TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (TVET) GENDER ASSESSMENT: FULL FINDINGS REPORT

USAID/West Bank and Gaza
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Contracted under GS00F280GA, Task Order 7200AA19M00017
Middle East & North Africa Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning Services Activity
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LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

NATIONAL LAWS AND POLICIES ................................................................. 23
TVET RELATED LAWS AND POLICIES .................................................. 23
RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT AND WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT ............ 24
INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS ................................... 24

SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS AND BELIEFS .............................................. 26

AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES ............................... 29
CONTEXTUAL CHALLENGES TO ACCESS AND TVET INSTITUTES INTERVENTIONS ........ 29
AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES TO ACCESS TVET AND EMPLOYMENT ................. 30

CROSS-CUTTING THEMES ........................................................................ 31
GBV/SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IN TVET INSTITUTIONS .......... 31
COVID-19 AND DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS .................................... 33
NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS AS VOICED BY FEMALE TVET STUDENTS AND GRADUATES .... 33
REASONS AND NEEDS FOR ACCESSING TVET ........................................ 33
WOMEN'S NEEDS FOR ACCESSING EMPLOYMENT ....................................... 34
MARKET DEMAND ..................................................................................... 35

CONCLUSIONS ......................................................................................... 38

RECOMMENDATIONS .................................................................................. 43
RECOMMENDATION BY DOMAIN .................................................................. 43
LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES ............... 43
SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS AND BELIEFS ........................................ 44
ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES ................................................................. 45
GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE ........................................... 46
COVID-19-RELATED REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS .................... 46
NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS ................................................................... 46
MARKET DEMANDS .................................................................................... 46

ANNEX 1: ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS ............................................................ 47
LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES: ................... 47
SOCIAL NORMS AND BELIEFS: ................................................................... 47
ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES: .................................................................. 47
GENERAL CONTEXT .................................................................................... 48
CROSS-CUTTING ......................................................................................... 48
1. GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE: 48
2. COVID-19/DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS ........................................ 48
3. NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS ............................................................. 48
4. JOB MARKET DEMANDS ......................................................................... 49

ANNEX 2: RESOURCES .............................................................................. 50

ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS ............................................ 54

ANNEX 4: COLLECTED DATA FROM TVET-INSTITUTES ................................. 56

ANNEX 5: ADDITIONAL DATA .................................................................... 57
### ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AQAC</td>
<td>Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASALA</td>
<td>Palestinian Businesswomen’s Association</td>
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<td>BWF</td>
<td>Business Women’s Forum</td>
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<td>CCI</td>
<td>Chambers of Commerce and Industry</td>
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<td>CIDAJ</td>
<td>Canadian International Development Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIPE</td>
<td>Center for International Private Enterprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>CNC</td>
<td>Computerized numerical control</td>
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<tr>
<td>COVID-19</td>
<td>Coronavirus disease 2019</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil society organization</td>
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<td>CVET</td>
<td>Continuous Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>DCA</td>
<td>Dan Church Aid</td>
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<td>DSPR</td>
<td>Department of Services to Palestinian Refugees</td>
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<td>Enabel</td>
<td>Belgian Development Agency</td>
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<td>ETF</td>
<td>European Training Foundation</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>ETVTC</td>
<td>Episcopal Technological and Vocational Training Center</td>
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<tr>
<td>FGD</td>
<td>Focus group discussions</td>
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<td>GDP</td>
<td>Gross domestic product</td>
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<td>GBV</td>
<td>Gender-based violence</td>
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<td>GIZ</td>
<td>German Technical Cooperation</td>
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<td>GRIT</td>
<td>Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Technical and Vocational Education and Training project</td>
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<tr>
<td>GROW</td>
<td>Generating Revenue Opportunities for Women and Youth in the West Bank project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHCT</td>
<td>Hisham Hijawi College of Technology</td>
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<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information, communication and technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labor Organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JISS</td>
<td>Jerusalem Industrial Secondary School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KAP</td>
<td>Knowledge, attitude and practice</td>
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</table>
KfW The German investment and development bank
LET Local employment and training
LWF Lutheran World Federation
MAS Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute
MENA MELS Middle East & North Africa Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning Services Activity
MOE Ministry of Education
MOEHE Ministry of Education and Higher Education (combined ministries during certain years)
MOHESR Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
MOL Ministry of Labor
MOSD Ministry of Social Development
MSI Management Systems International
MONE Ministry of National Economy
MOWA Ministry of Women's Affairs
NCA Norwegian Church Aid
NGO Non-governmental organization
NGO-VET League of Vocational Education and Training Institutes
NQF National Qualifications Framework
PBA Palestinian Business Men Association
PA Palestinian Authority
PCBS Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics
PFESP Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection
PFI Palestinian Federation of Industry
POC Palestinian Occupational Classification
PPU Palestine Polytechnic University
PTC Palestine Technical College
PWD Persons with disabilities
SME Small and medium-sized enterprise
SOW Scope of work
SVTC Salesian Vocational Training Center
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<th>Acronym</th>
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<tr>
<td>TVET</td>
<td>Technical and Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<td>TRP</td>
<td>Torino Process Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>VET</td>
<td>Vocational Education and Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>VSS</td>
<td>Vocational secondary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VTC</td>
<td>Vocational Training Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNRWA</td>
<td>United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USAID</td>
<td>United States Agency for International Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBG</td>
<td>West Bank and Gaza</td>
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<tr>
<td>WBL</td>
<td>Work-based learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>WWD</td>
<td>Women with Disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>YMCA</td>
<td>Young Men’s Christian Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>YWCA</td>
<td>Young Women’s Christian Association</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) West Bank and Gaza mission (USAID/WBG) under the Middle East & North Africa Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning Services Activity (MENA MELS) has engaged Management Systems International (MSI) to conduct a rapid intersectional gender assessment related to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in the West Bank and Gaza.

OBJECTIVES

In conducting this assessment, the primary objectives were as follows:

- Assess the extent of gender mainstreaming in TVET-related policies and organizational procedures and practices in the West Bank and Gaza (WBG).
- Identify current gaps and challenges in female enrollment in targeted TVET institutions, private sector female employment and local cultural norms towards female engagement in TVET programs.
- Provide recommendations on how to better mainstream gender in TVET programs and ensure increased enrollment of females and enhanced employment opportunities in the private sector.

METHODOLOGY

The assessment team collected and analyzed secondary data and conducted supplementary data collection through research into TVET institutes and gender issues, and through interviews with key informants and focus groups. In total, the assessment team consulted 125 people for the study. The team also collected data from 11 League of Vocational Education and Training (NGO-VET) institutes in WBG to enrich the findings with recently collected data. The interviews, focus group discussions (FGD), and data collection was conducted from January 29 through February 22, 2022.

MAIN FINDINGS

LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

In the WBG, there is a clear lack of relevant national policies and regulations and the absence of a legal framework for TVET. The newly established TVET Commission, with participation from the TVET sector, has plans to develop the new laws and strategy; however, gender-responsive laws and plans are still needed to provide a foundation for any such laws and strategy. The League of Vocational Education and Training Institutes (NGO-VET), a network of 16 non-governmental TVET institutes, will help ensure that the legal framework for TVET is based on equality through their advocacy and commitment to serving women as well as marginalized populations including refugees. The engagement of civil society organizations (CSO) is also essential to advocate for women's economic empowerment and related laws, policies, and regulations with the Ministry of Labor (MOL), the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOWA) and the Ministry of National Economy (MONE).

Institutional policies and regulations among the NGO-VET institutes vary; however, all are committed to the integration and empowerment of female students and most have policies and regulations to improve women’s access to TVETs. Based on this assessment’s findings, it is clear that additional measures would improve women’s access and experiences with vocational training centers (VTC), including adding new vocational training modules and ending segregation in entry requirements and adding measures to
mitigate the societal and practical obstacles women face in enrolling in and maintaining their educational and employment pursuits.

To facilitate women’s access to employment, TVET institutions have adopted work-based-learning (WBL) and integrated employment units and support. Nine out of 11 NGO-VET institutes that provided data to the assessment team, integrated these approaches into their systems. However, they are being provided by part-time and/or overburdened staff that don’t have the time needed to dedicate to these programs.

Support for accessing employment is also provided through career guidance to students and graduates (only 6 institutes), and the availability of the TVET Portal with a dedicated career resource center. Three institutes—Hisham Hijawi College of Technology (HHCT), Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU) and Lutheran World Federation (LWF)-funded VTC in Ramallah (in one vocation) have incubators for their graduates. Improving access to employment for female TVET students and graduates requires sustained and strengthened institutional policies across all TVET institutions to enhance these supportive approaches.

SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS AND BELIEFS

Cultural and gender norms related to women’s responsibilities for the care of family and the household is reflected in women’s decision-making surrounding education and employment. Families and communities’ social attitude to TVET is often negative, especially for women. There have been many campaigns conducted through traditional media, CSOs, and different institutions, using success stories to try to promote a positive perception. However, other means are needed to enhance this effort and to address the attitudes of families and employers to help support women in accessing employment or self-employment. In addition to these negative attitudes, there are many constraints affecting women’s access to TVET including fees, limited access to transportation, as well as the general demands and responsibilities within their households. Women’s access to the labor market is constrained by limited job opportunities (especially in non-traditional fields), and the weak economy including a weak private sector, especially in Gaza.

The TVET institutes’ practicing WBL and co-ed classes have noted better preparation for women and men students entering the workforce, along with preparing employers. Gender awareness for both female and male students is also important for changing attitudes towards women’s role and participation. The implementation of a six-months’ paid internship in the WBG for women has enabled some women to access job opportunities after graduation. At the same time, for various reasons, many graduates opted to be self-employed to have more flexibility. To help improve women’s access to work it is essential to create more, similar opportunities, e.g., internships and self-employment.

Overall, women’s choice of vocation, TVET, and employment is highly dependent on gender norms. Finding ways to increase the acceptance of women’s work outside the household by their community and family is important, as well as supporting women working from home or operating businesses from her home or community.

ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES

The fees for NGO-VET League institutes range from around 2,000ILS in Gaza, 4000ILS in West Bank, and 7000ILS in Jerusalem. For institutes that survive on donations, fees are an important income source. Scholarships are limited and there needs to be a more sustainable way to support them, especially for women. There are multiple resources that increase women’s participation such as boarding.
transportation allowances, outreach training, online training, childcare, adding more viable job market training, and providing guidance counselors and/or gender focal point persons within the institutes.

**GENERAL TVET GENDER CONTEXT**

The participation of women in TVET is highest at level 1 in the WB, reaching half of the trainees, followed by levels 2 and 4. In Gaza, the highest number of women is in levels 1 and 4, indicating perhaps that VTC diplomas and short courses may be more appealing or realistic for women in the informal sector while college level is appealing in the formal sector.

Employed women in WBG are concentrated in gender-stereotyped fields, with less women still being employed in non-traditional fields. To promote women’s opportunities in non-traditional work, the employment and education sectors need to promote and provide relevant supportive measures that are also sustainable. In addition, female trainers and decision-making staff at TVET institutes are segregated by gender with minimal reach in non-traditional fields/sectors. Women graduates from non-traditional fields with experience need to be recruited for training within those fields for women and men.

Various tracking studies of graduates cited the need for entrepreneurship skills training and post-graduate support in career/vocational matching, placement, networking, pre-incubation, and incubation. Labor market studies and discussions indicate the need for the engagement of women in non-traditional fields. Thus, there is a need in TVET institutes for skills training related to growing fields and the integration of these private sector actors in training and enhancing the workplace environment.

The private sector can be a challenging environment for women, due to weak and ineffective management, poor working conditions (including harassment and denigration of employees). Pay is often poor, especially for women. The MOL’s labor laws and regulations are not always properly followed. Engaging the private sector and its representatives in TVET could facilitate better engagement and respect for laws and regulations that protect workers, including women.

Female university graduates are highly affected by a pervasive skill mismatch, whereby they do not land jobs for which they have been trained. Providing university graduates with TVET, e.g., to learn useful skills through short courses, would help to mitigate the situation. Female TVET graduates have the highest rates of labor force participation and employment is evidence that TVET training leads to better employment opportunities for women.

Women with disabilities (WWD) are even less successful in accessing education and training and viable, sustainable employment and is an area that needs further attention. The Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Technical and Vocational Education and Training project (GRIT), funded by the Canadian international development agency (CIDA), works with WWD and TVET institutions to adopt policies to increase intake of WWD. These practices should be shared with other TVET institutions to help further enhance support to WWD.

**CROSS-CUTTING**

1. **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

In interviews and FGDs, female trainees and graduates noted a need to increase ways to address gender-based violence (GBV) in transportation and in the workplace. In addition, women subjected to violence in the workplace usually leave the job rather than report the issue/incidents to employers. Supporting the graduates with awareness raising and support related to harassment in the workplace is
needed. TVET institutes need to engage more with the private sector to address this issue. Implementing an internal, anonymous complaints system would be a first step.

2. COVID-19/DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS:

The number of female TVET trainees dropped during COVID-19 (from 44% to 34%). The drop is apparent by the change in the number of short courses available, although some institutes opted to go online to hold courses and continued their regular, ongoing courses. In 2020, all courses were held via Zoom. The assessment team heard from female students that they appreciated the institutes’ efforts in carrying on despite the circumstances but also agreed that they preferred engaging in education in person.

Institutes did note that COVID-19 assisted them in adopting online methods that they have continued to employ, enabling the participation of new groups, such as people from Gaza joining a training session held in Ramallah. The online methods, accompanied by practical implementation either in the center or through WBL, resulted in productive training. However, the pedagogical part of such integration needs adaptation.

3. NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS

Women graduates noted the need for mentorship, especially in non-traditional fields, support when entering the market, and WBL and preparation for the job market. Furthermore, women faced limitations in terms of the number and variation of available courses. Some relate to work environment and conditions, which adds to the importance of private sector engagement and monitoring. This also suggests the importance of providing women with more/other options, such as working in small- and medium-sized enterprises or self-employment for those looking to be employed in a big company, which entails additional support by TVET institutes related to career guidance.

4. MARKET DEMANDS

Employment rates of male and female TVET graduates are relatively high overall. After three to four years, nearly all were working. Within six months of graduation there is a variation in some sectors and locations, based on demand, competition, and oversaturation of the market in certain areas and fields (low for secretary in Gaza and high for tailoring). However, an ongoing tracking system is needed to have a better understanding of these trends and overall market demand.

In non-traditional fields, in line with gender norms and cultural perception towards women, employers seem to prefer males. But due to gaps in some sectors, some of which is caused by males choosing to work in the Israeli market, more employers are more open to employing women. In addition, training on new technology is also an entry point for women in non-traditional fields.

Employers also noted a high turnover among women once they get married, an area that could be addressed through offering government or privately paid maternity leave or paternity leave. Some women noted that they left their work due to GBV or harassment, or because they received less pay than their male counterparts. Thus, empowering women and supporting them in the marketplace, as well as improving their bargaining ability would help to address some of the inequality-related challenges.

Other hindrances for women’s engagement with the market include being paid less than men, jobs being concentrated in urban areas and high transportation costs. Family responsibilities also push women
outside the market or increase their preference for working from home through self-employment or their own businesses.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There are apparent gaps in the three under-examined key domains: 1) Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; 2) Social norms and beliefs; and 3) Access to TVET resources that challenge women's access to TVET and to the labor market. Addressing these challenges requires structural and sustainable measures. One of the main challenges women face in accessing TVET and employment are the attitudes and perceptions about their roles, which effects their choice of career, specialization, and employment. These choices often limit the opportunities at TVET institutes and resources for supporting their access to TVET and employment. In addition, women are challenged by the overall context, its effect on the economy and their mobility, as well as the lack of or weak implementation of laws and policies which provide limited to no support. However, the market demand for TVET, the sector’s readiness to accept women in non-conventional fields, and the need for sub-contracting in WBG are all opportunities for women’s employment and self-employment. To enhance and realize these opportunities there is a need for integrating successful sustainable initiatives, as well as spreading current learning from successful programs and initiatives to other institutes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the assessment team recommends that USAID/WBG programming focus on 4 key areas:

1. Empowering, resourcing, and sustaining TVET institutes with enabling policies and affirmative measures as well as sustainable structures.
2. Enabling TVET institutes to support TVET graduates.
3. Systemizing private sector partnerships.
4. Creating innovative ways based on positive cultural values to embed positive attitudes for TVET and women in TVET.

Innovative interventions are needed, those that build on previous work of donors and institutes and will effectively address the gaps detailed in the report’s conclusions, are suggested. For detailed recommendations by study domains see recommendations section below in the full body of the report.
INTRODUCTION

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) West Bank and Gaza mission (USAID/WBG) under the Middle East & North Africa Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning Services Activity (MENA MELS) has engaged Management Systems International (MSI) to conduct a rapid intersectional gender assessment related to technical and vocational education and training (TVET) in WBG. This assessment will help inform the design of a future TVET activity that will be implemented in WBG. This rapid assessment will explore three key domains: 1) Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; 2) Social norms and beliefs; and 3) Access to TVET resources. This assessment will also address questions related to the overall gender and social norms, and cross-cutting themes as they relate to TVET and gender.

PURPOSE OF THE ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this rapid TVET gender assessment is to help inform the design of the new USAID/WBG TVET activity. This assessment will provide the initial information needed for USAID/WBG to have a fuller understanding of the current TVET context and background as it relates to gender and to help inform the activity’s objectives and interventions. This assessment is designed to collect information to help USAID/WBG understand the current challenges and how TVETs can improve their inclusivity for women’s access and opportunities for training, and for people with disabilities and other groups with reduced access to TVET offerings. After the activity is awarded, the implementer will conduct a more in-depth assessment of the targeted institutions or specific geographics areas to further inform their program implementation.

The main objectives for this rapid assessment are as follows:

1. Assess the extent of gender mainstreaming in TVET related policies and organizational procedures and practices.
2. Identify current gaps and challenges in female enrollment in targeted TVET institutions, private sector female employment, and local cultural norms towards female engagement in TVET programs.
3. Provide recommendations on how to better mainstream gender in TVET programs and ensure increased enrollment of females and enhanced employment opportunities in the private sector.

AUDIENCES AND INTENDED USES

The audience for this assessment will be USAID/WBG, specifically staff working on designing the new TVET activity. It will provide useful information to better understand the current environment and needs related to TVET and gender. This assessment may also be shared with the future activity implementers to help inform their activity planning and implementation.

ASSESSMENT DOMAINS AND QUESTIONS

This assessment focused on understanding the challenges, obstacles, or barriers that women face regarding TVET enrollment, course selection and course completion in WBG. The assessment sought to understand how USAID/WBG could help increase women’s enrollment in TVET—and explored how the TVET system can create an effective and gender-inclusive training-to-employment pathway. This assessment examined post-secondary TVET programs that are run as short courses, longer term courses, diploma programs, and two-year programs. The assessment did not include secondary school programs and focused primarily on private TVET institutions. Applying a gender lens, the team also
examined TVET access and participation of youth and other disadvantaged populations (e.g., rural, low income).

Listed below are three gender analysis domains¹ with the full list of related questions listed in Annex 1, that this gender assessment sought to answer as they relate to TVET in the WBG. The 2020 USAID Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy guided the team’s development of these domains and questions.²

1. Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices: with focus on institutional policies and practices.
2. Social norms and beliefs: to understand the barriers and constraints.
3. Access to TVET resources: questions around TVET resources that enable access to TVET and employment, and access to these resources.

In addition to the domains and questions above, this assessment explored the general TVET and gender context and cross-cutting issues to provide a full understanding of the TVET gender dynamics in WBG.

The key cross-cutting issues that were explored include:

1. Gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual harassment prevention and response;
2. COVID-19-related distance/remote learning dynamics;
3. Needs of female TVET students; and
4. Job availability and job market demands/needs.

**APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY**

**ASSESSMENT APPROACH AND METHODS**

This rapid gender assessment used secondary data and data collected through key informant interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The assessment team collected secondary data through publicly available resources and key informants to conduct a rapid literature review. The team also reached out to TVET institutions and market associations to collect documents and information from them. In addition, to gain a more thorough understanding of the employment path, the team looked for private sector analysis, gaps or needs assessment for the labor market and any other assessments related to the demand (hiring) side. Collected and reviewed resources include any TVET related research studies, government data and reports, private sector information, TVET publications, local and international NGO reports, USAID and other donor project reports, business association documents, and other relevant documents and reports.

The team conducted 17 semi-structured individual and group interviews with 39 key stakeholders to learn more about the current opportunities and barriers for women and men, including among persons with disabilities, seeking training at a public or private TVET. See Annex 3 for the list of interviews conducted. The team conducted interviews and discussions in person when possible, or virtually through telephone, Zoom or MS Teams. Interviews targeted representatives from government ministries, local projects and donors implementing TVET programs, NGOs working on access of women to TVET, TVET organizations, and representatives from the private sector (e.g., business associations or private companies) in WBG. The team also conducted 8 FGDs with 80 women who are current TVET students or recent graduates of TVET from different institutes and different localities (full list interviews

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can be found in Annex 3) to gain an understanding of their experience as well as their challenges and barriers with accessing and participating in TVET programming and the job market. As well as one FGD with local employment and training (LET) Council members in Gaza representing the private sector and institutes. In total, 125 people were consulted for the study. The team has also collected data from 11 League of Vocational Education and Training Institutes (NGO-VET) institutes in WBG to enrich the findings with up-to-date data. The team faced challenges due to the current outbreaks of COVID-19 during the field work; Thus, many meetings were rescheduled or were conducted virtually. The interviews, FGD and data collection was conducted from January 29, 2022, through February 22, 2022.

ANALYSIS AND DEDUCTION

The assessment team triangulated, analyzed, matched, and grouped its findings with the study-specific questions. This report presents an analysis of gaps and learning opportunities pursuant to the study questions. The assessment team developed 40 detailed conclusions, drilling down to the domains and sub-domains, and contextual and cross cutting issues. The team presents 31 recommendations connected to the conclusions and linked to the domains and cross-cutting issues.

LIMITATIONS

The team relied mostly on publicly available information collected through internet searches or key informants that the team engaged with and had access to. Due to the short timeframe to complete this assessment and the large number of questions, answers to certain questions might be limited and based on the availability of current data. In addition, unless data and studies are available, there are several questions that the team cannot address completely without doing more intensive data collection, such as a survey, to find out more about specific information and analysis related to decision making, perceptions and behavioral trends of women.

However, the team mitigated this limitation to the extent possible by conducting key informant interviews, FGDs, collected data from part of the NGO-VET League institutes, using a competent team and relying on the insights of the team leader’s expertise as a regional TVET and a gender expert who has conducted and published many relevant research and field studies. The previous knowledge and connections the team brought to this assessment aided in the ability to rapidly deliver the report.

GENERAL CONTEXT OF THE WEST BANK AND GAZA

POPULATION

The Palestinian population of the WBG was an estimated 5.2 million in 2020; at that time, 3.1 million (59.8%) lived in the West Bank and 2.1 million (40.2%) lived in Gaza. At the end of 2020, 38% of the population was 15 years old or younger (36% in the West Bank and 41.2% in Gaza). There were 2.62 million males and 2.54 million females, a sex ratio of 103.4\(^3\). Figure 1 provides a snapshot of the population in the West-Bank and Gaza.

As the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) reported in 2021, regarding persons with disabilities (PWD), approximately 6% of the population had at least one physical disability in 2017, 7% in Gaza Strip and 5% in the West Bank. The percentage of PWDs with multiple, and/or severe disabilities that prohibit them from engaging in daily life (work, family, etc.) was estimated at about 2% of the Palestinian population (2% in the West Bank and 3% in Gaza Strip)\(^4\).

**TABLE 1: DISTRIBUTION OF DISABILITY BY DEFINITIONS OF DISABILITY AND DIFFICULTY BY TYPE AND REGION IN PALESTINE, 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Difficulty*</th>
<th>Seeing</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>Remembering and Concentrating</th>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>Disability*</th>
<th>Seeing</th>
<th>Hearing</th>
<th>Mobility</th>
<th>Remembering and Concentrating</th>
<th>Communication</th>
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<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Bank</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaza Strip</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: PCBS. 2021. Characteristics of Individuals with Disabilities in Palestine, Ramallah-Palestine

Notes: * cannot at all, a lot of difficulty, some difficulty, ** cannot at all, a lot of difficulty

\(^4\) PCBS. 2021. Characteristics of Individuals with Disabilities in Palestine, Ramallah-Palestine
The Palestinian territories (West Bank, including East Jerusalem and Gaza) are three different territories with different contexts and economies\(^5\), and as noted by the World Bank, the Palestinian economy is essentially an ‘archipelago’ economy, with poor economic links between ‘islands’.\(^6\) The map below (Figure 1) illustrates the disconnection between areas. Whereas East Jerusalem is linked with the Israeli economy, the West Bank is fragmented and weakened due to limited use of resources and restrictive measures on accessing people and goods, as many international reports noted. Gaza has been under siege since 2007, with an aid-dependent economy, weak private sector, restrictive control over borders for importing raw materials, and an ongoing electricity crisis. Such a weak economy and private sector negatively affect job opportunities available for job seekers.

As such, the report will present data and information, when possible, for each area. At times, data for East Jerusalem may be integrated with the West Bank data when disaggregation of that data is not available.

As the International Labor Organization (ILO) notes, the Palestinian territories struggle to support workers who are adrift amid rising uncertainty. Due to the deadlocked peace process, Palestinian territories have suffered from economic stagnation, high levels of unemployment, especially in Gaza. Many workers leave for better employment prospects in Israel\(^7\).

The economies of the West Bank, Gaza and East Jerusalem vary, with the gross domestic product (GDP) of the West Bank being 4.6 times that of Gaza. East Jerusalem is linked to the GDP of Israel which is 30 times that of the West Bank. Palestine’s geopolitical situation has a disastrous impact on its economic situation, with zero growth or in 2019 – a contracting economy. Preliminary estimates indicated a sharp decline in GDP by (11.5%) in Palestine in 2020 in comparison to 2019 (11.3% decline in the West Bank and 12.3% in Gaza).\(^8\) Poverty rates in Palestine are high and increased further during COVID-19.

The Palestinian Authority (PA) has developed the National Employment Strategy, to lessen the economic and employment dependence on Israel. As the World Bank reported in February 2021, “The Palestinian economy is in a precarious situation. The COVID-19 pandemic struck a weakened economy that was barely keeping up with the population growth in three years prior to the onset of the pandemic, with persistent fiscal deficits, high unemployment, growing poverty levels, especially in Gaza, and continuously declining levels of international support.” In November 2021, the World Bank noted that the “Palestinian economy is showing signs of recovery largely due to improved activity in the West Bank. However, Gaza still suffers from a particularly difficult economic situation with very high unemployment and deteriorating social conditions. In the current economic context, the outlook is uncertain as sustainable sources of growth remain limited.”\(^9\) This has exacerbated the already dismal employment situation for Palestinians, especially in Gaza.

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5 Refer to UN-OCHA maps and reports: [www.ochaopt.org](http://www.ochaopt.org)
8 PCBS, May 2021: Performance of the Palestinian Economy 2020
FIGURE 2: MAP OF THE PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES (WEST BANK INCLUDING EAST JERUSALEM AND GAZA)

Source: www.unochaopt.org

LABOR FORCE

The labor force framework shows a high dependency rate with 61.8% of the population that are of working age (aged 15-65), but only 40.9% are in the labor force (i.e., employed and unemployed). Of those in the labor force, only three-quarter of them are employed. With around one in five persons being employed in the Palestinian territories (see below). This situation is even bleaker in Gaza.11

Figure 3, next page, illustrates the high dependency ratio, as one in five people is active and employed, and supporting the other members of the population.

The framework is highly gender related, as Annex 5 illustrates the framework according to gender (female versus male).

Women’s participation rate is only 16.1%, compared to 65.1% for men (the gender gap is four times in favor of men). Most women (62.9%) are not in the labor force and are instead engaged in childcare and household responsibilities. Men’s participation in household and childcare is a reported 0%. This reflects the drastically unequal gender roles, where men are not expected to share in the household tasks and responsibilities. According to the Palestinian Labor Force Survey female unemployment is at 40.1% compared to 22.5% for men.\(^\text{12}\)

Young women have the lowest labor force participation rate and the highest unemployment. Only 8.8% of young women (age groups 15-24) were in the labor force compared to 42.9% for young men in the same age group. Unemployment is 70% for young women compared to 36.6% for young men.\(^\text{13}\)

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\(^\text{12}\) Ibid.

\(^\text{13}\) Legal age to work is 15 years old.
Unemployment was also recorded at 51.5% for women, compared to 26.7% for men in the same age group (25-34 years).\textsuperscript{14}

The highest unemployment rates for women based on education were women with 13+ years of education, it reached 92.9%, while the highest participation rate for women in that group reached 38.5%.\textsuperscript{15} The World Bank report has noted these figures and called for actions.\textsuperscript{16}

Employment according to gender and sector indicates the concentration of women’s work in traditional fields such as services (mainly education and health), as illustrated in Figure 4. below.

**FIGURE 4: EMPLOYED BY ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND GENDER**

![Figure 4: Employed by Economic Activity and Gender](image)


**Labor force for PWD\textsuperscript{17}:** In terms of access to the labor market, Figure 5, shows that two-thirds of PWD aged 15-59 years are inactive and one-third are unemployed, indicators well below national figures for labor force activity and employment. Labor force activity and employment is gender relevant, as the figure below illustrates. 90.8% of women with disabilities (WWD) are not active in the workforce and almost half of those active are unemployed. Data is worse in Gaza compared to the West Bank, the employment rate in the West Bank for PWD is 80.5%; in Gaza it is 45.9%.

**FIGURE 5: COMPOSITION OF THE PWD BY LABOR FORCE STATUS AND GENDER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Percentage of PWD of working-age (15-65 years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Men</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Labor Force</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>29.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>53.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Women</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Labor Force</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>90.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Labor Force</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inactive</td>
<td>66.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key to the Figure:
- In Labor Force
- Employed
- Unemployed
- Inactive

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{17} Source for this part is: PCBS. 2021. Characteristics of Individuals with Disabilities in Palestine, Ramallah, Palestine
ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

Below, are the main findings that the assessment uncovered through literature reviews, key informant interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs) and analyses of collected data. The findings reflect the background of the general TVET and gender contexts, economy, labor force and market demand. See the assessment questions below for more context.

GENERAL CONTEXT OF TVET AND GENDER

TVET CONTEXT

TVET is provided by governmental and non-governmental providers at different levels relating to skill levels for the labor market. The following graph (Figure 6) from the national TVET strategy endorsed by MOEHE\textsuperscript{18} & MOL illustrates the national TVET structure:

\textbf{FIGURE 6: TVET STRUCTURE FROM THE TVET STRATEGY}

![TVET Structure](image)

\textit{Source: MOEHE & MOL. 2010. TVET Strategy}

The TVET structure graphic displays the national vision for the existing TVET strategy. As this strategy is from 2010, updates are in progress. The responsibility for preparing a skilled labor force, at various levels, lies with governmental and non-governmental entities. These have been accredited by different ministries in the WBG. However, the TVET Commission (newly established in 2021) will unify all accreditation processes under its umbrella, creating one system. Table 2, presents the TVET providers per type of institute and level.

\textsuperscript{18} MOE and MOHE were combined during the noted year; relevant to this citation, they are separate entities.
TABLE 2: TVET PROVIDERS PER TYPE OF INSTITUTE AND LEVEL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Type of Institute</th>
<th>Duration of Training</th>
<th>Provider</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level 4: Technician</td>
<td>Post-secondary level technical colleges, or technical courses in community colleges</td>
<td>Two years after successful Tawjihi-(^{19}) -- accredited by MOHE</td>
<td>Mostly non-governmental (private, NGOs and United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) except for Palestine Technical Colleges (PTCs) under Khadoori-the governmental body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3: Craftsperson/Vocational</td>
<td>Secondary level vocational secondary schools (VSS) and vocational units in academic schools</td>
<td>Two years in vocational schools at 11th and 12th grades</td>
<td>VSS run by the PA (MOE currently) and VSS run by NGOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2: Skilled worker</td>
<td>Vocational training center (VTCs)</td>
<td>One scholastic year (9-11 months)- 900 hrs. and above</td>
<td>MOL, MOSD, NGOs &amp; UNRWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1: Semi/limited skilled worker</td>
<td>VTCs</td>
<td>Hours to months (less than 900 hrs.)</td>
<td>All the above provide short courses, CSOs and private sector institutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 illustrates the TVET level training distribution of students by level and geographic area, according to the latest national report of the European Training Foundation (ETF)/Torino Process (2020). The data of 2018-2019 indicates that there were 296 institutes providing TVET at the first four levels, with 57,748 students. Most institutes are providing Level 1, while most students are at the technical level 4 in Gaza. The highest number of students in the West Bank are at Level 1.

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF INSTITUTE AND STUDENTS PER LEVEL AND AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TVET Level</th>
<th># of Institutes 2018/2019</th>
<th># of Students 2018/2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>West Bank</td>
<td>Gaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total levels 1-4</td>
<td>227</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{19}\) Tawjihi is the national, standardized accreditation exam.
National data has identified that the percentage of the student population enrolled in TVET are 15% and less than 4% in vocational schools. Initiatives at the policy level, supported by donors, include curricula development, training of trainers on curricula, work-based learning integration, and engagement of the private sector with TVET. Further donor-funded and -supported initiatives include those by the German Technical Agency (GIZ) and the Belgian development agency, Enabel. The KfW Development Bank supports enhancement of infrastructure and rehabilitation; the European Union (EU) supports special youth groups in Jerusalem; and the International Labor Organization works with PWD in Gaza. The ILO is also engaged in integrating basic entrepreneurship education into TVET curricula. USAID’s previous support to TVET introduced curricula that was then updated with GIZ and adopted nationally. They also supported the NGO-VET League through developing the TVET portal, that is updated on an ongoing basis.

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has supported six projects for women’s economic empowerment, three of which are in TVET: Gender-Responsive and Inclusive Technical and Vocational Education and Training project (GRIT) implemented by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF); a project working with seven institutes of the League of Vocational Education and Training Institutes (NGO-VET); Generating Revenue Opportunities for Women and Youth in the West Bank (GROW), working with engineering associations and one of the league institutes; and another project in Gaza.

The national team identified four main policy priorities for the TVET Commission:

- TVET strategy and law
- Finalization of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- Finalization of the unified accreditation system, Accreditation and Quality Assurance Commission (AQAC)
- Development of an effective monitoring and evaluation system.

These are identified by the national team for the Torino Process report who are representing the TVET sector. The newly established TVET Commission is working on these priorities.

Of note TVET is underfunded. The allocated TVET budget covers less than 1% of the PA fiscal budget; development is covered through donor funding. It is hoped that through the formation of the TVET Commission, the budget for TVET initiatives will increase.

**TVET AND THE GENDER CONTEXT**

In the West Bank, the largest number of women enrolled in TVET and the highest proportion of women compared to men are in Level 1 (4,173, 49%), followed by Level 4 (2,589, 34.8%), and Level 2 (2,862, 34.5%). In Gaza, 97.6% of women in TVET are enrolled in level 4 (9,583). The following table summarizes the distribution of TVET students/trainees per level, area, and gender.

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21 Gender-Responsive and Inclusive (TVET) implemented by Canadian Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran World Federation and funded by Global Affairs Canada.
22 The NGO-VET League is a network of 16 non-governmental institutes, mostly faith-based; they provide training at levels 1-3, including three TVET institutes at level 4.
23 GROW, implemented by Ontario-based Cowater Sogema, funded by Global Affairs Canada.
24 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TVET Level</th>
<th>West Bank</th>
<th>Gaza</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 4</td>
<td>4,851</td>
<td>2,589</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 3</td>
<td>3,634</td>
<td>747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 2</td>
<td>1,876</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level 1</td>
<td>4,338</td>
<td>4,173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total levels 1-4</td>
<td>13,511</td>
<td>8,135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57,748</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Data from 11 institutes within the NGO-VET for levels 1 and 2 indicates that student participation in 2018-2019 was 1,709 (47% women). With 12.5% of the TVET sector at levels 1 and 2, if the remaining five TVET institutes sent their data, the percentage would increase to 15%, and if the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) programs are included, the percentage increases, to 18%.

However, the number of students for some institutes are increasing, as is the case for the Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) where level 1 increased during the past year. During COVID-19, the numbers dropped, but then increased again in the following year, as the table below illustrates. The 2022 figures are still initial as the short courses that attract women are not finalized yet. The drop due to COVID-19 affected women more than men. The percentage of women during COVID-19 dropped from 44% to 34%, but then went back to 45% in 2020-2021, where it is expected to remain until the end of 2021-2022, however, the numbers are not final.

The drop was related to the impacts of COVID-19 on people and institutes. Due to lockdowns and a downturn in the economy, COVID-19 has also reduced household income affecting household purchasing power and food security. Affected families have had to cut family expenditures, to cover the living essentials. The long duration of the lockdowns has also affected the running of training programs, as the short-term (Level 1) courses were stopped or postponed, while the long-term courses (levels 2-4) continued with measures such as online or extension of the courses.

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28 PCBS. 2020. Impact of COVID - 19 Pandemic (Coronavirus) on the Socio-economic Conditions of Palestinian Households Survey (March-May), 2020
Institutes indicated that there are challenges in attracting young women to TVET training versus attracting young men. Some have noted adding measures to attract more young women, some of which are discussed further below.

**WOMEN ARE CONCENTRATED IN GENDER-STEREOTYPICAL FIELDS**

Data from the MOL, indicates that most of their female graduates are in traditional fields (e.g., sewing, beautification and secretary), with some in newly introduced fields such as graphic design, Auto-cad, and office automation. The integration of women in short courses in partnership with other institutes enabled an increase in women’s engagement in non-traditional fields such as solar energy, however these are not conducted regularly.\(^{29}\)

The NGO-VET League data indicated that there has been an increase of women in non-conventional fields over the years, yet it is still limited to the LWF- Vocational Training Center (VTC) in Ramallah (VTCR), Hisham Hijawi College of Technology (HHCT), Palestine Polytechnic University (PPU), and one course supported by GRIT in the Salesian Vocational Training Center (SVTC). Added to which the increase in Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) courses in digital marketing, and programming is noted in additional institutes such as the YWCA Jerusalem and SVTC. They are also willing to add more non-conventional fields.

The policy paper for increase of women participation in the labor market\(^{30}\), has noted that a pre-post TVET awareness campaign of a knowledge, attitude, and practice (KAP) study—conducted among school students examining KAP towards TVET — showed the gender variance with regards to TVET. Whereas many young men were attracted to TVET following the awareness campaign conducted by Cooperazione Internazionale Foundation (COOPI) through the EU project, young women were less interested. This was explained based on matching the results with their aspiration for future vocation, and the limited number of vocations available in TVET institutes compared to those offered for young

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men. The study has also noted the negative attitudes of families towards TVET for females, compared to that for males.31

The history of integrating women in non-traditional fields, started in mid-1990s in the Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) by introducing women to electronics.32 The Ministry of Education (MOE) scaled up the experience and integrated women in different ICT fields in its vocational schools in the late-1990s. Whereas LWF integrated women into telecommunications and mobile maintenance in 2000. MOL integrated office equipment and computer maintenance a decade later in one of its institutes. These were added to provide market-demand opportunities for women in non-conventional fields.

So far, some non-conventional fields have been affected by minimum demand by women and reduced support. This is an issue that needs more awareness. Campaigns like “open the door” led by the women economic empowerment network, ASALA (Palestinian Businesswomen’s Association), and supported by GROW have worked on changing the image.

The new GRIT and GROW projects supported by CIDA will run until 2023 and work to integrate women into non-traditional fields in different VET institutes through adding market-relevant fields and enhancing the institutional environment.

**WOMEN’S CHOICE OF TVET, VOCATION AND EMPLOYMENT IS HIGHLY DEPENDENT ON GENDER NORMS**

Decision making processes in the family are mainly male-oriented and linked in some cases with the elderly in extended families. This affects women’s decisions about education/training, vocation, place of employment, as well as financial and family-related decisions.

Decision making for types of education, training, and employment are gender relevant and influence the perception towards the role of women, leading to a concentration in the education and health sectors. The perception also considers her sole role in housekeeping and family caring. These perceptions are reflected in the family and extended to the market and the state.

Impact studies have indicated the empowerment effect of TVET and employment on women graduates and her increased ability to share in decision making processes in the family.33, 34, 35

**NEED FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP SKILLS AND GRADUATE SUPPORT**

Many of the tracking studies noted the need for the graduates to open their own businesses after gaining experience36. However, many women aspire to find employment through self-employment opportunities, this was confirmed through FGDs with trainees and graduates, especially if they come

31 Hilal, R. (2019). KAP Survey of school students towards VET. Jerusalem: COOPI funded by the EU- Jerusalem
32 The team leader of this study was the director, electronics engineer herself, introduced and led the change.
from remote areas or have household caring responsibilities. Most emphasized the need for support services after graduation to help them achieve self-employment.

Various stakeholders, including during discussions with NGO-VET League and MOL, have emphasized the importance of self-employment opportunities to illustrate their skills in the field of training, especially if it’s in non-traditional fields.

Graduates from all FGDs including all PPU graduates that participated in the FGD expressed that they want to open their own businesses as one participant stated:

“I personally cannot wait until I can start my own business but for now, I need to gain as much experience and skills that can enable me to start my dream.”

**NEED TO ENGAGE WOMEN IN NON-TRADITIONAL FIELDS**

Various labor market studies\(^{37}\), including a few during COVID-19\(^{38,39}\) have noted the high demand for TVET graduates. This demand comes from small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) in most sectors, especially in industry, services, and construction related sectors. The demand reflects the skills gaps and the brain drain of TVET graduates into the Israeli market, attracted by higher salaries made possible by Israel’s higher GDP. The GRIT study found that the private sector is ready to employ women in non-conventional fields to bridge the gap.\(^{40}\) The study also identified non-conventional market-relevant areas that the GRIT project is integrating within the TVET institutes. In addition, the study noted the importance of engaging university graduates in short trainings, continuous vocational education, and training-reskilling in market-demand sectors (CVET).

During an interview, the private sector representative from the Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Ramallah noted the need for TVET graduates in most sectors and emphasized the importance of carrying out short-term market relevant courses starting from the market sub-sector. They noted their experience with a TVET institute in training women engineers in carpentry, some of which have been able to start their businesses in the field. He agreed that technology could be an entry point for women in different fields and noted the gradual change, giving the example of women mechanical engineers working successfully in a garage, mainly on electronic diagnostics.\(^{41}\)

The private sector representative from the Palestinian Federation of Industry (PFI) in Gaza noted gaps, but the preference still prevails for men in non-traditional fields versus women due to the long hours of work and women’s household responsibilities that they feel effect their commitment. There is also little desire to make changes in some of these workplaces to accommodate women and sometimes a lack of trust in women’s abilities. These are in addition to the challenges due to the social restrictions women face from their family or spouse in entering a non-traditional field. However, opportunities for self-employment are high and can help gain trust in the sector. The private sector representative also noted that women represent 95% of the workforce in female-gendered industries, such as the clothing and food industries.\(^{42}\)

Studies have noted that training women before or after graduation as interns in the labor market through work-based learning schemes, increases employer trust and can lead to increases in employment rates of women graduates.\(^{43}\)

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\(^{37}\) Said, N. et al. 2015. Skills Gaps and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. AWRAD and CARE International


\(^{39}\) Hilal, R., Nassar, T., 2020. Market Analysis for the GAC/CLWR/LWF- GRIT PROJECT

\(^{40}\) Ibid.

\(^{41}\) Interview, CCI Ramallah, 1\(^{st}\) Feb 2022

\(^{42}\) Interview, PFI Gaza, 2\(^{nd}\) Feb 2022

THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS A REPELLING ENVIRONMENT FOR WOMEN

Many studies have noted women’s aversion to the private sector. National labor force surveys clearly illustrate the gender pay gap. Tracking studies of graduates show the gap in decent work agenda (pay and regulations) for TVET graduates in general and for women TVET graduates.

Graduates in all FGDs noted this issue. As one graduate states:

"Most employers in the private sector treat their employees badly. There is no understanding, no compassion. I live a bit far out of the city and have to get two transports to get there which means I have to leave the house very early and sometimes I am late; my employer always tells me off and takes money from my wage even if I am five minutes late. They ask us to work really long hours with no allowed sick days or holidays, if we were taking any time off it’s taken off our wage."

The CARE market study found social factors were significant. In this survey, women reported that the institutional discrimination they face in employment choices and work settings, was largely a product of inequitable gender norms. Women are expected to seek education, training and employment in traditional sectors, such as services and teaching, and to accept lower pay than their equally educated or qualified male counterparts.

MOL’s DG of Employment General Directorate noted the lack of commitment of many private sector enterprises to pay the minimum salary or to provide working conditions according to Labor law. Additionally, the MOL has limited ability to monitor these conditions due to off-limit areas in Area C of the West Bank which is under total Israeli control and has a limited number of inspectors.

WOMEN UNIVERSITY GRADUATES ARE AFFECTED BY SKILLS MISMATCH

The World Bank has noted that post-secondary skilled women have the highest rate of unemployment compared to men with the same or similar qualifications, and to women with different education and skill level. They noted that employment opportunities for women are in the formal and the informal private sector and looked at working from home and online work as an opportunity to access regional and global markets through self-employment opportunities.

The PCBS recent data indicated highest unemployment among women with 13+ years of education (post-secondary), reaching 93% of the unemployed, while those with 10-12 grades reaches 5.6% of the unemployed, and below that for the remaining. Data indicated that 46% of women university graduates are unemployed, and for some vocations unemployment is over 55%, compared to 19% of men. MOL noted that 30% of women applicants for their VTCs were university graduates.

Nevertheless, the employment data for women graduates from TVET reaches over 80% after 3-4 years according to various tracking studies, including impact assessment data for the LWF, Department of Services to Palestinian Refugees (DSPR) and YMCA graduates. Results showed that their employment...
rates were 83.6% compared to 85.6% for males within six months to one year of graduation. The same cohort had 100% employment rates 3-4 years after graduation. The data for marginally self-employed was 36% for women compared to 19% for male, mostly in Gaza. The difference reflects the skills mismatch in the market and the high demand for TVET graduates.

WOMEN TVET GRADUATES HAVE HIGH RATES OF LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Many tracking studies indicate higher participation and employment rates of female TVET graduates than the national figures of women’s participation and employment rates in general, and the rates of young women specifically. However, as the Enabel 2020 study indicates, many TVET graduates are marginalized self-employed and seek full employment. The skills gained through TVET enable women and men to work for themselves if they can’t find full employment.

The DanChurchAid (DCA) and Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) impact study (2021) noted that surveyed graduates three to four years post-graduation found that women who were self-employed or have their own business were more satisfied, earned more money, worked fewer hours, and had more control over their time, compared to the fully employed women. The study also reported that many women in short courses were unemployed before joining and were better able to find jobs or self-employment opportunities after the courses.

WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES HAVE LESS ACCESS TO EDUCATION, TRAINING AND THE JOB MARKET

Overall, the national figures indicate that PWD, especially WWD, have less education compared to those without disabilities and limited educational backgrounds or experiences than others. Though the education system in the West Bank and Gaza strives to be inclusive, obstacles include family and community beliefs regarding the ability of PWD to access education, and minimal resources available to facilitate their access to education and training.

As for PWD inclusion in TVET institutes, in group meetings with TVET institutes and according to the ETF report, it was noted that PWD are under-represented in TVET. Their participation is around 10%. However, there are charitable societies, such as Annahda in Ramallah, that provide PWD with vocational trainings in limited fields, along with the Ministry of Social Development (MOSD) VTCs. The minimal presence of WWD in TVET and in the labor market is largely due to the absence of policies and measures targeting WWD by TVET institutes. The MOE has adopted inclusive policies and opened some of its vocational schools for PWD. The NGO-VET League, through the GRIT project, has adopted a policy to increase intake of women, especially those with disabilities. This policy and related support could affect positive change, a change that could be built on and complemented.

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56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
 Females and Decision-Making Staff at TVET are Segregated by Gender with Minimal Presence in Non-Traditional Fields

Assessment findings indicate that most women trainers do so in women-only institutes or provide training on theoretical topics or traditional fields in co-ed institutes. The national data indicates that 22% of teachers/trainers from levels 1-4 from different systems are women (25% in the West Bank and 18% in Gaza), 26% are at levels 1-3 and 21% are at level 4.59

There are few women in decision making positions in TVET and co-ed institutes. The first women director in a male-oriented TVET institute was Dr. Randa Hilal in the mid-1990s at the YMCA-VTC, where she introduced women to the non-traditional field of Electronics, she then moved to LWF and introduced women to telecommunications. The MOL followed this practice, hiring a woman director for the co-ed VTC in Qalqilia and now there is a women director in the YMCA-VTC. The MOE followed the practice of introducing women to electronics and telecommunications.

Introducing women as teachers/trainers in vocational and technical non-traditional fields is important for attracting women students. Female graduates in non-traditional fields can serve as trainers and teachers in the TVET institutes after gaining relevant market experience.

Laws, Policies, Regulations, and Institutional Practices

NATIONAL LAWS AND POLICIES

TVET RELATED LAWS AND POLICIES

TVET national laws, regulations, and guidelines to organize the sector do not exist. The newly established TVET Commission, with participation from the TVET sector, is planning to work on preparing the new laws and strategy. However, gender responsive laws and plans are still needed.

In 2016, two policies were adopted by MOE that encouraged students to enroll in TVET, one is the orientation between 6th & 9th grade, the other is the establishment of the 10th grade in vocational education. The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MOHESR) adopted another policy regarding the flexibility in accepting vocational education students in higher education.

In 2017 they adopted another policy regarding expanding vocational education by integrating vocational units into academic schools. The policy increased the number of school boys by 12% and school girls by 63% (adding 622 to the existing 988 school girls in vocational education provided by governmental and non-governmental schools). The expansion outside the current structures enabled women to overcome mobility challenges. Similarly, the integration of Open University added more women to university education by reaching women outside city centers.

The MOL and MOE have changed the way they publish courses, no longer segregating them by gender and opening the door for courses regardless of gender. This followed ASALA’s “Open the door” campaign, accompanied by a media campaign that followed the policy paper. The team leader noted that the policy is not backed by other measures. MOL-VTC cases show that although the policy enabled women to apply and join non-traditional fields, the lack of a support system has led some women to drop out, and those who continued faced market resistance.

59 Ibid.
The MOL’s gender unit has conducted gender audits for the vocational training directorate and developed a related plan. The ILO is working with the MOL on studies to assess the gender-responsive work environment in the construction sector. Most interviews in the WBG have confirmed gaps in gender responsive work environments in non-traditional sectors for women.

RELATED TO EMPLOYMENT AND WOMEN ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

The gender units within the different ministries and the Ministry of Women’s Affairs (MOWA) developed a cross-sectoral national strategy, in which women’s economic empowerment is considered one of its objectives. They are also part of the committees, together with a national committee headed by the MOL for women economic empowerment, that revises labor laws, investment laws, and pushes for women entrepreneurship and employment. MOWA and GUs also monitor progress, but implementation depends on projects and additional funding and the PA fiscal budget can hardly support the salaries of its employees.

The Labor Law has been under review over the past few years with participation by the private sector and unions (supported by the ILO). The law includes equal pay and 14 weeks of maternity leave and three days of paternity leave (1/3/2022), however implementation of the law is limited, as are inspections by MOL. There is also an absence of processes in SMEs (which account for most of the employers) to address gender biases. This suggests the importance of integrating private sector representatives in future efforts.

The investment law was reviewed from a gender perspective. Women NGOs, networks, and projects were engaged in advocating for women rights and representation, as noted by ASALA Business Women’s Forum (BWF) and GROW project. However, they are still pushing for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and work from home regulations. The legal advisor at the MOL also noted the absence of laws and regulations for the informal sector, an important employer for women.

The government has also recently announced an approximate 30% increase of the minimum wage from 1450ILS to 1880ILS which went into effect in 2022. However, enforcement is weak and according to interviews, many women and youth are paid less than the previous minimum wage.

Women’s participation in representative bodies and unions that can advocate for and protect their rights is also minimal. Many women in the study’s FGDs said forming a union could help in protecting and advocating for their rights. One graduate from Gaza who was supported by the group stated:

“I wish there’s a union that can advocate for us and can help us get more fair rights at our jobs. Most of us put up with really difficult work conditions and are unable to speak out against them because it’s hard to find a job and (we) can easily be replaced.”

The MOE conducts career guidance and awareness raising about TVET for school children. GIZ has supported career guidance about TVET at schools in previous years and embedded a counselor at TVET governmental schools. Save the Children, under USAID’s previous TVET project, provided career guidance manuals for grades 7 to 11 and a COOPI project provided one for grades 4 to 7.

INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

The assessment team leader’s research, conducted as part of her Ph.D. program, involved investigating 33 institutes in the WBG including Jerusalem. This research included public and not-for-profit TVET

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60 Interviews in Feb 2022
institutes. The team leader surveyed more than 750 graduates throughout the WBG from different types of institutes and has identified enabling policies and measures for women and other marginalized groups that can increase their access to TVET. The enabling policies and measures used by TVET institutes include priority enrollment, fees scholarships or dues exemption, and payment of/reimbursement of the high transportation costs to and from TVET institutes (an obstacle for many prospective students). Another helpful measure includes offering assistance to students to obtain access permits to TVET institutes in Jerusalem—through linkages to human rights institutes that can assist with this task.

Based on the team leader’s research, the enabling policies and measures that best facilitated access to employment for women and other marginalized groups were the provision of Work-Based Learning (WBL) before graduation (i.e., internships, apprenticeships, and other modes) which most institutes provide. They had the greatest influence on assisting graduates in finding employment. The second greatest influence was access to pre- and post-graduation counseling, employment skills training, and awareness raising about labor law. Other graduates made note of the usefulness of institutes supporting graduates through linkages to labor offices. Enabling policies and measures vary according to institute authority, location, and target group.

The team leader’s paper presented at the 5th national conference on TVET held in the PPU in November 2019 concluded: “TVET has been an effective tool to address marginalization and inequality of women in education, training, and work. Yet various steps, enabling policies and affirmative measures are needed to sustain the achievements.”

Currently, the NGO-VET institutes have added practices as part of their policies and measures to increase access of women to TVET (these practices have been added by some of the institutes but not all). They include:

1. Awareness activities among schools and communities.
2. Reduction or exemption of fees (this depends on available resources). The fees within NGO-VET League institutes vary according to area and range between 2000ILS in Gaza, 4000ILS in West Bank and 7000ILS in Jerusalem. For institutes that survive on donations, fees are an important part of local income.
3. Institutes that have kindergartens: YWCA Jerusalem opened a kindergarten that the public and students can use and the YMCA-Jericho recently started one.
4. Boarding for women (provided by YMCA in Jericho). It used to be provided by LWF-VTC but the mobility restrictions accessing Jerusalem have reduced the demand for it since families can’t reach their daughters for pressing issues, but will allow her to commute daily.
5. Facilitating issuance of permits for students from the West Bank to access institutes in Jerusalem (by the LWF).
6. Coordinating with women CSOs to attract women.
7. Adding new market-relevant vocations (resource dependent).
8. Providing short courses or outreach courses (resource dependent).
9. Providing counseling for women trainees to ensure their retention.
10. Gender- training and orientation for staff, along with code of conduct training.
11. Aligning time with scholastic time that enables mothers returning to training to attend, as noted by students in the study’s FGDs.

13. Embedding gender training for their students (YWCA Vocational Training Centre (VTC)) & VTCR, LWF VTC).

14. Enhancing the infrastructure, equipment, and developing gender and WWD responsive curricula for integration of WWD, currently supported by GRIT for seven institutes.

The GRIT project works with seven non-governmental TVET institutes on gender audit and gender-responsive policies.

The TVET institutes have also added more practices as part of their policies to enhance women graduates access to the market including:
- Know about Business study for entrepreneurship integrated with the training.
- Incubators for graduates in HHCT and PPU and for one vocation in LWF-VTC.
- Support to help graduates find employment or self-employment, including matching graduates with available employment, paid internships (e.g., DSPR Gaza is providing 6-month paid internship), LWF for women, incubation provided by PPU, HHCT, and LWF, and career guidance offered by 9 out of 11 institutes).
- WBL before graduation is provided by 9 out of 11 institutes.
- Relations with employers of graduates and/or those engaged in WBL, by nine out of 11 institutes.

TVET institutes lack policies and measures for integrating PWD, including WWDs. The GRIT project works with seven TVET institutes to develop policies and measures to facilitate integration.

Some of these measures have been adopted by some NGO-VET institutes. Some of these policies, however, such as scholarships, lack sustainability, an issue that will be addressed in the assessment recommendations.

**SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS AND BELIEFS**

Social and gender norms and beliefs determine women’s roles and are reflected in career and life options. Gender norms pervade society at all levels, the household, institutional and country level. During FGDs and interviews, female students, graduates, and stakeholders identified cultural norms and related barriers at different levels (household, economic, geographic, and infrastructure) that affect societal attitudes about the engagement of women in TVET. They include:

1. **Household and personal levels:** Gender-ascribed roles in family caring and child rearing, mean that household responsibilities fall squarely on women’s shoulders. This has been a barrier for women to sign up for and attend classes, pursue education, and join the labor force. According to TVET institute representatives female trainees in many cases stop their training when they get engaged or married. Women in focus groups added that the attitudes and practices of their families held them back. A female TVET graduate said,

   “My sister and I signed up to do the course together, but my sister decided to postpone and do the course the following year because of family commitments. After I did my course and my parents saw how much time and effort I put into it, my mum told my sister’s husband not to let her take the course as it will make her not have time for her house, kids, and wifely duties.”

A lot of women noted that it is left to the women to balance duties at home and studying. A student from Gaza stated,

“I think any woman can pursue her studies and employment as long as she knows how to balance her home duties with education. If she is determined enough, she can do it. I wake up at 5 every morning to cook for my children, tidy the house and do most of my duties before I go to the course. Yes, it’s a lot of work but I am determined to finish my studies and get a job. But I know other women who had to quit because they are unable to balance.”
Many women struggle to balance family duties and studies and end up quitting and feeling inadequate because they believe that it’s their duty to do endless hours of childcare, housework and then complete their studies. Women feel like they cannot ask their husbands for extra support with household duties; and those who ask are often shut down and asked to quit their education/job. Some women wait for their kids to go to school before enrolling in TVET.

“I am very grateful that I was able to pursue further education later in my life. After my kids all went to school, I decided to go back to education.”

2. **Economic level—Access to TVET:** Poverty and deterioration of economic status due to COVID-19 has affected households. For women, particularly, the conditions have exacerbated the difficulty they face in accessing education and justifying their goals to family and communities. Women’s education and training is valued less than that of a man, so when families are in need, women’s and girls’ education is the first to go from the family budget. Female students from LWF who participated in the FGD noted, “if the training was not free of charge, we could not have enrolled.” The head of TVET institutes confirmed this during their interview, which amplifies the importance of fee support.

3. **Economic level—Limited access to employment:** Contextual challenges and deteriorating economic status has affected the private sector and its ability to hire and retain staff, especially in Gaza.

4. **Economic level—Gender bias in employment:** Employers tend to have preferences for hiring men in traditional fields due to gender roles, including women’s burden of family caring and child rearing, more vacations and restrictive movement. According to one employer, “she can’t stay late at work if I need her, its unacceptable by the society, and (they) take more vacation”. These attitudes are the basis for gender-pay gaps as noted by MAS study. It’s clearly linked with societal gender-ascribed roles where men are the breadwinners and women are supporters. In another market survey (Enabel 2020), employers remarked on “the high turnover in female workers.” These attitudes further limit opportunities for women. Female graduates in the FDGs reflected on gender bias, noting,

“Most employers prefer to hire men or unmarried women. Because they want someone who can work long hours, someone won’t have to worry about going back to their children or house duties. In my job I see many men getting hired but most of them don’t have the skills me or my female colleague do, we work harder, and we get paid less. This gives us less of a motive to stay in our job or even find an alternative one. We are not appreciated.”

Women graduates also mentioned the poor working conditions:

“Most jobs require long hours and some wouldn’t even hire me when they know I have a kid, there are very few days off, no sick pay and the wages are very low especially compared to our male colleagues who do the same work if not even less. All of these make the idea of working less than appealing especially when my wage doesn’t even begin to cover the childcare costs. However, I really want to become financially independent, making my own money and not reliant on my husbands’ income.”

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Graduates noted that salaries are sometimes lower than the minimum salary, but they can’t complain, otherwise they will lose their job. They noted that male graduates did not experience the same treatment.

Women’s self-employment was a solution for many to provide them with flexibility to carry out their family responsibilities and continue with their career. Self-employed women marketing their products or services have identified various barriers related to connections, communications, and knowledge of the business environment. Some felt that their restrictive movement, lack of knowledge, and limited on-line marketing techniques were barriers. However, graduates talked about how TVET training was a wonderful opportunity not only for empowering them and giving them a sense of confidence in their abilities, but also enabling them to generate an income, which could lead to financial independence and improve their quality of life.

5. **Geographic level:** TVET institutes as well as employment opportunities are in the center of the governorates, which in many cases deprive women from rural areas of access to training or employment. Some graduates noted the importance of online courses for providing opportunities for women overburdened with their responsibilities (small kids at home, elderly at home, etc.). They also mentioned not having to deal with transportation time, cost and uncertainty or mobility restrictions. The TVET institutes have noted that outreach training and online courses increases women’s enrollment, however the online courses are limited in variety. Women graduates mentioned other transportation challenges including passing checkpoints every day and the high cost of transport for low paid jobs. Some women just quit. Some families do not allow women to commute to work because of delays that may cause them to reach home after sunset, which is unacceptable in the family and community.

6. **Infrastructure level:** The lack of accessible childcare centers or services in TVET institutes, and the limited vocations and courses offered represent infrastructure challenges. Women in focus group discussions also noted the importance of a child-care center to support women’s access to TVET:

   “Having a nursery in the building would be a wonderful way to break that barrier for stay-at-home mothers. One of our classmates has a young child who she was in nursery but when needed she had to leave and go all across town to check on her child, if there was a nursery in the building this could mean that the mother can go check on their children in breaks or in case of an emergency.”

7. **On the societal attitudes about TVET, women in TVET and women in non-traditional fields:** As noted in the previous sections, social attitudes about TVET as a means for providing relevant training/skills for a career is less valued than academic career. Women in TVET are less valued and linked only with traditional fields. Some trainees, however noted that societal attitudes about TVET are beginning to change because of successful role models who are benefitting because of TVET. During the interviews they noted:

   “At first people used to look down at anyone who studied in a TVET institute but with time they started seeing the graduates get excellent job opportunities and start many successful businesses and in many cases earning more than university graduates. This has shifted the society viewpoint towards TVET and gave it a much higher value. Therefore, many more people started enlisting at such institutes.”

The changing image of newly opened fields for women is still out of reach for many women. During FGDs women mentioned that they were not aware of TVET or the new courses being
offered. One noted that they first became aware of TVET at school, while some mentioned learning about TVET from Facebook.

The head of TVET institutes noted that it is harder to attract women to TVET training in non-conventional fields than to traditional fields. As noted elsewhere in the report, this is largely due to societal gender norms and beliefs and emphasizes the importance of awareness and changing perceptions, adding resources for a variety of courses (such as furniture design for doing carpentry work) and linkages with the market space.

In the next section the study discusses contextual challenges that affect men and women and the ways TVET institutes have addressed them.

AVAILABILITY OF AND ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES

CONTEXTUAL CHALLENGES TO ACCESS AND TVET INSTITUTES INTERVENTIONS

TVET institutes operate in three areas (West Bank, Gaza, and East Jerusalem) with different operating environments, working conditions, and challenges, which affect women’s access to TVET and employment, including:

- TVET institutes in Jerusalem face high competition from Israeli government-supported ones (identified by the ETF study in Jerusalem for the EU). The TVET institutes in Jerusalem (LWF-VTC, YWCA, and Jerusalem Industrial Secondary School (JISS)) provide scholarships and sometimes full exemption, when possible, to compete. They are still challenged by the high spectrum of specializations offered by these institutes. They try to add market-relevant courses through projects, but offerings are still limited, as noted by many market studies.

- The effect of the 15-year siege and a weakened private sector has led to high unemployment rates in Gaza and limited job opportunities. The Enabel study identified the need for TVET graduates for sub-contracted rather than direct employment in Gaza, in contrast to the West Bank. The DSPR, with the support of other funded initiatives, provides placement support for graduates for 6 months after graduation, which has helped many find employment.

- The high number of blockades in the West Bank and 3 different zones (A, B and C) make accessing TVET institutes in the West Bank problematic. These blockades impede women from crossing, requiring them to take a circuitous and more expensive route to jobs in nearby cities, where the promise of decent wages and employment is limited. This was apparent in various studies including the DCA recent impact assessment, and reflected in the comments from graduates during the focus group discussions. Many women reported that they would opt for working from home or self-employment. PPU mentioned providing incubation support for entrepreneurs and placement of graduates to address these issues. While HHCT noted that the Commercial & Industrial Security Corporation academy training enables women to increase their ICT skills, and for some to be self-employed. To overcome these challenges TVETs offer scholarships and outreach programs whenever possible, but not on a regular basis.

- For some of the poor women in disadvantaged localities such as Al-Aghwar (the Jordan Valley), they must take any job even in near-by settlements to support their families. Outreach courses might not even attract them. The YMCA experience with the Al-Bir project and in collaboration with a CSO and private sector provided sewing training for women and ensured jobs in a sewing factory once they were trained, along with an allowance and paying their transportation.
Overcoming these challenges requires higher sustainable support and learning from institutes’ initiatives.

**AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES TO ACCESS TVET AND EMPLOYMENT**

The following was noted as resources by consulted TVET institutes and women, if available, have increased women enrollment significantly, and some increased their access to employment.

**TABLE 5: AVAILABILITY OF RESOURCES TO ACCESS TVET AND EMPLOYMENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Resources that increased access to TVET</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scholarships for fees</strong></td>
<td>High for poor and marginalized women</td>
<td>Partially, some institutes provided and mainly linked with projects. The ratio of female to male once scholarships are available are 3 to 1 for some and 5 to one for others, or 100% for females, depending on available sources. Or if a newly opened non-traditional field, then women are exempted from fees, and it’s clearly publicized, through their social media and awareness campaign they do in schools and communities prior to beginning of the training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Boarding</strong></td>
<td>For women living in remote areas, to avoid daily transportation</td>
<td>LWF-VTC and YMCA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation allowance/ or bus</strong></td>
<td>When opening new fields, addressing women from remote areas, or part of training within outreach training to reach VTC</td>
<td>Different projects but not integrated as measure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outreach</strong></td>
<td>Reach the unreachable women in remote areas, especially those overburdened with household and caring responsibilities in these communities</td>
<td>Many are conducting in partnership with CSOs but on project based</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Online training</strong></td>
<td>Provide an opportunity for women to access TVET with her overburdened responsibilities and to overcome access issues.</td>
<td>Such training enabled women from Gaza to participate in TVET institutes’ courses in the West Bank, as the case noted by YMCA, and YWCA-Ramallah. It also increased the number of participants as the case of YWCA Jerusalem to 1.2% of its previous capacity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nurseries/ kindergartens/childcare</strong></td>
<td>For young mothers who wants to access TVET</td>
<td>The YWCA has the nursery as part of their other activities and students benefit from it. The YMCA newly added a nursery, it increased the number of women in their course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Need</td>
<td>Availability</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------</td>
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<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Market-relevant fields</strong>&lt;sup&gt;65&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Variety of courses at different levels is important for women, and poor families, who would expect their daughters’ support after graduation.</td>
<td>The SVTC/Grit experience has integrated females in the institutes, the YWCA experience in adding short courses has increased enrollment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Gender focal point/ Psychosocial counselors** | Important for retention of women trainees, especially in non-conventional fields | Experience of LWF & YMCA  
7 institutes have career guidance services for their trainees and 4 have gender focal points |

### Resources that increased access to employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Need</th>
<th>Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Career Guidance before &amp; after graduation</strong></td>
<td>Important for women identification of opportunities after graduation, and increasing their scope</td>
<td>Career Resource Center (CRC) at the TVET Portal, and 6 institutes has career guidance at their institutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WBL</strong></td>
<td>Many graduates found work in the place of training before graduation, or at least acquired experience</td>
<td>9 out of 11 are implementing in all their vocations, proved in tracking studies and previous work of the institutes to increase employment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Gender responsive work environment alignment** | Many of the graduates would leave employment for this reason, or their families would reject her work for this reason | GRIT will work with few samples  
USAID support to PS could integrate this element |
| **Job placement for 6 months after graduation** | For women and men graduates from marginalized areas as Gaza, this was an important tool for their employment | Linked to projects as the Mercy Corps project in 2016, or the DSPR ongoing relief projects |
| **Incubation/pre-incubation for self-employed/ entrepreneurs** | High demand by unemployed women, for women with social burdens and for women graduates from non-traditional fields | Provided by PPU and HHCT for their graduates and by LWF-VTC in one of their women trainings  
CSOs, MFI and the Palestinian Fund for Employment and Social Protection (PFESP) provide such services |

Thus how can these resources be accessed on a sustainable basis, either provided by TVET institutes or linked to other sustainable institutes for their provision, as will be noted in the recommendations.

## CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

### GBV/ SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE IN TVET INSTITUTIONS

None of the women who participated in the FGDs noted incidences of GBV within the TVET institutes, however, there was one case reported about a woman who was traveling to the TVET institute and was abused and harassed by a taxi driver. Some heads of TVET institutes noted that they have a complaints system in place and have never received any reports of GBV. Others noted that they have a psychosocial counselor as part of awareness raising and ensuring a violence free, safe environment, while others have a gender course. Although, many institutes don’t have set policies, their practices in this

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<sup>65</sup> The market-relevant courses are usually added based on a market study that engages the companies and they identify their market demand for employment and skills.
area is zero tolerance for any abuse to keep trust and reputation. There is a need for clear policies of prevention and protection to be integrated into TVET institutions. The work of GRIT in this area could help guide institutes in addressing these issues.

On the other hand, graduates noted being harassed in the workplace. Many women did admit to facing harassment at work, on the way to work or at the institute.

“I worked somewhere where one of my colleagues kept sexually harassing me from looks to very inappropriate things he would say. I tried to avoid him. I tried to do my best in not giving him attention but in the end, I left because there was nothing more, I could do to protect myself.”

Another graduate from Gaza noted:

“We need to have more rights and appreciation of our jobs, otherwise most of us will either put up with these hard conditions or quit and stay at home and never come back to the workforce. Especially when it comes to sexual harassment and the bullying that happens from bosses and higher up staff.”

Employers noted the high turnover of females once they get married. Some women noted they left their work for other reasons including GBV, lower pay than male staff, poor working conditions and abuse. Women also mentioned not knowing how to discuss these incidents, negotiate or where to complain in case of GBV. Some of the graduates suggested courses should be held in the TVET institute on how to handle such situations:

“If they gave us a little course on how to deal with such situations it would be very beneficial, we would know what to say and how to react as most of the times we’re shocked and unsure of how to deal with such situations and this only builds more fear in getting a job and integrating into the workforce.”

Many participants expressed that they would prefer to get a job where they can work from home or have only female colleagues, as a protection or a withdrawal mechanism. They said that they don’t feel comfortable around men and are worried that their male colleagues would cross the line by saying something inappropriate or by harassing them. However, many women also said that they don’t mind working alongside men and that they are ready to take any job that can help them improve their skills and career.

“We have to prove ourselves and show that we can work as well as men, if not even better. Many employers are hesitant in employing us because they think we’re not good enough, we don’t work as hard or that our kids and housework will get in the way but I want to prove those people wrong and show them that we can work just as hard and provide brilliant results. If we keep sheltering ourselves from the world and job opportunities, we’ll never claim our rights and show the world our true potential. But maybe having courses before graduation to help everyone feel more confident working with men would be helpful especially if they are given the skills to deal with harassment situations. This can give many a peace of mind and the confidence to work anywhere”

TVET institutes noted, in non-traditional fields they insist on mixed classes and engagement in WBL. Everything is under the institutes’ supervision to help prepare graduates for the marketplace and change the attitude & behavior of male students and employers. Some TVET institutes have gender awareness courses for their male students, which may lead to changing attitudes and behavior in the workplace.

Preparation for co-working spaces and interactions is important, as well as dealing with and reporting harassment. In addition to empowering women and supporting them in the marketplace, improving their bargaining ability would support women and help them address inequality-related challenges.
COVID-19 AND DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS

The number of women trainees dropped during COVID-19. This was expected (as noted earlier in the report, Figure 4, with a drop from 44% to 34%). The drop in enrollment resulted in a drop in the number of short courses that are usually held, although some institutes opted to have online courses, and continued their normal courses through online methods. Students who studied in 2020 had to do everything via Zoom. Women students said they appreciated that the institute in carried on despite the circumstances, but also agreed that they preferred everything to be done face to face.

This is in line with a national survey on the impact of COVID-19 on education through online learning. According to the survey the effect of COVID-19 and the shift to online learning has affected marginalized people negatively because only half of the households had internet or computers, and two third of the households with children who practiced online learning were not satisfied66.

Institutes did note that COVID-19 assisted them in adopting online methods that they used afterward. These methods enabled institutes to reach new groups they were not reaching before, such as trainees from Gaza for a training held in Ramallah. The online methods when accompanied by practical implementation either in the center or though WBL made it better, although the pedagogical part of such integration needs adaptation.

NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS AS VOICED BY FEMALE TVET STUDENTS AND GRADUATES

This section looks at choices made by female students and graduates for training programs and its link to occupations in the workplace, and what their needs are regarding access to TVET or employment.

REASONS AND NEEDS FOR ACCESSING TVET

Many women that participated in the FGDs decided to choose a training program/vocation they are passionate about, especially those who studied graphic design, or even those who studied a non-traditional field. Many decided to study what they thought could provide them with better job opportunities after graduation. Some went with gender normative courses like secretary but there are some that went with something they were passionate about despite it being a very male dominated course/sector.

“I chose to study mobile rapiers because it’s something I’ve always been interested in. I was the only woman in my course and although at first, I was self-conscious about it, I became good friends with all my male colleagues. I am starting my own business now fixing mobile-phones and I am really enjoying it. I try to buy new equipment with every profit I make.”

For this graduate, passion and employment was the driving force for her. Over 90% of the women who participated in the group interviews are longing to find employment or be self-employed after graduation and have hopes and plans for that.

Some choices are made based on the workplace. Some women prefer women-only work environments, others prefer an opportunity that will lead to self-employment or will lead to employment in a big institute that has systems, such as banks. As one noted:

“I personally did not study a course that is male dominated as I do not feel comfortable being around men. In our society we rarely interact with any men and I do feel intimidated and scared to study a male dominated

course especially since it would mean that I would have to work in an environment that is heavily men oriented.”

The TVET institutes noted that career guidance, WBL, gender training and counseling during the training are all supporting methods that assist women in male-oriented non-traditional fields in the TVET institute itself and in the marketplace.

Reasons for selecting a training program is also dependent on social status and geography. A younger unmarried women noted she preferred training that would lead to employment in big companies, while older women (in their early thirties) or married women or those living in remote areas preferred options that would enable them to be self-employed or have their own business, allowing them to better balance their work and home responsibilities.

Unemployed university graduates who joined TVET, stated that they joined to find better employment opportunities because they could not find a job or start their own business. They saw that TVET graduates were able to find more job opportunities, because of the additional market-relevant skills they obtained and/or additional practical skills related to their field of specialization. Others decided to take a TVET course because the course was their passion and they already worked in a similar sector and wanted to have a broader experience and qualification especially for those who wanted to start their own business. Others just wanted to do a short course that would help them obtain a job opportunity. Returning mothers wanted to refresh their skills and identify options for employment or self-employment.

TVET institutes noted that increasing the number of vocations and courses happens every few years and is project-funded. The need and addition of new fields is based on market demand and consultation with beneficiaries. Consultation is part of the training needs assessment process TVET Institutes and projects conduct before introducing a new course.

WOMEN’S NEEDS FOR ACCESSING EMPLOYMENT

Many of the women consulted for the study also noted the importance of supporting them in accessing employment. All participants agreed that having a mentor after graduation is immensely helpful especially for those who work in male dominated sectors or those starting their own business.

“I want to start my own business but don’t know where to even start. I know how to do my graphic design really well but have no idea how to approach the practical side of running the business, like handling marketing and finances. Having a more detailed course before graduation would be helpful as we did learn a little bit about the basics of starting a business but not merely enough to help us know how to run one. I suggest that we use the experience from a mentor who graduated from the same or similar institute who has started their own business and would have a pool of information as they would have gone through a similar journey as us and we’ll be able to relate to them. Someone who could be paired with us and help us after graduating would be very beneficial too. Because sometimes we have the odd question here and there and have no idea who to resort to.”

A graduate suggested forming an incubator to support graduates seeking to start a business especially in Gaza where graduates have very limited electricity and resources.

“We need incubators or something similar as in Gaza we only get electricity a few hours a day which means doing my projects as a graphic designer is increasingly hard, buying an electricity generator is very expensive. In addition, we need programs that are also not easy to source, if there was an incubator that can provide access to programs needed and electricity even if just for few hours would be very beneficial.”

Another graduate expressed how hard it was to land a job after graduating:
“Having more courses on how to do our CVs and interviews would be immensely helpful. When I graduated, I had no idea how to do job interviews or improve my CV. We did do a couple of sessions on this, but it included very basic information that simply was not enough. These skills are invaluable because no matter how good we are at the skills the job requires, if we are unable to demonstrate that in an interview then it won’t lead anywhere. I think interview and CV skills are one of the hardest and most important skills any student could learn before graduation.”

Another student suggested that TVETs offer a short courses in employment skills after graduation to refresh and update their knowledge or offer peer learning:

“It would be beyond helpful if we could do short courses for a few hours every other month to update our knowledge as anyone who studies something to do with technology will know how quickly programs and knowledge changes. Something like this could provide us with important tools that can keep us on track. It doesn’t even have to be done with a teacher, maybe us graduates can meet up and teach other new information that we learned. Using the institutes faculties.”

Some TVET institutes provide partial support to women graduates. The LWF-VTC has a successful model that needs to be strengthened and shared. In 2016 the LWF established a graduates’ support unit within its organizational structure, fully staffed, with clear job descriptions and responsibilities. During the past 5 years they were able to support over 600 graduates through matching graduates with job opportunities, providing support for self-employment through grants and links to venues for marketing their products, as well as providing counseling and technical coaching through the trainers. These efforts were supported through networking and projects. Graduate support programs require additional investment for all institutes.

MARKET DEMAND

Recent studies done in the West Bank\(^\text{67}\) and in WBG overall\(^\text{68}\) indicate that there is high demand for TVET skills in various employment sectors. In the West Bank, as detailed below, there is high demand in many sectors for workers. In Gaza, employers are using subcontractors to fill the worker gaps. Studies by the Belgium Development Agency (Enabel) and the Gender-Responsive and Inclusive TVET (GRIT) project examined the “skills drain” of skilled Palestinians going to the Israeli market for better opportunities more in line with their education, training, and skills as well as better pay. The GRIT study also looked at the possibility of West Bank employers filling the gap with female TVET graduates for jobs that are traditionally “male.” The GRIT study provides suggested fields of training for the GRIT project to implement. These studies and others have indicated the demand for green skills and the integration of technology. The Enabel study concludes that technology is a main driving force for market development. Integration of technology in different sectors could be an entry point for women in non-conventional fields, such as working on scanners, computerized numerical controls (CNC), 3D, or computerized equipment in carpentry, auto-mechanics, or industry.

The Palestine Economic Policy Research Institute (MAS) sectoral studies on sectoral gaps have clearly identified the need for TVET graduates within the different sectors. For East Jerusalem various studies were done including European Training Foundation (ETF) and European Union (EU) studies\(^\text{69}\). The market demand based on these studies, are presented by area in text box 1 below.

\(^{67}\) Hilal, R., Nassar, T., 2020. Market Analysis for the GAC/CLWR/LWF- GRIT PROJECT


\(^{69}\) East Jerusalem related studies:

- Hilal, R. 2017. Rapid Needs Assessment for the East Jerusalem Local Market with focus on Tourism and Technology Sectors. COOPI
BOX 1: THE MARKET DEMAND FOR SKILLED/SEMI-SKILLED LABOR BY AREA

West Bank:
- A severe gap was noted for all construction sectors, auto mechanics, fashion design and sewing.
- Skilled and semi-skilled workers are also needed in most industries but specifically in machinery maintenance, Computerized Numerical Control (CNC), printing and binding.
- Demand for skilled/semi-skilled workers in sectors differed according to governorates. While woodwork, carpentry, and construction graduates were needed in all governorates for men, with possibility of integrating women in non-traditional fields, the need for chefs and food servicing was concentrated in Ramallah, Jericho, Bethlehem and Hebron for men and women, the need for graduates in agriculture was concentrated in Jericho and the north of the West Bank for men and women, and the need for graphic design was mainly in Ramallah Nablus and Hebron for women.
- There is also an opportunity for entrepreneurial projects in agriculture, mainly in organic and permaculture projects, and in niche markets like herbs, mushrooms, and dates, in general green jobs, opportunities are for men and women.

Gaza:
- The demand for skilled and semi-skilled workers exists, although the market is closed. The demand for skills is required through sub-contracting and in technology related skills.
- The main sectors in need of graduates and skilled workers are: Wood engraving, mechatronics, hydraulic and pneumatic (related to maintenance of machinery), maintenance of sewing machines, master technicians in construction and olive press maintenance in agriculture.
- For both: cooking and housekeeping in hospitality (e.g., hotels), and Veterinary, Agricultural Extension, Fish farming, Food processing, Solar energy,
- For women in dress making, food processing and handicrafts, as well as cosmetics and beauty salons and wedding photographers.
- The textile industry in Gaza is export oriented and is linked with the Israeli textile industry, the ones operating are functioning, with increased demand from the Israeli market.

East Jerusalem:
- Tourism, services, and ICT sectors, including tour guides, chefs, other hotel and restaurants service people, crafts, graphic design, and e-marketing requested by tourist and services establishments. While the vocations requested for ICT included mobile app development, computer networks and security system installations and maintenance. The identified demand is for men and women.

Employment rates of male and female TVET graduates are high overall and after 3-4 years almost all are working. Within 6 months of graduation, however there is some variation in employment rates based on sector and location. For example, employment is lowest in some sectors such as secretary in Gaza, and high in tailoring because the sector is export oriented. Employment in certain fields and areas is partially
saturated, while demand is high in other areas. In addition, graduates of secretarial courses are frequently competing with unemployed university graduates.

Employment in TVET-related fields is in high demand by the private sector in the West Bank and Jerusalem. Subcontracting is in very high demand in Gaza and there is demand for women in non-traditional fields in the West Bank, as noted in the findings. This points to the need for TVET institutes to add new market-relevant fields, integrate technology into non-traditional fields, and address the challenges and barriers to women’s access to employment.
## CONCLUSIONS

TVET provides clear access to employment, self-employment, and opening businesses. TVET skills are highly needed in the job market that has clear skills gaps. The access to TVET institutes and employment is highly engendered, with apparent social and gender norms and attitudes that define gender roles and restricts women's access to TVET and employment. TVET institutes have been striving to increase access through various best practices, although some are lacking resources and others could be replicated in other institutes. The conclusion below identifies the gaps and learnings, to which the recommendations in the following section respond.

The detailed conclusions below are based on the assessment’s findings and relate to questions as per the consultant’s scope of work (SOW). They are listed according to domain and sub-domain and respond to related questions.  

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<th>Domain/Subdomain</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Conclusions: Gaps and Lessons Learned</th>
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| Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices: | - Do TVET institutions have regulations or other commitments for improving women’s access to training or to advance gender equality? Does this include persons with disabilities (PWD), or other groups with less access to TVET offerings? <br> - Do TVET institutions have affirmative action programs or targets to promote women’s and men’s entry into TVET institutions, and into gender-segregated occupations? Is any such affirmative action program part of a formalized policy? Does the policy define targets? <br> - Have the relevant PA ministries, non-government organizations (NGOs), or other institutions conducted a labor market or private sector analysis with a gender or social inclusion lens to identify the misalignment (if any) of skills training to labor market demand? Have TVET institutions created effective training-to-employment pathways that are gender-inclusive? <br> - Is there a unit or focal point responsible within TVET institutions charged with ensuring gender integration and female education? <br> - How do the laws and constitutions shape different opportunities for women’s and men’s access and opportunities for TVET education? Does this include laws requiring accommodations for women or men with disabilities, for childcare, etc.? <br> - To what extent does policy for private sector firms and TVET institutions reflect gender-sensitive considerations? | 1. Many **national policies** and regulations are missing, including the legal framework of TVET, although some were adopted by the MOEHE and MOWA, the newly established TVET Commission could lead such effort, the lack of laws to protect self-employed and women working from home is also a challenge for women graduates, as well as the delay in the labor law and its reference to equality.  
2. The engagement of NGO-VET league, whom mission statements are based on serving the marginalized, refugees, and women and their high commitment to serve women would ensure the legal framework for TVET is based on equality, and the **engagement of CSOs is essential to advocate** for the women economic empowerment related laws, policies and regulations with MOL, MOWA and MONE.  
3. **Institutional policies and regulations** at the NGO-VET League vary among institutes, where-as all of them are committed to integration of women, most of them have policies and regulations to improve access of women, such as ongoing awareness and linkages to schools and CSOs. Some have reduction of fees or exemption especially for non-traditional fields that are resource dependent. Only 7 institutes have an affirmative action program that is part of a formalized policy. The YWCA in Jerusalem and Ramallah through integrated gender training for men and women non-traditional fields and integration of childcare services in Jerusalem. The LWF (in |
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|                  | – Are there processes in private sector firms to address gender bias and imbalances through gender-sensitive or socially inclusive recruitment, affirmative action, or career enhancement?  
– Have the relevant line PA Ministries, NGOs, UNRWA, UNESCO, ILO, or other institutions analyzed TVET educational curricula and teaching materials with regards to gender-based stereotypes? What were the findings of such studies? | Ramallah and in Jerusalem, PPU and HHCOT through integrating women in non-traditional fields and having a gender focal point. LWF VTCs also integrates gender training to its students. The YMCA was the first to integrate women in non-traditional fields and started a childcare service.  
4. **The GRIT project is working with 7 institutes of the NGO-VET League to ensure and widen the integration**, including adding women for the first time, and enhancing gender integration. They managed to integrate women for the first time in the Salesian VTC and starting to integrate affirmative policies and regulations in the 7 addressed institutes. DSPR with the support of DCA/NCA integrated new non-traditional field and JISS with the support of welfare.  
5. **There were two gender relevant labor market assessments in 2020** that had a gender inclusion lens, the GRIT assessment included a WWD lens. Studies have identified various market-demanded fields that are non-existent at these institutes or are still closed through gender segregation system in all VTCs in the West Bank and Gaza. Although some institutes recently opened all fields, they still require added counseling support to ensure retaining women, so as not to drop out, as noted by the MOL experience, where they did not have counselors. Seven out of 11 institutes from the NGO-VET league have counselors that are engaged in supporting women trainees.  
6. **Relevant policies towards integration of PWD is limited** in these institutes, the GRIT project is working on supporting 7 institutes in integrating policies, preparing the spaces, equipment and training trainers. Alignment of educational attainment of PWD and facilitation of access to market would need special attention.  
7. Adding new vocations and ending segregation in entry requirements would enhance access of women to VTCs, as well as adding other affirmative measures (noted above and in the findings and recommendations) and strengthening those measures.  
8. **Access to employment was encouraged** by TVET institutes through adopting the Work-based-learning before graduation. The integration of employment unit/support is provided by 9 out of 11 institutes, however it is provided through part-time and overloaded...
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<td><strong>Social and gender norms and beliefs:</strong></td>
<td>What are the barriers, economic constraints, geographic, social and infrastructure challenges that prevent males and females from accessing, continuing, or completing their technical and vocational education (e.g., cultural norms, gender norms, gender division of labor, fees for education, facilities, access to transportation and safe passage to TVET institutions, childcare services, perceptions of personal security)?</td>
<td><strong>10. Economic constraints to access TVET:</strong> high percentage of poverty especially in Gaza and marginalized localities in the West Bank presents a barrier and challenge for men and women. The social perception towards valuing women’s career and work less than men’s has led some families in poverty to cut-down the expenses of women’s education and training. Fees and expensive transportation become a burden, and in severe cases to causes families to cut down the men’s education and training, or to pull them out of school so they can try and work. This is highest in Gaza with higher poverty, in Jerusalem young men drop to be a cheap labor with high salaries in the Israeli market. <strong>The support to fees and transportation is essential,</strong> the TVET institutes noted the importance of this for women and for poor men, especially during emergencies.</td>
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<td><strong>Economic constraints to access the labor market</strong> due to the limited job opportunities and weak economy and private sector, especially in Gaza. Six months paid internship in Gaza and in the West Bank for women has supported some in being able to access the market, while many graduates opted to be self-employed. Opening opportunities for employment and strengthening self-employment is essential.</td>
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<td><strong>Geographic constraints, are related to the mobility restrictions</strong> due to occupational measures, in scattered areas of the West Bank, and high number of physical impediments which increases the cost of transportation for women in rural areas to reach the center of the governorates were jobs are, and also restricts access to TVET and employment. There is also difficulty in moving between the three areas, West Bank, Jerusalem and Gaza, which also causes constraints</td>
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<td>Social: Cultural and gender norms</td>
<td>Cultural and gender norms related to women’s sole responsibility in family caring was reflected in their role and decision making, reflected in household responsibilities and managing home and studying or work, and in controlling her decision-making regarding education, training and work, and even controlling her income, by spouse or family. The cultural norms affected the employer’s decision making and women trainees self-confidence. The institutes’ practicing WBL and co-ed classes have noted better preparation for women and men trainees, as well as the employers regarding women’s abilities. The co-ed training prepared women to deal with male colleagues, and vise-versa, especially when they come from public schools which most of are segregated by gender. While WBL has prepared women to interact with the employers, colleagues and customers, and be more confident of their skills and abilities, including technical and life skills; there is still a need for gender awareness for women and men trainees to help change attitudes. In addition, family and employer attitudes need to be further addressed to help support women in accessing employment or self-employment.</td>
<td>for women. The online courses were welcomed by many trainees and graduates as an idea but noted less benefit than face-to-face training. Online courses are a newly started initiative by the TVET institutes and needs strengthening.</td>
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<td>Social: Infrastructural constraints</td>
<td>Social attitude to TVET: families and communities’ social attitude to TVET is often negative, especially related to women in TVET. Many campaigns through schools and CSOs have been done through traditional means of media, using success stories. In some institutes the CSOs were the ones attracting women students, other means should be introduced.</td>
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<td>Infrastructural constraints: related to TVET institutes and employment was clear, as limited number of courses were opened to women with limited related equipment and infrastructure, same for PWD, with addition of inclusion measures that are missing. While the non-traditional workplace does not have the required infrastructure to add women especially the SMEs, and women graduates requiring opening their business are also affected by these constraints, an issue that needs attention.</td>
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| Access to TVET resources: | - What are the available data on TVET-related scholarships in the WBG? What is the ratio of male-to-female scholarship recipients of these scholarships?  
- Have scholarship or stipend programs increased women’s enrollment in TVET courses?  
- Are TVET scholarship opportunities for girls in all available programs widely publicized? How are poor women or women with disabilities informed about TVET scholarship opportunities and are they encouraged to participate?  
- Are there free TVET programs? Are these programs viewed as having value by hiring firms and families? How do fees affect girls’ and women’s engagement in TVET programs? | 16. The fees within NGO-VET League institutes are part of this local income and is significant especially since these institutes survive on donations. Women benefit more than men (3 to 5 times or even more) from scholarships, when available, especially women in non-traditional fields. Women try to find sources for scholarships, which is mainly from projects. **TVET institutes need a more sustainable way to support scholarships.**  
17. All the institutes and consulted women agreed that scholarships increased women participation, and for some it’s impossible to participate without the scholarship.  
18. **The findings of the study have identified other resources that increase women participation.** (listed in table 5), including boarding, transportation allowance or bus, outreach training, online training, childcare, adding market relevant fields, and having a counselor or /and gender focal point. |

**Overall Conclusions**

19. There are apparent gaps in the three under investigated key domains: 1) Laws, policies, regulations, and institutional practices; 2) Social norms and beliefs; and 3) Access to TVET resources, that challenges women’s access to TVET and to the labor market. Which requires structural and sustainable measures.

20. The challenges women face towards accessing TVET and employment, include attitudes and perception towards their roles, with effects on choice of career, specialization, and employment. They are also limited with the opportunities at TVET institutes and resources for supporting their access, and finally they are challenged by the context and its effect on economy and mobility, and the lack of laws and policies, and its weak implementation. However, the market demand for TVET, their readiness to accept women in non-conventional fields, and the need for sub-contracting are all opportunities for women’s employment and self-employment. However, the integration of successful initiatives as a sustainable measure is needed, as well as learning from which to spread to other institutes.
RECOMMENDATIONS

New USAID/WBG initiatives for TVET and gender in TVET are encouraged to address the findings and the gaps as detailed by the recommendations below. Recommendations are listed by the assessment domains and note which specific conclusions they link to.

Overall, the assessment team recommends that USAID/WBG programming focus on 4 key areas:

1. Empowering, resourcing, and sustaining TVET institutes with enabling policies and affirmative measures as well as sustainable structures.
2. Enabling TVET institutes to support TVET graduates.
3. Systemizing private sector partnerships.
4. Creating innovative ways based on positive cultural values to embed positive attitudes for TVET and women in TVET.

Innovative interventions that build on previous work of donors and institutes are important and will effectively address the gaps detailed in the conclusions. Although long-term support is needed for sustainable change to help enhance the TVET institutes and private sector, as noted below, there are some short-term interventions that will also move them towards better gender integration.

RECOMMENDATION BY DOMAIN

LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES

- Build capacity to and facilitate the development and documentation of policies and regulations that are tailored for each TVET institute based on step-by-step assessment and coaching with the management of each institute and through financial assessment and planning. (C3-C9) (For long-term sustainability)
- Strengthen the NGO-VET League’s role in advocacy for TVET laws and strategies that is based on equality and equity. This could be done through in-depth training of management on gender equality and equity in TVET and advocacy, as well as accompaniment for their role in advocacy. (C1 & C2) (Short to Long-term)
- Support and network with CSOs carrying out advocacy for women in economic development, through the NGO-VET League’s active members and networks. Example could be supporting a legal comparative analysis of regional laws and regulations regarding labor laws, and micro businesses. (C1&C2) (Short-term)
- Cooperate with GRIT and NGO-VET League through regular meeting and plan to continue the work of integrating and documenting internal policies and regulations for access of women and WWD to TVET, for protection against GBV, adding policies to ensure inclusion, considering educational background (could be pre-vocational preparation/basic education preparation, etc.)

The recommendations respond to the findings and the 40 conclusions made. Each recommendation points out to the conclusion number it’s referring to at the end (C#). Recommendations could be linked to more than one conclusion, and more than one recommendation could link to the required conclusion. Some of the recommendations listed under certain domains will link to conclusions within the same domain and could link with other domains or cross cutting, some would link to recommendations.
and enhancing inclusion policies to address challenges in accessing employment (supporting the graduates is essential (linked with R20)). (Short to Long-term)

- Enhance and sustain systems within TVET Institutes that can improve access of women and WWD to the market by coaching institutes to integrate and sustain the systems. Enhancements to these systems could include WBL, career counseling, graduates support units, and gender focal points.(C8, C12 & C13, C34) (Long-term)

- Improve TVET institutes sustainable relations with the private sector through different methods including being active in LET council and based on each area and type of training. (C9) (Short to Long-term)

**SOCIAL AND GENDER NORMS AND BELIEFS**

- Provide scholarships for poor women and men and for women in non-conventional fields to access TVET. Work with TVET institutions to develop relevant TVET institutes' internal policies to sustain scholarship programs. Develop income generation methods and plans for each institute and support the plan for sustainability. (C10, C16, C17) (For long-term sustainability)

- Help enable institutes’ abilities to provide matching services and career guidance for their graduates. This could include supporting six month paid internships after graduation for women graduates and graduates in Gaza. Recommend paid internships prioritize women graduates from non-traditional fields or women graduates from newly introduced course (women categories could also be added to the West Bank). However, internships could also target both women and men graduates from Gaza and those working in non-traditional environments. Matching service can be provided for all men and women graduates by their institutes to help enhance their success after graduation. (C11, C22, C34) (Short to Long-term)

- Support current incubators at the three institutes and develop it's incubation services for TVET graduates based on clear assessment of each. In addition, develop other incubators that could serve other areas (either within the institute or within incubators serving university students with alignment of the services to TVET graduates and seed money). (C11, C12, C22) (Short to Long-term)

- Enable and support the TVET institutes to more effectively serve former graduates who want to open their own business through creating networking with others, and providing technical coaching. (C12, C22) (Short-term)

- Design innovative campaigns (addressing communities and market) based on supporting role models, use of social media, producing videos and use of community actions. Campaigns can be based on positive cultural values and connotations. (C13, C14, C21) (Short-term)

- Conduct a study to extract slogans from positive cultural values and to design the campaigns to target levels 1-4. (C13, C14, C21; this is a prerequisite to R11 and R13) (Short-term)

- Document and publish (electronically and paper) examples of role models of women graduates, teachers, and management. Examples should have representatives for levels 1-4, and document trainings provided geographically, with link to career guidance info (R28). (C13, C14, C21, C28) (Short-term)
- Create and facilitate partnerships and certifications between local and international TVET institutes to add value to TVET within the community and address the issue of certification in East Jerusalem. (C13, C14, C21) (Short to Long-term)

ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES

- Fund and support the increase of the number of trainings programs offered by TVET institutes for women and PWD at levels 1, 2 and 4 by identifying and adding market-relevant trainings for each area and institute based on a market survey (R28) and through adding needed resources (infrastructure, equipment, and curricula development according to nationally adopted method for TVET curricula). (C5, C6, C15, C18, C19, C20, C33) (Long-term)

- Develop outreach and online short training courses (level 1), based on market demand to reach women, PWD and other marginalized groups. Develop the curricula, the systems, the needed equipment, and infrastructure, as they could increase the number of women in TVET exponentially, and add additional women groups, as did the spread of vocational units in academic schools and the open university in integrating women in university education, while integrating PWD has to be tailor-made and responsive. (C5, C6, C18, C19, C20, C33, R28, R25) (Long-term)

- Provide funding for integration of other identified resources (listed in table 5), including boarding, transportation, childcare, etc. based on each TVET Institute and their trainees needs. Support should be preceded by detailed mapping of resources and identifying needs for each TVET institute, as part of the tailor-made approach72. (C18) (Short to long-term)

- Develop a data bank of curricula for market-relevant short courses (either face-to face, online or outreach) to cater to the different target women groups including the unemployed, drop-outs, university graduates, entrepreneurs looking for skills, and returning mothers to education and training. This could be accredited nationally by TVET institutes and made available nationally (C18, C19, C20, C25, C26). (Short to long-term)

- Develop the physical infrastructure and PWD related learning tools and equipment of institutes to cater for access of WWD to TVET, for those that were not addressed by GRIT, or complementing the work done. (C27) (Short to long-term)

- Provide technical support and coaching to developing Graduates Support Centers/units in all TVET institutes based on LWF experience and international best practice; include needed career counseling materials. These could be general73, but specific within each institute. Coach institutes to do the mapping of other service providers they can network with for serving graduates and fresh graduates, with developing alumni structure for their graduates. (C8, C9, C11, C22, C30, C32, C34, R9 & R10) (Short to long-term)

- Develop sustainable relation between TVET institutes and the private sector that involves setting up structures, and engaging the private sector representatives as CCI, PFI, BWF, PBA, for each area according to the specific area and related sectors, which can be extracted from the market study to be conducted. (C24) (Short to long-term)

- Fund and support TVET institutes to integrate technology into existing male-oriented traditional fields in TVET institutes to allow access of women to these fields through technology, and

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72 The mapping could use the partial collected data for 11 institutes during the study (Annex 4).

73 Developed counselling materials and developed curricula could be added to the TVET portal initially developed with the support of USAID, www.tvet.ps
upgrade the trainers’ skills in the new technology and inclusion, and train female graduates from non-traditional fields to become trainers. (C36, C28) (Short to long-term)

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

- Integrate gender training for all male and female trainees, and include methods to address, prevent, and respond to GBV and sexual harassment. Trainings should also provide empowerment tools and methods, and techniques to enhance communications with employers related to bargaining and workers’ rights. (C29 & C30) (Short to Long-term)
- Raise awareness of the private sector on GBV, through various means including designing clear messages and carrying out advocacy. Such efforts should include gender units at CCI, and include adding complaint mechanisms. (C30) (Short to Long-term)

**COVID-19-RELATED REMOTE/DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS**

- Provide technical assistance to TVET institutions to enhance the quality of online training, and hybrid training through adding WBL elements, on the job training or inhouse practical training, and developing ways of assessment and certification. These methods can help re-engage past graduates in upgrading their skills and competencies on new technology. (C31) (Long-term)

**NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS**

- Provide technical assistance to TVET institutions to provide online mentoring and coaching from past graduates for employed and self-employed recent women graduates. (C30, C32) (Short-term for sustainability)
- Encourage high cooperation with USAID/WBG economic projects to enhance the environment of the workplace to accept women which will help incentive the private sector in accepting women in non-traditional fields. (C34) (Short to Long-term)

**MARKET DEMANDS**

- Use set-up structures such as sectoral committees, LET councils and others to engage the private sector in consultation for market demand, training of trainees and employment of graduates. (C36, C38, R28, R28, R5, R22) (For long-term sustainability)
- Conduct a new market study and a training needs assessment on the institute level to assess the market demand according to TVET level, location, gender, disability, and to be linked with current vocations and social demand. The study will come up with lists of market-relevant courses to be provided by each institute, the study will be the basis for integration of new courses. (C35 and pre-requisite to R14, R15, R16 & R18) (Short-term)
- Conduct a campaign directed to the private sector that shows the cost benefit of integrating women into non-traditional fields. (C36, C38) (Short-term)
- Provide technical support for TVET institutes by developing career guidance materials, tools and methods to enable ongoing integration of market information within the system, engaging the private sector and their representatives, and make available for market TVET institutes as well as coaching and capacity building. (C34, R20) (Long-term)
ANNEX 1: ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Listed below by the three gender analysis domains with all the questions that the assessment sought to answer as they relate to TVET in the WBG.

**LAWS, POLICIES, REGULATIONS, AND INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES:**

- Do TVET institutions have regulations or other commitments for improving women’s access to training or to advance gender equality? Does this include persons with disabilities (PWD), or other groups with less access to TVET offerings?
- Do TVET institutions have affirmative action programs or targets to promote women’s and men’s entry into TVET institutions, and into gender-segregated occupations? Is any such affirmative action program part of a formalized policy? Does the policy define targets?
- Have the relevant PA ministries, NGOs, or other institutions conducted a labor market or private sector analysis with a gender or social inclusion lens to identify the misalignment (if any) of skills training to labor market demand? Have TVET institutions created effective training-to-employment pathways that are gender-inclusive?
- Is there a unit or focal point responsible within TVET institutions charged with ensuring gender integration and female education?
- How do the laws and constitutions shape different opportunities for women’s and men’s access and opportunities for TVET education? Does this include laws requiring accommodations for women or men with disabilities, for childcare, etc.?
- To what extent does policy for private sector firms and TVET institutions reflect gender-sensitive considerations?
- Are there processes in private sector firms to address gender bias and imbalances through gender-sensitive or socially inclusive recruitment, affirmative action, or career enhancement?
- Have the relevant line PA Ministries, NGOs, UNRWA, UNESCO, ILO, or other institutions analyzed TVET educational curricula and teaching materials with regards to gender-based stereotypes? What were the findings of such studies?

**SOCIAL NORMS AND BELIEFS:**

- What are the barriers, economic constraints, geographic, social and infrastructure challenges that prevent males and females from accessing, continuing, or completing their technical and vocational education (e.g., cultural norms, gender norms, gender division of labor, fees for education, facilities, access to transportation and safe passage to TVET institutions, childcare services, perceptions of personal security)?

**ACCESS TO TVET RESOURCES:**

- What are the available data on TVET-related scholarships in the WBG? What is the ratio of male-to-female scholarship recipients of these scholarships?
- Have scholarship or stipend programs increased women’s enrollment in TVET courses?
- Are TVET scholarship opportunities for girls in all available programs widely publicized? How are poor women or women with disabilities informed about TVET scholarship opportunities and are they encouraged to participate?
- Are there free TVET programs? Are these programs viewed as having value by hiring firms and families? How do fees affect girls’ and women’s engagement in TVET programs?
In addition to the domains and questions above, this assessment will explore the following general context and cross-cutting questions to provide a full understanding of the TVET gender dynamics in WBG.

**GENERAL CONTEXT**

All data should be cross-tabulated to the extent possible by age, sex, socioeconomic status, level of education, disability status and location.

- What is the enrollment rate for male and female youth in private TVET institutions?
- What are the public TVET enrollment rates for male and female youth?
- Are there regional variations in these rates?
- What is the proportion of male-to-female students enrolled in female dominated fields of study at the technical and vocational level?
- What is the proportion of male-to-female students enrolled in male dominated fields of study at the technical and vocational level?
- Considering social norms, are women able to comfortably access male-dominated vocational trainings (e.g., work sites, shops and classrooms)?
- Are female instructors available at TVET institutions?
- What is the proportion of female instructors at TVET institutions compared to males?
- Do female instructors teach courses in male dominated fields? Do male instructors teach courses in female dominated fields?
- What is the attendance by young pregnant women?
- Do childcare responsibilities create barriers for women to enroll in TVET programs? What is the rate of TVET enrollment for young mothers after the birth of their babies?

**CROSS-CUTTING**

1. **GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE/SEXUAL HARASSMENT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE:**

   - What policies/strategies are in place to increase safety at TVET institutions and decrease gender-based violence (GBV) and harassment, and enforce anti-harassment codes of conduct?
   - Are there any policies at TVET institutions on sexual harassment on campus or in the classrooms?

2. **COVID-19/DISTANCE LEARNING DYNAMICS**

   - Are there special patterns or practices during COVID 19 that were noticed which can increase the participation rate of women?

3. **NEEDS OF FEMALE STUDENTS**

   - Do women select their own training programs, or are they tracked into certain courses official or unofficially? Do they receive mentorship/support as they progress through training, especially in non-traditional gendered occupational training?
   - Are women consulted or their opinions collected in designing or updating new programs?
– What occupations do women prefer to study and train for, and work in? Why?  

4. JOB MARKET DEMANDS

– What data exists on the employment rates of male and female graduates of TVET programs in the WBG?
– Which economic sectors in WBG and East Jerusalem absorb female TVET graduates? Is the private sector more interested in male or female graduates and why?
– What is the current market demand for TVET skills? What skills do employers’ need and how do these align with programs women are enrolled in?
– Will training improve women’s productive capacity and increase their marketable skills and income-earning potential?

ANNEX 2: RESOURCES

ASALA and Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)

CARE Report:
- Said. N. et al. 2015. Skills Gaps and Development in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. AWRAD and CARE International

COOPI Report:
- Hilal, R. 2017. Rapid Needs Assessment for the East Jerusalem Local Market with focus on Tourism and Technology Sectors. COOPI
- Hilal, R. 2019. KAP Survey of school students towards VET. Jerusalem: COOPI funded by the EU- Jerusalem

DCA/NCA Reports:

Enabel Reports:

ETF Reports:
- ETF, 2021a. ETF Palestine: Education, training and employment 2020, ETF

GRIT & LWF Report:

Hilal Reports and Papers:


ILO Reports:


MAS Reports:

• Al-Falah, B.
  •______.2012. Structure of the Palestinian Services Sector and its Economic Impact. MAS. Ramallah- Palestine
  •______.2014. Informal sector in Occupied Palestinian Territories, Ramallah, Palestine. MAS.
  •______.2019. Skills shortages and gaps in the industrial sector in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. MAS. Ramallah- Palestine


• Abdallah, S.
  •______.2018. Skills shortages and gaps in the building and construction sector in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. MAS.
  •______. 2019. Skills Shortages and Gaps in the Tourism Sector in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. MAS. Ramallah- Palestine

OECD:


PA:


Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS) Reports


PCBS. 2021a. Characteristics of Individuals with Disabilities in Palestine, Ramallah-Palestine


USAID


World Bank Reports


ANNEX 3: LIST OF INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

BOX 3-1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP MEETINGS

The team conducted 19 meetings with a total of 39 participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th># People</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Institute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Saturday Jan 29 2022</td>
<td>NGO-VET League members-West Bank (LWF-VTC, LWF-VTCR, YWCA Jerusalem, YWCA Ramallah, SVTC, ETVTC, Al-Bir, HHCT, PPU, JISS, YMCA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Saturday Jan 29 2022</td>
<td>MOE (i.e., Research, Gender Unit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sunday Jan 30 2022</td>
<td>MOHE (Informal meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sunday Jan 30 2022</td>
<td>BWF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Monday Jan 31 2022</td>
<td>ASALA &amp; WEE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 1 2022</td>
<td>DSPR- Gaza (Training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 1 2022</td>
<td>Chambers of Commerce and Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 1 2022</td>
<td>GRIT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wednesday Feb 2 2022</td>
<td>PFI-Gaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thursday Feb 3 2022</td>
<td>MOHE-TE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 15 2022</td>
<td>MOL (i.e., VT General Directorate (VTGD), Employment General Directorate (EGD), Legal Affairs, Gender Unit, SMEs Department (EGD))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 15 2022</td>
<td>ILO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 22 2022</td>
<td>MOWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Monday Feb 21 2022</td>
<td>TVET Commission (Informally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 22 2022</td>
<td>GROW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 22 2022</td>
<td>GIZ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 22 2022</td>
<td>USAID Economic Dept.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### BOX 3-2: LIST OF FOCUS DISCUSSION GROUPS WITH WOMEN STUDENTS/TRAINEES AND GRADUATES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>FGD participants</th>
<th>Number participated</th>
<th>Institute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mon Jan 31 2022</td>
<td>Women students</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>YWCA- Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Mon Jan 31 2022</td>
<td>Women graduates</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>From YWCA Jerusalem &amp; LWF-VTC Jerusalem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 1 2022</td>
<td>Women Graduates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>From YWCA Ramallah,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 1 2022</td>
<td>Women Graduates</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>LWF-VTC- Ramallah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 1 2002</td>
<td>Women Students</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>LWF-VTC-Ramallah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Monday Feb 7 2022</td>
<td>Women graduates</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>DSPR-Gaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Tuesday Feb 8 2022</td>
<td>Women students</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>DSPR-Gaza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wednesday Feb 9 2022</td>
<td>Women graduates</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>From HHCOT &amp; PPU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**: 80

Thus, nine FGD with 80 women graduates and trainees/students.

### BOX 3-3: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS IN LOCAL EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING FOCUS DISCUSSION GROUPS IN GAZA- TUE 8TH FEB 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Institute</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Private sector/LET Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>GTC-UNRWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>GTC-UNRWA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>College of Intermediate studies-Alazhar (Practical Training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions- PGFT (Gender Unit)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ANNEX 4: COLLECTED DATA FROM TVET-INSTITUTES

Attached Excel file with 11 worksheets from the collected data from 11 NGO-VET League institutes
ANNEX 5: ADDITIONAL DATA

FIGURE 5-1. LABOR FORCE FRAMEWORK FOR WOMEN

Female Population 2.57 Million (49%)

Within the Working Age 15 and above (40.9%)

Outside the working Age less than 15 (59.1%)

In side Labor Force (LF) 16.1%

Employed 59.9%

Unemployment 40.1%

Full Employment 59.2%

Time Related Under Employment (0.7%)

Outside Labor Force 83.9%

House Keeping 62.9%

Study/ Training 22.5%

Old age/ Illness 7.5%

Others 7.1%

FIGURE 5-2: LABOR FORCE FRAMEWORK FOR MEN

Male Population 2.63 Million (51%)

Within Working Age 15 and above (40.9%)

- Employed 77.5%
- Unemployed 22.5%
- Time Related UnderEmployment (1.3%)

Full Employment 76.2%

Outside of the working Age less than 15 (59.1%)

- Outside Labor Force 34.9%
  - HouseKeeping 0.0%
  - Study/ Training 40.8%
  - Old age/Illness 32.7%
  - Others 26.5%

Outside Labor Force 34.9%

Within the working Age 15 and above (40.9%)

- Employed 77.5%
- Unemployed 22.5%
- Time Related UnderEmployment (1.3%)

Full Employment 76.2%

Outside the working Age less than 15 (59.1%)

- Outside Labor Force 34.9%
  - HouseKeeping 0.0%
  - Study/ Training 40.8%
  - Old age/Illness 32.7%
  - Others 26.5%

Within the working Age 15 and above (40.9%)

- Employed 77.5%
- Unemployed 22.5%
- Time Related UnderEmployment (1.3%)

Full Employment 76.2%

Outside the working Age less than 15 (59.1%)

- Outside Labor Force 34.9%
  - HouseKeeping 0.0%
  - Study/ Training 40.8%
  - Old age/Illness 32.7%
  - Others 26.5%