and degrees in these schools. The department of controls and examinations also performs inspection visits to check on the teaching environment, students, and the infrastructure of the school. However, due to the shortage of human resources in the Division, the inspection visits are not carried out and thus monitoring is only limited to providing lists of students who are enrolled in the institutes/schools and those who are candidates for national exams, adding that each school should provide each year the names of the teaching and the administrative staffs.

### 2. Factors contributing to policy challenges

The limited financial resources allocated to TVET institutes/schools from the DGTVET, hinders the investment in upgrading the infrastructure of the institutes/schools and equipping them to provide

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<sup>105</sup> UNESCO, Work Based Learning Study: Reviewing Work Based Learning Programme for Young People in Lebanon, WARD association, October 2018:  
<http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LB.pdf>

better practical trainings. But above all, it hinders the further investment in upgrading the teaching skills of the VET teachers to better accompany the trends in the labour market and improve their teaching performance and methods.

The evaluation system for monitoring and assessing teachers' effectiveness has not undergone any significant changes since the last Torino Process review in 2016. The method of evaluation is more qualitative and subjective, based on the evaluators' (directors of technical institutes and schools in that case) own perspectives and general consideration of factors such as teaching methods, interaction, and adherence to curricula agenda.

The limited financial and human resources have not only impacted the teachers' development but also hindered further monitoring and evaluation of the teaching/learning process in both private and public institutes/schools. This is mainly due to the shortage of human resources that can-do regular inspection for all the TVET institutions.

When it comes to the modernization of the curricula, the variation in the implementation of the approach, given the existing weaknesses in the process of curricula updating may have added further challenges, also provided that the human resources in the technical department and the curricula development committees have not had capacity building exposure and support in this regards. There are different donors and organizations working on supporting the TVET system, but the institutional capacity remains in need of further support to coordinate all such initiatives.

### **3. Solutions and progress with implementation**

The National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocational Education and Training in Lebanon anticipates the improvement of the human resource management system for the TVET sector, training instructors on pedagogical and technical skills. Within these building blocks, actions will focus on providing standard pedagogical training certificates for all instructors, train them through in company training every two years through public-private partnerships and linking performance with financial rewards.

However, the evaluation methodology for teachers remain unclear, especially as how to conduct the evaluation and how it will be carried out, as well as who will conduct it.

### **4. Recommendations**

#### **Provide Incentives to Teachers through Career & Salary Scales**

This would be something similar to the human resource development strategies utilised in the private sector, involving compensation & benefits along with setting salary ranges. For that to happen, a comprehensive review and assessment of the teachers is required, more of job analysis to identify the activities and responsibilities assumed by the teachers, history of performance, educational and work experience, trainings undertaken, comparison to the required tasks and then needs for improvement. In parallel, a review of the salary scales and compensation should be done and matched with accordingly, linking them, on a points basis with the number of trainings undertaken and the performance of the teacher. This would provide incentives for teachers to engage in upgrading their qualifications and engage in continuous learning enabling them to be promoted to better positions.

Engage in Institutional Capacity Building for the DGVTE to improve provision and governance of its activities: This would require a holistic review of the current operations of the DGVTE, prioritising the areas that need improvement in terms of teachers' development, monitoring and evaluation and data collection systems, working through participatory approach to build capacities of current staff and mobilise additional resources, be it from other departments within DGVTE or from the Ministry to address these issues and improve internal efficiency.

# BUILDING BLOCK E: GOVERNANCE AND FINANCING OF VET

## E.1: Institutional arrangements

### E.1.1 Effectiveness of institutional and governance arrangements

The governance of the VET system has not changed since the last two years, in terms of having the DGVTE, the concerned directorate general within the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), the sole body responsible for decision making and monitoring all related VET issues. However, there has been more involvement of the MEHE through collaboration with the different international organizations as part of the support provided based on the National Strategic Framework issued on 2018. Additionally, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education also re-activated the Higher VET Council, which represents an important step as it was not very active in the previous years. The Higher VET council convened once, in October 2018, with the presence of 12 members representing different ministries, local organizations and economic organizations. It should be noted that the term of the Council that met has expired a long time ago and it is necessary to issue now a presidential decree to form the members of the Council according to the decree of its establishment.

Another important step has been recently undertaken by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Advisory Councils in the public TVET institutes/schools based. The decision is based on a resolution issued in the year 2000, which enforces that every public VET institute or school has to establish an advisory council comprising the following members: Institute/school Director, Representative from administrative body of the institute/school, Representative from the teaching body of the institute/school, three to nine representatives of productive and service economic sectors (employers) relevant to the specialties available at the institute/school. The Council's members are appointed once for two years and the council has to convene at least once every two months or when needed, whereby recommendations are sent to DGVTE to take action accordingly. How these Advisory Council will fit within the overall strategy is still unknown, but they can feed into the future sector skills council, whereby socio-economic contexts are taken into consideration for the different geographical regions and can serve as facilitator to implementing recommendations from the sector skills council. But again, the main objective is to help the DGVTE have more monitoring and knowledge of the various issues nationwide and be able to address the needs as recommended.

International organizations such as UNICEF, GIZ-ProVTE, and IECD are working within the same vision of the National Strategic Framework, and all for improving the quality of the VET system in Lebanon, alongside presence of a more flexible DGVTE management. However, each of these organizations has their own approach, modality of work and target when it comes to the activities. While diversity is healthy and positive, it is at the same time creating more complications for the VET system. This is mainly due to the weak management capacities of the DGVTE to coordinate effectively among these different organizations and ensure a common ground to build on. For example, IECD worked on piloting two specialties in a process adopted in France, while GIZ-ProVTE is working on upgrading training curricula on particular topic using competency-based approach, but also certifying the implementation through third party including teachers. From its side, UNICEF is working on the modernization of the qualification system, curricula development, introduction of life skills, education management information system and self-evaluation programs including capacity building components. In addition, ILO is focusing on capacity building on CBT, skills anticipation, vocational training management, among other activities planned related to accreditation of private sector, testing and certification, and sector skills council formation.

Additionally, ILO in partnership with MoA and FAO developed 5 DACUM charts for occupations identified in demand as per the study conducted in 2018. These included Agriculture Machinery Repairer, Irrigation system installer, Poultry Producer, Hydroponic Farmer, Livestock and Dairy Producer. Five Technical Committees (TCs) have been formed in cooperation with the MOA for the development of Operating procedures for each. Memberships consist of employers, workers and curriculum developer, and DACUM experts from relevant industry. The process included workshops analysis to drag out the knowledge, skills and attitude for the listed duties of each occupation, develop the performance criteria/ assessment standards for every sub-tasks/elements based on the DACUM

competency charts. The outcome will be used for designing and developing of training standards, curricula, learning materials, and competency-based assessment guides for MoA BT courses relevant to each occupation.

The results of all these different efforts made by the international organisations are yet to be evaluated but at the same time, given the heavy centralisation of the VET system, a weak management would reduce the effectiveness of such initiatives and the overlook on the regional context or socio-economic contexts while undergoing such reform and upgrading. Additionally, the coordination with other ministries remain weak, and limited to the individual efforts of these organizations. Now that a new director is in charge, and wanting to strengthen decision-making, it is important to provide institutional support so as to enable better accompanying of the various reforms and initiatives with good management.

### E.1.2 Accountability, leadership and control

As indicated in the section above, the DGVTE is the sole decision maker as it monitors all VET related issues. Given the nature of its centralised system, the VET providers including the institutes/schools directors, the teachers, and the students, the VET providers are accountable to the DGVTE for the quality of their work, by sending annual reports, names of students to sit for the exams and their results as well as information on the teaching and administrative bodies. This is still being done in the same way as in the previous years without any noticeable changes or any decision taken regarding the performance of the VET institutes/schools or their administrative and teaching bodies.

When it comes to governance regarding accelerated vocational trainings, provided over certain number of hours (between 15 and 144 hours over up to three months period, covering both theoretical and practical training<sup>106</sup>) for specific topics by different national and international organizations within the framework of the LCRP plan, there is still lack of coordination, functions and responsibilities between different ministries despite having their representatives on board of different entities such as the NVTC and NEO. Added to that is the governance in terms of the role and mission of the Higher Council for VET, the umbrella for the TVET sector and the main advisor on the sector.

With the aim of standardizing the approach and provision of the these non-formal market based skills training, ILO, with support from the Netherlands, has launched a process of mapping private TVET private providers accredited by DGT VET and active in five economic sectors including health, agro-food, public infrastructure, hospitality, and printing and packaging. The mapping would review their training practices and applied accreditation system and will serve to propose an upgraded system. In line with NSF building block 4. It feeds into strengthening DGTET's capacity to manage and regulate this sector.

The Higher Council for VET, which was formed by a presidential decree to operate as an advisory body for the DGVTE, only convened once. The role of this council is to offer advice on proposed laws, budgets, and policies and strategic development plans including the opening of new public or private institutes/schools, approving budget, appointing technical committees for particular topics, or any other matter related in any way to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. However, new members were invited to the meeting by initiative taken by the Minister, but so far this membership is only being proposed but hasn't been put in place. The higher Council meeting included the Labour Union, the Association of Lebanese Industrialist (ALI), the Chamber of Commerce of Beirut & Mount Lebanon, the Economic & Social Council, the Syndicate of Hotels, the Technical institute of Dekwene, the Amliyye VET institute in addition to the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Industry and the DGTVE. In its proposal, UNICEF proposed that the Council includes the Association of Lebanese Industrialist, the Syndicate of private Hospitals, the Syndicate of Contractors and the Labour Union to represent the 4 private sector members in the Council. The higher council for VET should also have the role of accountability, based on an efficient monitoring system, to take decisions that would improve the performance and quality of the VET.

While the DGVTE is the leader when it comes to VET related issues, its leadership and control on vocational training aspect is to a certain extent weak. There is little coordination with official training

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<sup>106</sup> [https://unevoc.unesco.org/wtb/worldtvtdatabase\\_lbn\\_en.pdf](https://unevoc.unesco.org/wtb/worldtvtdatabase_lbn_en.pdf)

providers such as the NVTC and NEO. This becomes a challenge when linking education to employability as there needs to be effective coordination so as to first avoid overlap in the training courses provisioned, organize trainings as per the needs of labour market in the different regions, and provide job matching through link with NEO for youth employability. In principle, the NVTC assigns training topics, based on labour market demand, and communicate with the DGVTE to develop the training curricula, but currently this is not being effective nor implemented. UNICEF however, has in its plans strengthening the management organization of the NVTC to take on a better effective role. There is even a weak link between the NVTC and NEO although they have common members on board and are affiliated with the Ministry of Labour. NEO, based on its mission, should have an advisory role, through policies and studies, which would feed into the work and plans of NVTC. But, this is not being the case.

Based on all of the above, the leadership of the DGVTE is still weak across the different levels discussed, and there is a need for Higher VET council to be more active as this can provide the control and accountability arrangements, feeding into the work of the DGVTE, as well as promote more coordination with other ministries. For accountability, there should be measures put in place, to ensure proper flow of work, but also to be able to take corrective actions in case of problems or when roles are unfulfilled that can jeopardise the coordination and work.

### E.1.3 Governance reforms

The National Strategic Framework for VET in Lebanon includes the support of the provision of VET for improving the HR management system, particularly support the capacities of the VET teachers and trainers. However, there is no enough clear mentioning of the provision of support to strengthen the institutional capacities of the DGVTE to have a better governance and leadership roles, thus remains a need to be tackled.

The establishment and organization of the DGVTE was done through different laws or decrees, the most important being the decree # 839 issues in 1996 outlining the main functions and organizational structure of the DGVTE. The role remains heavily centralised with little flexibility for the institutes and schools to develop partnerships with private sector or mobilise different resources.

When it comes to the administration and its organization, there is understaffing in various departments that constraints the capacity of the DGVTE to plan, implement, and monitor the different programs and plans. This was confirmed through the different interviews with the representatives from DGVTE where for example the Department of Examinations and Monitoring is understaffed and thus cannot inspect all public and private institutes/schools, as well as the division of Counselling and Orientation which has only 3 staff members whereas the need is for at least 16, according to the same representatives.

## E.2: Involvement of non-state actors

### E.2.1 Distribution of responsibilities between state and non-state actors in VET

In the previous Torino Process Review, there was a lack of proper and efficient coordination between public and private sector especially in linking education to the employment and Labour market. However, this has changed over the past two years, witnessing more involvement of private sector, through their representatives be it syndicates, chamber of commerce and industry or others. This has been possible through a push from the international organizations, within the framework of the national strategy. Sector Skills council is mentioned within the NSF. UNICEF and GIZ-ProVTE are working on the involvement of the employers in their programs through TVET employers committees not yet formalized. For example, the GIZ-ProVTE is working with the Syndicate of Contractors on defining the occupations, designing the curricula, and administering the trainings of teachers and students. UNICEF is working on cars maintenance and repair with the association of automobile importers and the Association of Industrialists. There are more sector TVET committees envisioned within industrial, services and health sectors.

On the other hand, the Association of Lebanese Industrialist, being represented in the board of directors of the NVTC has also played active role in the trainings carried out by the Center.

There is improvement, through the implementation of the National Strategic Framework, and establishment of the sector skills council. While still at early stages, it represents an important step forward towards the involvement of the non-state actors. In fact, dialogue has started in April 2019

over establishing sector skills council, under the leadership of MEHE and with key stakeholders. ILO committed towards establishing these councils, through developing concept note and policy brief on international practices for Sector Skills Council development. Coordination meetings between MEHE – DGT VET and its partners were organized during September and November, which concluded the need for additional consultations to be held on the SSCs, specifically with employers and key government institutions in order to establish SSC. Accordingly, a workshop is proposed focusing on i) concepts and international examples, ii) current arrangements in Lebanon, and iii) next steps, including possible temporary arrangements. The workshop, facilitated by ILO, was planned for December 2019, however following the political unrest it is postponed to second week of February 2020 to be held under the patronage of MEHE-DGT VET.

When it comes to the local and international non-governmental organizations involved in the provision of accelerated vocational trainings, there is little coordination and organization, though they are part of the Working Groups responsible for the organization and implementation of the Lebanese Crisis Response Plan. Trainings are conducted, based on their own Labour market assessment without referrals to the DGVTE and using their own trainers and curricula. Thus, more organization needs to be implemented, in terms of curricula development, trainers' profile and link with private sector.

## E.2.2 Policies in support of participation of non-state actors

The National Strategic Framework is the main policy developed for the VET system in Lebanon and includes the establishment of sector skills council, as well as implementation of the NQF, and activation of the Higher council for VET as previously discussed in the above sections. The framework is based on the need to have more involvement of private sector and promotion of public private partnerships.

Moreover, the inclusion of representative of the Economic & Social Council as well as other syndicates (such as Syndicate of Hospitals, Syndicate of Contractors) and Union of Labour in the Higher VET Council is also positively viewed in the direction of public-private partnership. As per the Decree No.5768 issued first in 1960, the Higher Vet Council should have a President, 11 members, 5 from the private sector and 6 from the ministries.

Yet there is still more work to be done, given the existing gap in dialogue and coordination between the public and private sectors. Trust remains a critical issue, as the private sector has little trust in the public sector and perceives the latter as more complex and inefficient. The presence of international organizations played an important part in reducing this gap, but there is a need to have more dialogue, and more arrangements in place, such as providing incentives (tax exemption, support on legal employment, etc..) that can stimulate further the private sector to collaborate, not only in sector councils, but also in provision of internships and apprenticeships while feeding information in Labour market surveys that help in identifying the trends and gaps to initiate action towards employability of the active population.

## E.3: VET budget

### E.3.1 Expenditure planning, VET budget formation and execution

Expenditures and financial planning for the VET remained the same in the last couple of years, without recording any changes in the arrangements, remaining a challenge. The General Public Budget is the main financing source for the public VET, with its management controlled by the DGVTE. The secondary sources of funding include tuition and examination fees collected from the students as well as some donations by national or international organizations. Through annual reports, directors of VET institutes/schools submit their annual budget along with requirements through standard budget item forms. Once collected, the directorate consolidates all requests and submits them after adding the needs of the central administration to the Ministry, which in turn apply some adjustments as deemed required and submit them accordingly to the Ministry of finance for final approval. As per the law, the Council of Ministers should submit the overall government budget to the parliament, who in turn approves or adjust the budget accordingly, all in perceived transparent manner.

Any donation or identification of additional sources of funding require the approval of the Council of Ministers, which again represents a governance challenge for proper budgeting and planning to match the demand of the programs and trainings.

## E.3.2 Policies to improve expenditure planning and budgeting in VET

There are no policies yet put in place to improve the processes of expenditures planning and budget formation.

## E.4: Mobilisation of resources for VET

### E.4.1 Sources and mechanisms of funding for VET

**The main sources of funding for the DGVTE** remains the government that approves or allocates the budget for the VET, and some flexibility is provided in terms of grants/donations, conditional upon approval of the Council of Ministers. **When it comes to mechanisms of funding**, there is little flexibility for the **institutes/schools to mobilise additional resources to meet their demands. According to the DGVTE, the annual budget allocated is 1 milliard Lebanese Liras<sup>107</sup>. In 2018, the annual budget of the DGVTE was 218,141,412,000 L.L, accounting for 0.91% or less than 1% of the total Governmental budget, which was 23,891,223,583,000 L.L.<sup>108</sup> Additionally, the budget is set based on that of the previous years, adjusting slightly the costs but the final budget and its approval are cleared by the Finance Committee at the Parliament, which can reduce further the budgets as per the total governmental budget. The final budget is published in the Official Journal, according to the different budget lines: Consumables, Stationaries, Salaries & Pensions, contribution to joint projects and other expenses.**

For the institutes/schools, there are revenues generated from the tuition fees, of up to 400,000 L.L/student/ year. The fees acquired are allocated to the internal fund of school from which stationaries and equipment are bought, a percentage allocated to the “schools contribution fund” for assisting the institutes/schools in need , and percentage goes to the internal fund. There isn't any contribution from the private sector and grants to individual institutes/schools can only be accepted after getting approval from the Council of Ministers.

However, there is no information on the percentage of the budget in terms of sources, percentages from the central administration, donor contribution, and tuition fees. Some schools are allowed to generate income, such as the Hospitality Institute of Dekweneh, which is also a training center for students majoring in Hospitality. Usually meals are prepared at the institute and a percentage of the cost (70 % cost of food, 30% profit) is allocated to the institute fund, but as indicated, not enough to cover expenses.

### E.4.2 Diversification and mobilisation of funding for VET

There are not yet policies put in place to diversify the funding resources, and thus remain the same since the last Torino process review.

## E.5: Allocation and use of resources in VET

### E.5.1 Patterns of resource allocation

This goes in line with the facts mentioned in section E 4.1. Additionally, as stated in the previous Torino Process review, salaries and benefits for DGVTE personnel (teachers, workers and administrators) accounting for 94% of the overall budget, barely having any flexibility in managing additional activities be it on regional or national level. Internally, the budget is allocated in way to purchase needed equipment for the institutes/schools, stationery for organization of final examinations, financing of the joint projects with private sector (a private sector offers the land or the building and the DGVTE pays for the rest), and investment in hospitality schools (subsidizing school activities).

### E.5.2 Policies to ensure adequacy of resources for VET and equity in their allocation

So far, there are not policies forecasted for improving the financial planning and budgeting for the VET nor the assurance of equity in the allocation.

<sup>107</sup> Interview with Mr. Ghassan Chaito.

<sup>108</sup> Input from Mr. Mufid El khouri from DGVTE

### III. Summary and analytical conclusions

#### 1. Policy challenges

*Weak Enforcement of Control & Accountability* – While the DGVTE is the leader when it comes to VET related issues; there are weaknesses in leading and controlling the vocational training aspect. The main challenge is that there is weak coordination with official training providers such as the NVTC and NEO, which renders the control even weaker in terms of checking the quality of such trainings, the link to the labour market and other issues. Yet there is still more work to be done, given the existing gap in dialogue and coordination between the public and private sectors. Trust remains a critical issue, as the private sector has little trust in the public sector and perceives the latter as complex and inefficient. The Higher Council for VET should also have the role of accountability, based on an efficient monitoring system, to take decisions that would improve the performance and quality of the VET. In the last two years, the Council met only once and members are still not yet fully involved or active vis-à-vis the mission of the Council, which in any case should be revised according to the latest developments in the VET sector.

*Limited Budget and Restrictions in Mobilization of Resources* – The General Public Budget is the main financing source for the public VET, with its management controlled by the DGVTE. Any donation or identification of additional sources of funding from the schools require the approval of the Council of Ministers, which again represents a governance challenge for proper budgeting and planning to match the demand of the programs and trainings.

#### 2. Factors contributing to policy challenges

The centralisation prevailing in the public sector and the neglect of the government support to VET education in the past years has led to weakness of the DGVTE in terms of management and hindered any initiative that the management can take given the budget restrictions and lack of flexibility in mobilising resources. International organizations have stepped in with a package of technical and financial support to improve the quality of VET education starting with strategic framework on to updating and designing new curricula, involving private sector and working on the overall implementation of the framework. This is of added value to the system, but the proliferation of support for one entity, DGVTE and having each with a different approach further revealed the weakness in the inability of the DGVTE to manager and lead on the reform process, given also the weak human resource capacities available. No formal trainings have been provisioned for the management team of the DGVTE and the administration thus remained constant while witnessing changes around them.

Regarding financial resources, the DGVTE budget allocation still represents less than 1% of the Government's budget and any donation or additional resources identified require approval of the Council of Ministers. This crippled the capacity of the DGVTE to take further steps such as investment in equipment or workshops /labs that would increase practical knowledge of the students. Additionally, the limited dialogue with the private sector added further challenge in promoting public private partnerships that would allow for private sector investment in upgrading the workshops/labs. Trust remains a critical issue, as the private sector has little trust in the public sector and perceives the latter as more complex and inefficient.

#### 3. Solutions and progress with implementation

The international organizations, through National Strategic Framework, have contributed to stimulating the interest of the private sector to take part in the reform process, through sector councils, which are in progress of formation and formalization. The Syndicate of Contractors and Association of Importers of Hybrid Cars have stepped on board and are currently working with UNICEF and GIZ on identifying occupations, developing training curricula, and internship programs for the students. This is considered a major step in the direction of public private partnerships. But in terms of leadership and resource mobilization, there hasn't been any progress in that.

International organizations played an important part in reducing the gap between public and private sector, but there is a need to have more dialogue, and more arrangements in place

#### 4. Recommendations

Provide Incentives to Private Sector for More Involvement in VET education

This can include providing incentives such as tax exemption, support on legal employment, ease of administrative regulation and bureaucracy in businesses, etc. This can stimulate further the private

sector to collaborate, not only in sector councils, but also in provision of internships and apprenticeships while feeding information in Labour market surveys that help in identifying the trends and gaps to initiate action towards employability of the active population.

Advocating for flexibility in budget and resource mobilization for the DGVTE

The Higher Council for VET can play a big role in that direction, lobbying with government for more allocation of resources but moreover in having flexibility in accessing additional funds, at regional level as well as national level, either from private sector or other resources to invest in infrastructure and human resource development of the administration and management of the DGVTE.

## 2. SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 2.1 Main findings per building block

The country's context in which the TVET exists has been witnessing various changes as result of different factors, mainly of which originate from the prolonged Syrian Crisis. Today, the Government of Lebanon, in its latest Syrian Crisis Plan Document updated in 2019 estimates that there are more than 1.5 million displaced Syrians in Lebanon, with 950,334 Displaced Syrians registered, 180,000 Palestinian refugees, and 28,800 Syrian Palestinian refugees fleeing Syria.<sup>109</sup> Poverty wise, around 28.5% of the Lebanese, 69% of the displaced Syrians, 65% of the Palestinians and 89% of Syrian Palestinians live below the poverty line, with less than \$3.84 a day<sup>110</sup>.

Increased poverty rate underlies the increase in unemployment, with some groups of the active population unable to find a job and secure an income for their living. Today, the Lebanese labour market continues to be characterized by high unemployment rates. While World Bank estimates the national unemployment rate to be 11%, the Ministry of Labour reports an even higher estimate, 25% national unemployment rate with 37% for youth under 35 years of age, and 18% for women<sup>111</sup>.

Informality in businesses and employment became a significant feature and one that is growing in some sectors more than others are. With the latest Syrian Crisis, the employment of the displaced occurred entirely in the informal sector, according to the World Bank's estimate, increasing the rate of informality by 10% across all economic sectors.<sup>112</sup> This has resulted in reduced job opportunities, reduced level of job types offered, and depression of wages in many sectors, particularly for low-skilled workers. The informality is affecting more acutely females.

The new Lebanese government was formed on January 31st, 2019. It includes all major political parties and mirrors the new parliament, which was elected based on a proportional law that was a novelty for Lebanon. The new government places economic growth at the heart of its strategy and commitment for the next five years. As part of this commitment, the Council for Economic Development & Reconstruction Investment (CEDRE) Conference was held on 6 April, 2018 in Paris with an aim to get international support for an investment program to boost Lebanon's economy. At the Conference the government presented the Capital Investment Program (CIP) and its vision for stability and sustainable long-term growth and job creation. During the Conference international donors pledged USD 10.2 billion in loans and USD 860 million in grants for investment in infrastructure projects, such as: transport, water sanitation, electricity, telecommunications, waste management, industry, and tourism.

It is expected that the CIP will help to kick-start the economic growth, create jobs and reduce unemployment. However, the implementation and disbursement of the money from the donors has not started yet. The main reason is that the operationalization of these funds is conditioned upon completion of series of reforms at different levels, such as increasing transparency, reducing deficit and cutting public expenditure.

Given a brief overview of the current country context, the main findings from the Torino Process Review for 2018-2019 are summarized as follows:

#### For Building Block B

**Existence of Skills Gap and mismatch of skills:** The informal sector has even further impact on women who face exploitation and discrimination, more precisely in rural areas where women undertake productive tasks as part of their natural role, without any recognition or even remuneration, as they usually undertake these tasks as part of their social role, being wife or daughter (family workers) not as an economic activity. The prevalent skills gap affects more the youth population,

<sup>109</sup> Ibid

<sup>110</sup> Ibid

<sup>111</sup> Arab Weekly Digest, Interview with Minister of Labour, Beirut, August 2017

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

especially in rural areas where access to education is lower than in urban areas, and job opportunities are naturally lower. Refugees are more vulnerable to the above challenges given the legal restrictions regarding right to work, and the few sectors in which they are allowed to work in.

**Lack of Entrepreneurship Education Integration in the TVET System:** The promotion of entrepreneurship and self-employment among VET systems remain a challenge as the entrepreneurial skills are still missing from the TVET official curricula. There is more focus on promoting entrepreneurship namely for youth pursuing university studies rather than VET students. VET students do not have the motivation nor the requirements to set-up their own businesses, given also the lack of support opportunities available for them, since they come from economically less advantaged backgrounds. Interventions in supporting promotion of entrepreneurship remain limited to non-governmental initiatives undertaken by international organizations such as UNICEF, IECD, UNESCO, and others. There is commitment to integrate the Entrepreneurial Learning Framework already developed by ETF, ILO, and CRDP, but to date, awaits concrete steps towards such adoption.

#### For Building Block C:

**Poor Attractiveness of the VET system for Youth:** There is a poor perception of the population regarding the vocational education and the misconception linking TVET with academic failure and poor-quality education. This is evident in the low enrolment rate, estimated at 27.6% of the total number of students in the secondary education level, according to UNESCO statistics in 2017, increasing by 14% from the previous year<sup>113</sup>.

**Low access to education for female, non-Lebanese and People with Disabilities:** Female youth, specifically non-Lebanese ones are at a higher disadvantage of accessing learning opportunities, whether academic or vocational. The reason is that 76% of the Syrian Households are categorised as poor with 58% of those living below minimum survival level. This forces the households to prioritise education of boys over girls, preventing them from continuing their education and triggering them into early marriage, or getting exposed to sexual and gender-based violence. For the Lebanese females, the participation rate around 22% is lower when compared to male enrolment of around 34%<sup>114</sup>. But, above all, the participation of females is mostly in gender-oriented specialties such as nursing, services, artistic, hospitality and others, with lower presence in non-traditional industrial specialties such as electro-technique, mechanics or other. When it comes to people with disabilities, there are no statistics but the infrastructure missing from the institutes/schools as well as dedicated teachers and trainers further hinder their integration in the VET system.

**Limited Career Guidance and Orientation for Youth & VET Graduates:** Career guidance should be provided through the division of Orientation and Guidance within the DGVTE. Training for Improved Employability is provided through the National Employment Office, in addition to the GEOs set up in 23 VET institutes/schools. However, the Department of Orientation and Guidance is short of human resources to fulfil its role while the link between NEO and GEOs needs to be strengthened. Moreover, the labour market assessments conducted reveal a large gap in the relation with the private sector, as the latter is not fully aware of the NEO and its role, which represents a challenge in the communication and visibility of the office.

#### For Building Block D:

**Lack of Investment in Teachers' Professional Development:** There has not been a significant change in the teaching and learning conditions since the last Torino process review. There has not been a comprehensive evaluation of the teachers yet to identify their needs and challenges, be it in limited exposure to work, out-dated competences or lack of professional development. The teachers vary in their academic background and a significant number of such teachers are recent university and TS graduates, without adequate work experience that qualify them to perform their duties properly<sup>115</sup>.

**Lack of Investment in systematic tracer studies for TVET Graduates:** Aside from the tracer study to be conducted for MoA, there are not Tracer studies at national level for TVET graduates, that officially indicate the enrolment rate, success rate in examinations and number employed or found job

<sup>113</sup> UNESCO Stat: <http://uis.unesco.org/country/LB>

<sup>114</sup> Ibid

<sup>115</sup> UNESCO, Work Based Learning Study: Reviewing Work Based Learning Programme for Young People in Lebanon, WARD association, October 2018: <http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/FIELD/Beirut/images/Education/LB.pdf>

in the market relevant to their specialties. The different labour market assessments conducted to date identified skills mismatch, high unemployment rate among youth, reflecting an inadequate supply of graduates, over supply of university graduates but shortage in skilled VET graduates and in particular fields.

**Variation in Support for Curricula Upgrading and Implementation:** The approach followed by the different international organizations in curricula updating is similar, competency based, as indicated in the NSF. However, the international organizations have kind of followed different approaches, competency based, with some variation in the implementation, which may add a further layer to the existing challenges and weaknesses in the learning methods as well as evaluation of the learning methods afterwards.

**Need for Further Development of the Teaching & Learning by the DGVTE for the public and private schools:** The Division of Education Monitoring and Orientations is responsible for monitoring and supervising the work of the public and private institutes/schools. It supports the Ministry of Education in preparing the base, the file based on which a permit is provided, through ministerial decision, that permits an institute/school to start providing educational and training services. The institutes and schools are asked to present to the DGVTE on yearly basis all the information on the students, teachers and administrative staff. The division also performs inspection visits to check on the teaching environment, students, teachers and the infrastructure of the institute/school. However, due to the shortage of human resources in the division, the visits are not carried out and only the lists of students and teachers are submitted by the institute/school.

#### For Building Block E:

**Need for More Enforcement of Control & Accountability** – While the DGVTE is the leader when it comes to VET related issues; the leadership and control are weak on the vocational training aspect. There is little coordination with official training providers such as the NVTC and NEO, a weak link. Yet there is still more work to be done, given the existing gap in dialogue and coordination between the public and private sectors. Trust remains a critical issue, as the private sector has little trust in the public sector and perceives the latter as more complex and inefficient. The higher council for VET should also have the role of accountability, based on an efficient monitoring system, to take decisions that would improve the performance and quality of the VET. Up till now, it only met once and members are still not yet fully involved or comprehensive of the mission of the higher VET council.

**Limited Budget and Restrictions in Mobilization of Resources** – The General Public Budget is the main financing source for the public VET, with its management controlled by the DGVTE. Any donation or identification of additional sources of funding from the schools require the approval of the Council of Ministers, which again represents a governance challenge for proper budgeting and planning to match the demand of the programs and trainings.

## 2.2 Recommendations for action

The development and adoption of a National Strategic Framework for Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in Lebanon has been major milestone for the government, in its effort and commitment to improve the education and TVET system in Lebanon and increase employability of the active population. The action plan developed and the work that has been achieved to-date provides a clear picture of how the TVET system is evolving.

Throughout the review there existed some issues that required highlighting or shedding further light to have more attention, and ones which require consideration to integrate them in the already existing planning and implementation process, so as to have this process more comprehensive. The below points represent recommendations, mainly policy recommendations, that address the challenges and present ideas for solutions to mitigate such challenges.

Among the main recommendations for actions at policy levels, there are the following:

**Improve the business and skills acquisition environment.** Creating jobs requires economic growth, and this can be achieved through providing environment that can attract investments, and transform them into successful projects that generate growth and create jobs. Additionally, there should be lobbying for the government to work on a strategy (joined forces of the different ministries) for targeting the informal sector and ensuring proper working conditions for the workers and new entrants into the labour market. On the skills level, improving business environment also requires the

preparation and integration of skilled labour to accompany the growth. This should be done in close collaboration between private sector and vocational institutes/schools, through skills councils or other structures, but not only to identify current gap in skills, rather than to anticipate and prepare for the future (such as responding to the demand from the proposed projects in CEDRE, and then designing and developing the curricula accordingly). It should be done in a systematic way, prioritising the sectors with potential such as renewable energy or environmental sector or other, identifying the potential types of jobs that can be created, and then tailoring the programs to equip the youth with skills that would link them to such sectors.

**Prioritizing the Set-up of Labour Market Information System:** As the first step, Labour market information system should be prioritised and put in place, which will enable the TVET system identify the demands of the labour market and develop programs that target such demand. While this is a priority, more involvement of the private sector should occur, through cooperation in undertaking employers' surveys to properly identify the demand and highlight the gaps that need to be tackled. This would then translate into the establishment of sector councils to develop training programs that match the demand.

**Joining Forces with employers to emphasize and engage in internship and job creation:** A network should be established, via the GEOs to help youth access to internship opportunities but with continuous updates and higher reach of youth, through website or app that can inform the student of the opportunities, in terms of location and company profile. It should have free access along with messaging support to receive updates on the latest opportunities.

**Providing incentives for starting up new businesses for TVET Graduates as option for self-employment:** This would include identifying sectors with economic potential, regions witnessing harsh economic conditions, and reviewing the current government regulations to identify bottlenecks and simplify so as to act as incentives for starting up new businesses. The ministries of Trade, Labour, Industry, and Finance can provide certain incentives for SMEs and businesses who commit to increasing their workforce (and maintaining it) over the next 2 years. Such incentives can include exemptions from certain taxes or exemptions from the need to pay stamp duties upon the request of legal documents.

**Increase attractiveness of the VET through Success Stories:** There is a need to work on the attractiveness of the VET among the youth, through long-term planning and different approaches combined to achieve that. One approach is conducting awareness campaigns on the VET System, labour market trends and how VET can cater to the needs of the private sector and increase access of its graduates to labour market. This would require also paying particular attention to the low female enrolment and promoting education among women in non-traditional specialties, thus breaking stereotypes and increasing chances of generating income for them and their families. Identifying labour market trends and needs also requires an operating labour market information system, thus a pre-requisite for that. Increasing awareness for people with disabilities require upgrading in the infrastructure and curricula, which will be tackled through the strategic framework. Awareness campaigns should be carried out by the DGVTE but with input and support from the private sector, utilising the experience of private sector councils.

**Align and Strengthen Career Orientation & Guidance:** Close coordination should occur between the GEO offices at VET schools and the National Employment Office. A continuous referral system should be done, along with first ensuring linkages between the GEO themselves. Orientation for particular specialties should be done by the GEO and then referral of the graduate to NEO can occur upon graduation, where by NEO would have a strong network with private sector for matching and guiding graduates, based on assessment on the additional trainings they need to undertake for increasing their employability. Additionally, through linking with private sector directly or in collaboration with NEO, GEO can facilitate internship opportunities for the students. The common platform among GEO is needed first to exchange information on the potential existing opportunities and have students apply even if outside the region, so as to increase chances of employability and also exchange experiences with the different private sectors, identifying those cooperative and those that need more targeting in communication.

**Provide Incentives to Teachers through Career & Salary Scales:** This would be something similar to the human resource development strategies utilised in the private sector, involving compensation & benefits along with setting salary ranges. For that to happen, a comprehensive review and assessment of the teachers is required, more of job analysis to identify the activities and

responsibilities assumed by the teachers, history of performance, educational and work experience, trainings undertaken, comparison to the required tasks and then needs for improvement. In parallel, a review of the salary scales and compensation should be done and matched with accordingly, linking them, on a points basis with the number of trainings undertaken and performance. This would provide incentives for teachers to engage in upgrading their qualifications and engage in continuous learning enabling them to be promoted to better positions.

**Engage in Institutional Capacity Building for the DGVTE to improve provision and governance of its activities:** This would require a holistic review of the current operations of the DGVTE, prioritising the areas that need improvement in terms of teachers' development, monitoring and evaluation and data collection systems, working through participatory approach to build capacities of current staff and mobilise additional resources, be it from other departments or the Ministry to address these issues and improve internal efficiency.

**Provide Incentives to Private Sector for More Involvement in TVET education:** This can include providing incentives such as tax exemption, support for formal employment, ease of administrative regulation and bureaucracy in businesses, etc. This can stimulate further the private sector to collaborate, not only in sector councils, but also in provision of internships and apprenticeships while feeding information in labour market surveys that help in identifying the trends and gaps to initiate action towards employability of the active population. The UNESCO Regional Bureau for Education in the Arab States (UNESCO Beirut Office), in its latest workshop on enhancing institutional partnerships between TVET institutions and private sector 2019, has similarly listed several recommendations for partnership enhancing tools which can be further adopted, such as organizing national competitions to build partnerships with private sector, and establishing accredited system for standardization of terminologies in training system as well as accrediting trainers in different sectors as per international standards.

**Promote further Lifelong Learning Development Processes,** working with both private sectors and DGVTE and concerned ministries for further promoting lifelong learning as means of supporting further growth of SMEs and upskilling of the workforce. This should be done through different schemes and training processes, based on the input from the sector skills council, but also from the labour market information that would better identify the gaps and the sectors with further potential for growth, as a starting point.

**Advocating for flexibility in budget and resource mobilization for the DGVTE:** The Higher Council for TVET can play a big role in that direction, lobbying with government for more allocation of resources but moreover in having flexibility in accessing additional funds, at regional level as well as national level, either from private sector or other resources to invest in infrastructure and human resource development of the administration and management of the DGVTE.

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