

Adult Learning in the MEDA Region

Synthesis Report

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Annex 1: Methodology – questions for the data collection

1 Introduction

1.1 Scope and objectives

This is the synthesis report for the study commissioned by the European Training Foundation (ETF) on Adult Learning in the MEDA Region. The study focuses on adult learning provision in seven countries of the region: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Tunisia. The overall aim of the project is to undertake a stocktaking exercise in order to inform the development of policy guidance on adult learning in the countries involved. More specifically it is to:

- provide evidence about strategies to improve adult participation in learning;
- highlight key lessons;
- address potential barriers to learning;
- make recommendations on policy.

This entails understanding the existing situation in order to be able to identify strong points, weaknesses and gaps, with the intention of highlighting possible further developments. The report is organised around three ‘pillars’, which are defined by the population targeted, that is education and training provision for people in employment, for unemployed people and undertaken through individual initiative though there is clearly some overlap between these categories. In addition to providing basic information, the country reports focus on trends in each of the countries so the definition of the scope has been kept broad in order to ensure that the reports can capture the most important information for their country. The study aims to describe both policy and practice, with a view to understanding government policy as fully as possible and selecting illustrative sectoral examples that help understand interesting and significant trends. Hence, consultants were asked to select sectors that are important for the national economy and that that have a particularly well-developed approach to training and/or are innovative.

1.2 Methodology

The methodology is based on commissioning a set of country reports and a synthesis report. The country reports were drafted by local consultants using a set of common guidelines that were agreed with ETF and with the consultants at a project meeting held in Turin on 17th October 2009. This synthesis report uses the data gathered by the country reports, which were reviewed at their draft stage by the ETF country managers. The consultants were:

Algeria	Hamid Belhabib
Egypt	Atef Aly
Jordan	Manar Shawareb
Lebanon	Bourhan Kreitem
Morocco	Aomar Ibourk
Syria	Anton Al-Jouni
Tunisia	Abderrazak Bouselmi

The country reports are rich in detail about the education and training provision for employed and unemployed adults as well as for the education and training offer taken up by individuals on their own initiative. The report for Algeria is incomplete; therefore data has only been included in this synthesis report where available. This synthesis report aims to summarise the key information and data contained in the country reports with the aim of drawing out the common issues and

characteristics, the similar and/or different challenges and recommendations for policy focus. For more detailed information on specific aspects of countries, readers are advised to consult the country reports. In order to obtain as complete a panorama of the education and training provided, the reports were structured around a set of questions which are contained in *Annex 1*.

The authors of the country reports used a range of sources to gather their data that are listed in Table 1 below. According to the authors there are, however, few statistical tools or surveys. As a result, given the absence of systematic quantitative data, the report does not include regional figures about the numbers of adults involved in the different types of education and training because the data would not be sufficiently reliable for any further comparative or policy purposes. Some quantitative data is included for certain countries and types of provision where it is available on a case by case basis.

Table 1: Data sources for country reports

Country	Statistical tools/surveys	Data collection for the study
Algeria	No information provided.	- Existing reports and documentation,
Egypt	There are no specific surveys or statistics on adult learning.	- Existing reports and studies - Questionnaire to key actors
Jordan	No specific statistical tools are mentioned.	- Annual reports and websites - Interviews with key actors
Lebanon	Some data can be provided by the National Committee for Illiteracy and Adult Learning, but apart from that, no surveys about adult education have been carried out to date and no data is available.	- Existing sources of data and reports - Literature search - Interviews with stakeholders
Morocco	Adult learning comes under several ministries and also is the responsibility of a number of public and private institutions and so information is dispersed and collected separately by each body and organization.	- Existing documents and statistics - Interviews with key actors
Syria	There are no specific statistics or surveys regarding adult education.	- Existing studies, research and statistics - Questionnaires to ministries, training centres, and enterprises - interviews with key individuals in ministries and organisations
Tunisia	No information provided.	- Existing reports and documentation, - Interviews with individuals responsible for the training system and institutions

An explanation is given in the Moroccan report that illustrates well the difficulties in collecting data. The report states that adult education, as it has been defined for this study, is fragmented among several ministerial departments as well as with other institutional actors in both the public and private sectors. This fragmentation of the offer of training has an effect on the structure and content of the statistical system which is also fragmented with no overall coherence. Each government department or institution develops its own *ad hoc* system for collecting data based mainly on partial or one-off activities. Therefore there is a lack of visibility in the data which makes it very difficult to assess the situation in an exhaustive manner.

1.3 Structure of the synthesis report

This report follows a similar overall organisation as the country reports focusing on different groups of beneficiaries of adult education. Firstly Section 2 presents a brief introduction to the

national contexts and major issues. Then Section 3 examines the education and training provided for people in employment in each of the countries; Section 4 focuses on the education and training for unemployed people and Section 5 presents education and training that is available to be undertaken on individual initiative. In each of these three sections the data is presented by theme including illustrative country examples and then at the end of each section there is a synthesis of the main obstacles and issues encountered. Section 6 presents a summary of the issues from the three main sections and suggests recommendations for addressing key challenges.

1.4 Working definition and scope of adult education

Before moving into the presentation of the data, it is useful to look at some definitions of ‘adult education’ or ‘adult learning’ commonly in use and the scope they cover.

In the Communication from the EU Commission in 2006, *Adult learning: It is never too late to learn*¹, for the purpose of the Communication, adult learning is defined as “*all forms of learning undertaken by adults after having left initial education and training*”.

The report situates adult learning in the context of the acquisition of key competences, employability, mobility and social inclusion. Despite differences of context among the EU member states, one of the major challenges for adult learning in the EU is fighting poverty and social exclusion which are affected by low levels of initial education, unemployment, rural isolation and reduced life chances on a wide range of grounds. The Commission report considers that not only does this situation marginalise people and exclude them from active citizenship, but new forms of illiteracy (i.e. access to and use of ICT in professional and daily life) exacerbate this exclusion. Adult learning is seen as having a key role to play in responding to social exclusion, helping make adults more efficient workers and better-informed and more active citizens and it also contributes to their personal well-being. This has a clear echo with the situations in the countries in the MEDA region included in this study.

ETF’s work on adult learning is based on the EU definition, but with an emphasis on employment. For example in the report on adult learning in Southern Europe², the emphasis is on the skills that people need to be able to adapt and remain employable in the open market and the employability skills that help people to move out of unemployment and marginal employment.

In the Millennium Goals, those directly related to adult education focus on ensuring that the learning needs of all young people and adults are equitably met and this includes reducing adult illiteracy rates by 50 per cent by 2015. However, according to the recent report of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, the continued dominance of universal primary education has tended to underscore the marginalization of the youth, adult literacy and lifelong learning objectives which are, nevertheless, seen as vital to overall success. The report goes on to say that: “*This marginalisation is also shown by the absence of adult education as an MDG strategy, especially as achieving the goals requires adults to learn new skills, new information and new values. The simple truth is that improvements in provision, participation and quality in adult education can accelerate progress towards all eight Millennium Development Goals*”.³

¹ *Adult learning: It is never too late to learn*, Communication from the Commission, COM(2006) 614 final, Brussels, 23.10.2006

² Madeleine Gunny and Evelyn Viertel, *Designing Adult Learning Strategies; the case of South Eastern Europe*, ETF, 2006.

³ *Global Report on Lifelong Learning and Education*, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2009.

In 2007, in preparation for the Sixth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA VI), the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning asked all UNESCO Member States to prepare national reports on the situation of adult learning and education and on salient developments since 1997 using a set of guidelines. On the basis of these reports, a synthesis was drafted for the Arab Region: *The State and Development of Adult learning and education in the Arab States. Regional Synthesis Report*⁴. The author indicates some key issues for these countries which include literacy and the dual issue of women's higher illiteracy rate in most countries and their low participation in labour market. But he goes on to say that:

“... the reports ... focus on a very narrow perspective of Adult Learning and Education, as understood in the traditional sense of the term, namely the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. They discuss the first stage of adult education that follows the basic literacy level, known in these countries as the postliteracy stage, in which there are two main objectives: (i) to consolidate the skills acquired in the basic level, and (ii) to provide learners with basic skill training and general information on daily life practices in, for example, health, population and the environment.”

This focus on literacy is certainly important in all the reports drafted for this ETF study but not the only aspect presented. However the UNESCO report raises an important issue, which is the definition of literacy and how it links to vocational training and further education.

For the purposes of this study, the definition in the EU Communication is useful in that it is suitably broad, encompassing all forms of learning. This approach corresponds to the terms of reference of the study, which focus by type of population targeted: employed or unemployed learners as well as people undertaking learning on their own initiative. The country reports do not propose a definition explicitly, but the existing provision in the countries gives some implicit indications in terms of the scope. Three of the characteristics of public policy for “adult” learning in all of the countries are:

1. Improving literacy rates of adults and eradicating illiteracy is a preoccupation in all countries, though the extent varies with the rate of illiteracy among the population aged 15 years and over.
2. Adult learning has to address many problems created by the fact that all children in these countries do not attend primary education, or they leave school before the end of the primary cycle. This means that there is a large, very young population, from the age of about 15 years old and upwards (or in some cases younger) that comes within the scope of ‘adult’ learning. The functional literacy gap has to be dealt with before further training can take place.
3. Given both the percentage of young people in the overall population and the numbers graduating from higher education, the proportion of young, well-qualified unemployed people is comparatively high and creates a critical focus for adult education initiatives and measures.

The next section sets the scene against which adult education policy is formulated and implemented.

⁴ Dr Abdelwahid Abdalla Yousif, *The State and Development of Adult learning and education in the Arab States. Regional Synthesis Report*. All the regional and national reports can be downloaded at: <http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/grale/>

2 Brief introduction to the national contexts and major issues

This section looks firstly at the general context and challenges of each of the countries and secondly at two major concerns for adult education (literacy and the labour market integration of young people). The Joint Declaration of the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean of 13 July 2008 emphasised the importance of vocational education in the region in these terms: “*Particular attention should be paid to enhancing quality and to ensuring the relevance of vocational training to labour market needs*”.⁵ The ETF MEDA-ETE project produced outputs and outcomes which are clearly in line with this statement. There is now a need to extend that attention to the field of adult learning in the region.

The specific context in each of the seven countries is of course different but there are some common aspects that influence policy making for adult education. They are:

- Demographic trends in the region with a high percentage of all the populations that are under 15 years of age which means the workforce will continue to expand in the coming years.
- Progression in the numbers staying on for secondary and higher education means that large numbers of well-educated young adults are arriving on the labour market and need training to help them enter it.
- This includes female graduates (more than male graduates in most of the countries) who need more and better opportunities to enter the labour market.
- On the other hand raising the literacy rate remains an important objective as there are still too many adults who are not functionally literate and out-of-school children (especially girls and those in rural areas).
- There is a large informal labour market with no training for the workforce.
- All the countries have been undergoing substantial economic reform and have objectives that necessitate a more structured and systematic approach to adult education.

These factors are developed in more detail in the sections below. The first looks at some of the characteristics and contexts of the seven countries and the second at major concerns.

2.1 General characteristics and contexts

2.1.1 Demographics and the labour market

All of the countries included are still experiencing rapid population growth (except Tunisia) and have an age profile that includes a high percentage of young people in comparison with the EU countries or North America⁶. Jordan, for example, is a young society with 37.3% of the population under the age of 15. The population has doubled since 1980 and is expected to continue growing and to double again in the next 30 years.

The other demographic characteristic is inward or outward migration (including due to refugee movements) though this latter aspect was not a major feature of the country reports. These characteristics have a major effect on vocational education and training at all levels and for all age-groups and are very significant for adults.

⁵ ETF, *Regional cooperation in education and training: the whole is more than the sum of its parts, MEDE-ETE* Synthesis Report 2009.

⁶ *ibid*

The following table, that shows the percentage of the population under the age of 15, illustrates the extent of the challenge posed to governments in their education and training policies. The reports all include data demonstrating that labour market integration of young people/young adults is a major thrust of adult education policies.

Table 2: Percentage of population aged under 15 years old

	% population under 15 years of age
Algeria	28.4
Egypt	37.7
Jordan	37.3
Lebanon	27.2
Morocco	30.0
Syria	39.5
Tunisia	25.6

Source: Training and Employment in the northern and southern Mediterranean region, MEDSTAT, December 2008. The figures are for 2006, except for Lebanon for they are for 2004.

The next box illustrates the situation with the example of Egypt.

Box 1: Egypt: issues for the working age population:

There is rapid growth in the working age population in Egypt and this trend will continue as 32% of the population is between the ages of 15 and 29 years old and a further one-third between the ages of 0 to 14 years old.

It was estimated that between 2005 and 2010 790,000 individuals would enter the labour market every year creating an annual growth rate of over 5% of the active population, and that around 80% of the unemployed are aged 15 to 24 years old.

Two major issues are providing post-primary education and training for the high numbers who do not progress into secondary education or who leave before completing. Enrolment rates for females in secondary education are low. The majority of school graduates in Egypt are in the Technical Secondary Schools (TSS) and the second major issue is to improve the quality of provision and the perception by the population of the value of TSS diplomas.

The pressure of the demographics has a very substantial effect on the labour market situation, on policy formulation for adult training and on the use of resources.

2.1.2 The workforce and the labour market

In most of the countries a large part of the workforce works in agriculture and small enterprises in the trades and services. The formal labour market is relatively small and tends to be dominated by the state, though this is changing. The exception is Tunisia with a well-developed private sector⁷. While the labour force supply is increasing, activity and employment rates show a decreasing trend⁸ with average unemployment rates around 15%, but they are much higher for young people. In

⁷ T. Leney, *Qualifications that count: strengthening the recognition of qualifications in the Mediterranean region*, MEDA-ETE regional project, 2009.

⁸ *ibid*

Jordan, the national agenda has set targets for reducing unemployment, which is about 12% (but higher for young people and women) and for strengthening the links between the needs of the labour market and training. The first phase focused on attracting investments to labour intensive employment areas and recruiting 60% of the labour needed from the unemployed.

In Tunisia 90% of the unemployed are between the ages of 15 and 39 years and the largest group is made up of adults with secondary or higher education. This last group is increasing in numbers.

In Egypt, labour market participation is low at 47.6%, but with a female participation rate at only 21.3%. This figure does not take account of the informal sector and unpaid work.

The pressure of demographics is a particular problem for the higher education graduates whose overall numbers are increasing as well as the percentage of young women graduating from higher education, which is between 50 - 60% of the total number of graduates in all the countries included in this report, except Morocco (42%). **Two major challenges are the labour market integration for higher education graduates in general and improving employment opportunities for women that are in line with their qualifications in order to increase the female activity rate.** In Morocco young graduates are the most vulnerable category on the labour market with an unemployment rate of over 25%.

However, as in many countries, employers express lack of satisfaction with graduates whom they consider are not well-prepared for employment in the private sector as HE has traditionally been more oriented towards public sector employment⁹. Hence the training programmes described later in the report that focus on giving HE graduates the skills they need to enter employment in specific sectors of fields of employment.

In Egypt, partly due to the phasing out of guaranteed employment in the public sector for higher education graduates, it is estimated that employment in the informal economy is growing especially among the young and in particular for women.. Since public sector employment is shrinking, this is affecting women in particular since those who are in the labour market tend to be employed in the public sector. This is resulting in a decrease in the participation rate for well-educated women. In Syria, males account for 83% of the total labour force. Whereas production employment is largely for males, there are a high number of women in professional positions.

In contrast to the growing well-educated young population, **the majority of workers in the region (60-70%) have only primary education or less which creates a substantial challenge to continuing education and training systems if they are to support economic development adequately.** The outcomes will depend, to a certain extent, on the profile of adult education in each country and how it is prioritised in strategies and funding. In Syria, just under 60% of the workforce has only basic education, and there is high unemployment among this group. A majority of Syrian families need to send their children to work directly after primary education in order to contribute financially to the family. However a decrease in employment for this category also indicates changes in labour market needs and in the economy. An illustration of the skills profile pyramid is provided by Tunisia where in 2004 low skilled workers represented 57% of the workforce, medium skilled workers 31% and high skilled workers 12%¹⁰.

⁹ ibid

¹⁰ Leney, op cit.

With the decrease in public sector employment in favour of the private sector, changes are also taking place in the share of GNP accounted for by different sectors. As the MEDA-ETE summary report notes¹¹, while the public sector is still a common transition destination for young people even though numbers are decreasing, the transition to the private sector is marked by an increase in the informal sector. This appears partly to correspond to well-documented aspirations to public sector employment – the private sector (formal or informal) has tended to be a transition stage while awaiting the coveted job in the public sector. **As countries move to stronger market economies with a corresponding need to recruit, the shift to the private sector will increase and with it a need to involve increasingly the social partners from the different sectors of the economy in defining (future) skills needs.**

Syria is in the midst of reforming from a centralised economy to a social market economy. The following table shows the share of GDP of the most important sectors for the economy:

Table 3: Syria - share of GDP for the most important sectors

Mining and manufacturing	just under 40%
Agricultural	20%,
Wholesale and retail trade	12%.
Transport and communications	12%

Source: Syria Country Report

Other sectors account for less than 10% each. However it should be noted that a high growth rate is expected in telecommunications, IT, tourism, transport, construction, agriculture and manufacturing.

Tunisia has developed a market economy characterised by improvement in the agriculture, energy and mining sectors. In the perspective of creating a free market with the European Union, there has been a process of modernisation of the economy since the mid-nineties in order to make manufacturing enterprises, as well as the service enterprises linked to them, more competitive. In parallel a strategy of promoting exports has been pursued. It should be noted that more than 70% of Tunisian importations come from the EU and 80% of its exports are towards the EU. The main challenges of the economy for the coming years are defined in the country report as job creation and transforming the economy into a knowledge economy targeting high value –added production, which entails a major effort in terms of training and qualifications. Of the active population, 19% work in the manufacturing industries, 18.6% in education, health and administrative services, 18.5% in agriculture and fishing and 13.5% in construction and mining. Commerce represents about 11.6% and tourism 4%.

In Morocco, another country in which the move towards creating a free market with the European Union has been an important factor, a National Pact was established in 2008 to support industrial development. It supports human resource development measures for enterprises in the sectors that have been included in an initiative called ‘*Métiers mondiaux du Maroc*’ (which roughly translates as: Morocco’s Global Skills). They are the automobile industry, aeronautics, electronics and offshoring (i.e. outsourcing). The objective is to develop the competences needed by new recruits so that they are immediately operational and also to respond to the training needs of these new staff during the 2nd and 3rd years after their recruitment.

¹¹ European Training Foundation, *Regional cooperation in education and training: the whole is more than the sum of its parts, Synthesis report 2009*, MEDA ETE Regional Project, 2009

All these characteristics taken together constitute a substantial challenge for adult education and training whether for adults in employment or the unemployed.

2.1.3 National strategies and challenges

The final sub-section looks at examples of major strategies and challenges. Depending on the specific situation of each country, they can have a very different focus.

At one end of the spectrum, Morocco (like Tunisia) provides an example of how relations with the EU have contributed to strategic choices. Over recent decades important structural and macroeconomic reforms have been undertaken. The integration of Morocco into free exchange zones, major investment projects and the status of associated partner with the European Union have been significant factors in moving forward the development strategy. However, what is considered in the country report to be a backlog of deficits in education, are making it difficult to make the best of the potential offered by a large, young population.

A somewhat different approach in Jordan has emphasised the establishment of a major 10-year reform plan, the National Agenda 2007-2017, that includes eight core areas for which objectives have been set: political development; legislation and justice; investment; financial reform; employment and vocational training; social prosperity; higher education and scientific research; and upgrading the infrastructure. Education, training and employment are integrated into different areas and the reforms in these fields will be influenced by this national strategic development plan.

The neighbour, Syria, is also working through a national strategy, the 10th Five Year Plan which includes: economic reform; social justice; restructuring the public sector; rationalising government support; investment activation; development of the financial and monetary sector; administrative reform; attention to government employees through improving their income and training; and also increasing work efficiency.

A completely different example is offered by Lebanon where the situation is exceptional and strongly affected both by the long civil war as well as the conflict with Israel. In the 1990s, profound political and economic changes took place, which have impacted on human development in the country. The author of the country report raises four major issues which are interesting as they illustrate well the long lasting effects of conflict in the region. They are:

1. Insecurity and conflict: The reconstruction programme was funded through market borrowing with high interest rates while international support focused on concessionary loans. In the mid 2000s despite a good growth rate, the economic situation of the population worsened and this included the education situation. The effects of the political situation on the social and economic environment have been significant, e.g. assassination of the prime minister and the events of the Palestinian camp.
2. Political fallout: There is instability in the political situation between the two government coalitions and this had led to paralysis in government. The Doha agreement, which was brokered by the Arab League, supported by regional and international powers, aimed to put an end to political and military deadlock and create political stability. There are implications for the long-term stability and development of the country of the sectarian overtones in the media and political discourse that puts sectarian representation above the national or civic interests.

3. Policy choices: Economic choices made in the post conflict reconstruction period had an effect on human development factors with a rise in income-related poverty. Policies related to the reconstruction of the infrastructure were not fully implemented and fell short of their targets. The infrastructure reconstruction was not integrated into an overall development plan with a global approach for addressing major macroeconomic imbalances enhancing sectoral development and developing public institutions. Social policies did not achieve their intended objectives to alleviate poverty, deprivation and social exclusion.
4. Social economic outcomes: There is overlap between the geographies of poverty and the geographies of conflict. The poorest have suffered the most in terms of living conditions, vulnerability and exclusion.
 - a. It is generally considered that about 8% of the population live in extreme poverty and another 20.5% between the upper and lower poverty lines. The most vulnerable groups are female heads of households, working children, the elderly, people with a disability, agricultural workers, fishermen and the unemployed.
 - b. The country lacks a long-term social development vision and the problems are compounded by a highly politicised approach to the issues and the multiplicity of actors.

2.2 Major concerns

Following the brief presentation of the contexts, it is interesting to examine major issues linked directly to adult education that the countries are facing. Two issues that are highlighted in all the country reports to different degrees are at the opposite ends of the educational spectrum. On the one hand there is the need to reduce illiteracy and improve functional literacy for personal development, social inclusion and for economic development. On the other hand there is the considerable preoccupation of sustainable labour market integration for the growing young population of higher education graduates.

2.2.1 Improving adult literacy

A recent, regional report written for the UNESCO Institute of Lifelong Learning discusses the state of literacy across the region since it is one of the critical issues. *The State and Development of Adult learning and education in the Arab States. Regional Synthesis Report*¹² summarises the context and major issues affecting education in general and influencing adult education in the Arab Region. Though the report includes more countries than this synthesis report, it provides a useful background to the literacy challenge.

The author reports that "*more than 6 million children of school age (about 10 million according to some sources) are out of school. About 60 per cent of them are girls. Nearly two-thirds of these children have never been enrolled in school, and about 13 per cent have left school early. There are many reasons behind non-enrolment of these children, including shortage of school space, poverty, gender, tradition, parents' lack of education, and place of residence (8.7 per cent of those children live in rural areas)*". **This situation will necessarily have an influence on the priorities for adult learning since it affects both the absolute literacy rates and functional literacy for skills training.**

Other challenges which he highlights that are directly relevant for adult education are presented in the box below:

¹² Op cit.

Box 2: Challenges for adult education in the Arab Region

- Some 65 million adults are non-literate (some sources put the figure between 58 and 61 million), two-thirds of whom are women, and an estimated 10 million children aged 6–15 are out of school. This number is likely to increase by 40 per cent by 2015 if current trends persist.
- Despite remarkable progress in the education of girls and in the empowerment of women, the gender gap is still wide, with women under-represented in managerial and decision making jobs.
- There is a major mismatch between the output of educational systems and labour market needs.
- The problem of dependency of the region on other countries who are leaders in the production of knowledge has limited the development of its own capacity.

Source: Dr Abdelwahid Abdalla Yousif, *The State and Development of Adult learning and education in the Arab States. Regional Synthesis Report.* <http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/grale/>

According to the author of the report, on average only two-thirds of adults across the Arab States can read and write with understanding though there has been an increase in the literacy rate of about 16 per cent between 1999 and the 2000–2004 period. However, literacy rates vary from one country to another. They are, for example, below 60% in Morocco and Egypt but around 90% or above in Jordan and Palestine. The report goes on to say that in 2004 more than two-thirds of adult non-literates were women.

He summarises typical objectives as:

- increasing the acquisition of the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy by as many people as possible, but with priority given to particular target groups;
- providing learners with some general knowledge and life skills for everyday living, as well as some religious knowledge, attitudes and citizenship.

The report mentions Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Jordan as being among the countries that have as one of their objectives to help non-literates and those who have left school early to achieve a level equivalent to a particular grade in primary or in secondary school. In the Arab Region, common priority target groups cited in the national policies described in the country reports drafted for the UNESCO project are:

- non-literates in the 10–45 age group (15–40 in some countries);
- women;
- those who have dropped out of school;
- the rural population;
- excluded groups (ethnic, linguistic, the poor); and
- displaced and refugee groups.

The country report emphasises that in Morocco illiteracy remains a major issue as it concerns almost 40% of the population over the age of 10, though with major disparities so that the rates are higher in rural areas and for women. The following table illustrates well those disparities.

Table 4: Morocco: Percentages of the active population by educational level

Education level	Urban	Rural	Total
No recognised level	18,9	53,9	36,9
Coronic / pre-school	3,6	6,5	5,1
Total of low levels	22,5	60,4	42

Source: Morocco Country Report

Box 3: Egypt: Literacy

This box summarises the improvement and remaining challenges in the literacy situation in Egypt:

In the 10 year period between 1996 and 2006 the adult literacy rate increased from 44.4% to 71.4% due to several measures that included decreasing the drop-out rate from education by providing more educational opportunities for all children in Egypt and improving early childhood programmes.

In addition programmes are being developed for the 15-35 year old age group, with a specific focus on women and the governorates of Upper Egypt.

The National Plan for Literacy aims to deal with the issue of reoccurring illiteracy following the cooperation with UNESCO on the *Education for All* goals.

It should be noted that illiteracy rates in rural areas and for women are higher than the national average. It is estimated that the literacy rate of adults in rural areas is around 50% and that of women, in general, is around 59.7%.

Source: Egypt Country Report

Raising the literacy level and labour market participation of women in paid work presents substantial and critical challenges for the coming period. Table 5 shows the gap between the official activity rate for males and females in the seven countries. There are of course no figures for participation in the informal sector.

Table 5: Male and female activity rates

	Male	Female
Algeria	69.9	14.9
Egypt	75.1	23.6
Jordan	63.1	11.9
Lebanon	73.4	22.3
Morocco	76.4	27.2
Syria	72.8	14.5
Tunisia	73.8	27.2

Source: Training and Employment in the northern and southern Mediterranean region, MEDSTAT, December 2008. The figures are for 2006, except for Lebanon which is for 2004.

The table above shows that for the working population there is a substantial difference in the activity rate of men and women. However, given the importance of the informal sector, especially in rural areas, it is difficult to know the real activity rate of women including both paid and non-paid labour. **Given the fact that the illiteracy rate of women is higher than that of men, these figures do suggest the importance of the effort of adult education for women to support economic and social development.**

Table 6 shows the adult (age 15 years and over) literacy rate in the seven countries. The data are taken from the UNESCO report cited above. The figures given in the country reports for this study are in some cases higher because there are regular improvements due to the existence of policies to tackle adult illiteracy. In all the countries for which there is data, the literacy rate is lower for females than for males with very large differences of 20 points or more in all the countries except Jordan. (It should be noted that there was no data available for Lebanon for this UNESCO study.)

The fourth column shows the literacy rate of 15 to 24 year olds which is, in all cases, higher than for the total population over the age of 15 showing the progress made in primary education. **In part this also illustrates how the focus for adult education will continue to shift from functional literacy (except for women) to other labour market issues.**

Table 6: Adult literacy rate, 15 years and over (2000-2004)

	Male	Female	Total	Total 15-24 years
Algeria	79.5	60.1	69.8	90.1
Egypt	67.2	43.6	55.6	73.2
Jordan	95.1	84.7	89.9	99.1
Lebanon	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Morocco	63.3	38.3	50.7	69.5
Syria	91.0	74.2	82.9	95.2
Tunisia	83.4	65.3	74.3	94.3

Source: Dr Abdelwahid Abdalla Yousif, *The State and Development of Adult learning and education in the Arab States. Regional Synthesis Report.* <http://www.unesco.org/en/confinteavi/grale/>.

2.2.2 Labour market integration

The country reports drafted for this ETF study suggest that one of the most critical issues for public policy to address through adult education in the seven countries is the sustainable labour market entry for unemployed young people with different educational levels. The extent of the problem is well illustrated in the Table 7:

- In four countries (DZ, JO, MA and SY) over half the females in this age group are either not enrolled in education or training or not counted as unemployed.
- In all the countries apart from Egypt, only a very small percentage of females (3 to 6%) are declared as unemployed. The employment and enrolment rates vary considerable among the countries.
- In all the countries the percentage of males who are neither enrolled in education nor training, and are not declared as unemployed is much lower than for females. In all countries the largest percentage of males are either enrolled in education or employed.

These figures illustrate the need for active and dynamic public policies and measures to address the education and training needs to support labour market entry, but also to support the creation of activity.

Table 7: Distribution of young people by education and employment status (in %)

Total 15 to 24 year olds:

	DZ	EG	JO	LB	MA	SY	TN
Unemployed	7.2	12.4	9.4	6.7	6.7	6.3	10.2
Employed	22.7	23.9	16.4	23.7	35.9	27.4	22.6
Enrolled at school	29.5	45.1	36.8	45.5	18.9	17.8	45.8
Unemployed and not-enrolled	40.6	18.6	37.4	24.1	38.5	48.5	21.4

Total							
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Males 15 – 24 years

	DZ	EG	JO	LB	MA	SY	TN
Unemployed	11.5	11.7	15.3	9.2	9.9	7.9	13.9
Employed	38.9	38.6	27.9	32.1	51.2	44.5	30.0
Enrolled at school	25.9	46.2	37.1	40.6	20.3	19.5	41.1
Unemployed and not-enrolled	23.7	3.5	19.7	18.1	18.6	28.1	15.0
Total							

Females 15 – 24 years

	DZ	EG	JO	LB	MA	SY	TN
Unemployed	3.0	13.0	3.8	3.9	3.4	4.4	6.6
Employed	6.4	7.9	5.6	14.1	20.0	8.0	15.1
Enrolled at school	33.1	44.1	36.4	51.0	17.5	16.0	50.4
Unemployed and not-enrolled	57.5	35.0	54.2	31.0	59.1	71.6	27.9
Total							

Source: Training and Employment in the northern and southern Mediterranean region, MEDSTAT, December 2008.

The MEDSTAT publication of December 2008¹³, summarises some of the future perspectives as follows:

- Integrating young people who are increasing well-educated into a production system that offers more modern and higher valued jobs;
- Competing the rural exodus by reducing the number of people working in agriculture; and
- Improving access for young women to the labour market and ensuring they fully participate in economic activity.

The next sections will examine the state of play in adult education and will give some indications about whether these developments are underway. Section 3 will now present the policies, initiatives and data collected in the seven countries about education and training that addresses beneficiaries in employment.

2.2.3 Summary of issues arising

Based on the analysis of the ETF MEDA-ETE project, a brief summary of the labour market characteristics in the 7 countries, allowing for differences and disparities, would include:

- Traditional predominance of public sector employment is decreasing in favour of the market economy;
- With a shift to the private sector, there has also been an increase in employment in the informal sector, but for well-educated young adults it is seen as transition point waiting for employment in the formal private sector;

¹³ MEDSTAT, *Training and employment in the northern and southern Mediterranean region*, December 2008.

- Having 2 jobs is not unusual;
- The female activity rate is much lower than the male activity rate;
- In all the countries except Morocco, female graduates constitute more than 50% of the total number;
- Women are more affected than men by illiteracy;
- Where there are out of school children they are more likely to be girls than boys;
- Youth unemployment is higher than the average overall unemployment. It is particularly problematic for well-educated young people.

All the countries have been undergoing substantial economic and social reform and have objectives that necessitate a more structured and systematic approach to adult education. Major concerns presented by the context in the seven countries are:

- Demographic trends in so far as the pressure of the demographics has a very substantial effect on the labour market situation, on policy formulation for adult training and on the use of resources.
- Progression in the numbers staying on for secondary and higher education and the increase in the numbers and proportion of female graduates create two major challenges which are labour market integration for higher education graduates in general and improving employment opportunities for women that are in line with their qualifications in order to increase the female activity rate.
- However, the majority of workers in the region (60-70%) have only primary education or less which creates a substantial challenge to continuing education and training systems to be able to support economic and social development adequately.
- Improving the literacy rate remains a concern and will have an influence on priorities for adult learning since it affects both the absolute literacy rates and functional literacy for skills training.
- The illiteracy rate of women is higher than that of men which suggests the importance of the efforts that need to be made by adult education for women to support their personal development, as well as the economic and social development of their communities. The importance of girls' and women's education (literacy) as a pillar of human development and social progress has been amply demonstrated.

3 People in employment

This section focuses on continuing education and training carried out by private enterprises, ministries and other public sector enterprises, institutions and bodies. The training provided is for people who are in employment. The country authors were asked to cover government policy as fully as possible for the public sector and to present selected sectoral policies as illustrative of current trends in the private sector. The data gathered for the country reports followed the list of items in *Annex 1*.

Generally this type of education/training can be expected to cover three broad domains:

- improving or updating the knowledge and/or competences of existing staff whether in the public or private sector;
- acquiring new competences for a career move or retraining within a ministry, institution, or enterprise;
- continuing personal or professional development undertaken as part of an in-service arrangement;

A fourth domain in this region is functional literacy (in certain cases).

In all the countries included in this study, salaried workers in both the public and private sectors can undertake training whilst in employment. However, the situation varies quite considerably among the countries, the sectors and the type of enterprises. For example the authors of the reports on Egypt, Lebanon and Syria all noted that, though many of the larger enterprises in the private sector would have a training plan, it may not be well implemented except in a small number of companies. Nevertheless, labour law in Syria states that employment must include training and qualification systems. In Egypt training would frequently be linked to the acquisition of new machines or new technologies being introduced and the author suggests that there are few incentives for employees except in large companies. As in many European countries, training is more likely to be organised in larger enterprises than small ones and in the public sector. It will tend to favour people who already have qualifications. People working in the informal sector, which is substantial in this region, are unlikely to benefit from training and therefore unlikely to develop their qualification.

This section is organised in 7 sub-sections. Firstly we look at examples of institutional arrangements to support training and then separately how the public and private sectors fund, organise and implement training. For the private sector examples are presented of interesting, key sectors and enterprises. The contributions of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry are then illustrated followed by some examples of arrangements and issues concerning the recognition of qualifications and the quality of the provision. The final section looks at obstacles to the development of training and then there is a summary of the issues arising.

3.1 Institutional arrangements to support training

In the Maghreb countries the institutional arrangements to support training are particularly well-developed. Two examples are presented here (Tunisia and Algeria) as examples to illustrate this situation. Such arrangements concern staff in both public and private sector employment. The example of Morocco is presented in a later section on the private sector. The third example included focuses on Egypt where there is a process underway of structuring institutional arrangements in the training sector.

For all continuing education and training in Tunisia, the Ministry of Employment and of Labour Market Integration of Young People is responsible for steering, through the *Centre National de la Formation Continue et de la Promotion Professionnelle* (CNFCPP) for industrial and services sectors. Other government departments are also responsible for training in their different domains. The three main organisations presented below are:

1. The *Centre National de la Formation Continue et de la Promotion Professionnelle* (CNFCPP)
2. The *Agence de la Vulgarisation et de la Formation agricole*
3. The *Office National Tunisien de Tourisme*

Continuing education and training comes under the responsibility of the *Centre National de la Formation Continue et de la Promotion Professionnelle* (CNFCPP) which has as its mission to implement training programmes to support professional development; to allow people to progress in training to a higher level; to undertake reconversion training for employees who have lost their jobs or are likely to do so; and to support enterprises through programmes to support training and quality. This body works with both the public sector and private enterprises making available a number of funding instruments for training, both through the central services and regional offices through the *Instituts de promotion supérieure de travail* and through partnerships with other organisations.

The funding instruments are:

1. Rebates on the professional tax,
2. Funding for the national training programme and
3. Funding for training through funding for technological investment.

Enterprises in Tunisia pay a tax for vocational training that is 1% of the annual salary bill for manufacturing enterprises and 2% for the others. Expenditure made by the enterprise for the purposes of training staff can be deducted from this tax. The national training programme addresses the needs of small enterprises employing fewer than 100 staff. Since these instruments were introduced in the mid-nineties there has been considerable increase in the take-up in terms of the number of enterprises and the amounts of spending. The number of beneficiary enterprises has increased from just over 1,200 in 1995 to 5,750 in 2008 with a parallel increase in the number of individuals receiving training that has increased from just over 57,000 in 1996 to over 190,000 in 2008. However the first two instruments have increased the most. The third, which is focused on innovation, has been less effective. The author of the country report suggests that this may be due to the complexity of the procedures.

The second major actor is the *Agence de la Vulgarisation et de la Formation agricole* that comes under the Ministry of Agriculture and implements training programmes. The *Office National Tunisien de Tourisme* has a responsibility for training but, according to the information received by the consultant, there is insufficient training carried out in the enterprises.

In Algeria, continuing training which aims to increase industrial competitiveness by improving individual and collective competences, is under the responsibility of different ministries and enterprises and covers different types of provision such as work-based training, evening classes, skills training, etc. Training undertaken within the official provision either leads to a recognized diploma or gives a qualification (skills) necessary for a particular employment. This would include updating the skills of certain employment fields such as maintenance, business skills for entrepreneurs, ICT skills, training to use the New Financial Accounting System, etc. Training is provided and organised by a range of different types of organisations, such as public and private

education and training institutions, higher education and training institutions, the training centres of the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture and the training centres that come under professional bodies.

In addition to the State budget, training is funded through different mechanisms:

- by enterprises through their annual training plan;
- by the *Fonds National de Développement de l'Apprentissage et de la Formation Continue* (National Fund for the Development of Apprenticeship and Continuing training) to which enterprises contribute the equivalent of 1% of their annual salary bill;
- by the *Fonds Sectoriel de Développement* (the Sectoral Development Fund);

There are also a certain number of programmes to encourage investment in enterprise creation. In the coming years this stimulus will focus on the energy sector which will be opened up. The national 5-year plan (2009-2014) includes the establishment of 200,000 new enterprises which will therefore generate substantial needs in terms of training. These programmes are operated through national agencies that support investment, youth employment, micro-credits and social development. Under the provisions of the programmes, for the initial period the training needed to launch new enterprises will be covered completely the relevant programme.

The third example presented here is Egypt. The situation is complex given that there is a large population, a high illiteracy rate (especially in rural areas and of women), and low qualifications of the working population. In addition several ministries have responsibilities for training. It is hoped that structuring institutional arrangements will contribute to increasing the number of adults who are able to undertake training. The country report presents the intermediate bodies which have a responsibility for sector-based training or at national level. They are:

- The Industrial Training Council which was established in 2006 under the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry and Trade in order to provide coordination for the various training programmes funded by government and donor funding. It is also responsible for the implementation of the National Skills Standards Project (NSSP) and for the reform of the PVTD (Productivity and Vocational Training Department), the training centres under the responsibility of the Ministry of Industry and Trade. It is expected that the role of the ITC will expand and become more important in the implementation of human resource development policies. Since 2007 similar bodies have been established for construction (the Building and Construction Training Council) and for tourism.
- The National Authority for Education Quality Assurance and Accreditation (NAEQAA) established in 2008 is an independent body reporting directly to the President, the Prime Minister and the President of the Parliament.
- The Supreme Council for Human Resource Development is the only body in which all stakeholders, including the social partners, are represented. There is a process underway to revitalise this body. It is currently under the responsibility of the Prime Minister but this will be transferred to the Minister for Manpower.
- Since 2003 a National Training Fund has been created.
- In the last decade several programmes have been developed (National Programme for Youth Training, Enterprise and Training Partnerships and the Skills Development Programme) aim to develop training for a range of key sectors. There has been a general trend to move towards competence-based programmes and to improve the quality of programmes that remain, however, supply driven.

3.2 Training for employees in the public sector

Training offered by the public sector appears to be more widespread in all the countries that in the private sector. So, for example, in Morocco all ministries and public enterprises are required to have a strategy for human resource development as part of the overall objective of modernising the administration. Thus each ministry provides its own training budget and, in some cases, the ministries and the public enterprises for which they are responsible have established training centres. This is the case for example for the Ministries of Transport, Health, Education, Agriculture, Finance and the Interior. At the same time ministries also call on the services of private, external providers, including of higher education institutions.

This situation is similar in Syria where most ministries have a human resource development policy with training plans and programmes for the staff. The governmental sector accounts for 28% of people employed in Syria, i.e. about 1,379,977 individuals of which 75% are males. Some of the training programmes are conducted in cooperation with Arabic and international organisations such as UNIDO, UNDP, the EU, etc. One example is the Modernisation of Vocational Education and Training (MVET) programme in which an important programme for teacher training has been implemented with EU support.

Training is funded by government funds and there is no social partner involvement except for the apprenticeship schemes run by the Ministry of Education. It takes place in public sector training centres reserved for ministry employees for the sectors they are responsible for, e.g. the Ministry of Finance centres for the banking sector. For public sector companies, training takes place either in the company on-the-job or externally in the company training centre or another one.

One specific example given is that of the Commercial Bank of Syria, which is a public bank that has an innovation and modernisation plan that includes an intensive training plan covering all aspects of bank services, languages and computer training. The results of training are integrated into the incentive scheme for employees. This example is considered by the author of the country report to be indicative of the importance of training employees in reaching economic objectives.

In the public sector in Syria information is available to all employees and training is available to all regardless of their gender or age. However one of the obstacles is that there is not a well-developed learning culture which the author suggests may hinder the take-up of opportunities. The levels and length of training vary considerably from a few days or months to longer, formal courses that lead to a diploma. For short courses trainees receive an attendance certificate while formal courses lead to recognition and there may be some recognition of prior learning for entry to courses and also the possibility of progressing.

A third example of public sector provision of training which is presented in this section is Jordan. As in Morocco and Syria, in the public sector the government emphasises the importance of human resource development and all ministries therefore have a policy and strategy in place with dedicated staff to analyse staff training needs and establish a training plan, which is implemented either within the ministry (e.g. the Ministries of Education and of Health have their own training centres) or using external providers. The focus is on upgrading the technical, administrative and technological capacities of staff. Four examples of public sector training are presented. The first is the Ministry of Education and the Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Center for Educational Technology which has provided programmes for the Ministry. The third example is the National Institute for Training which provides programmes for all public sector staff. The final, the Land and Survey Department, provides an example of a specific sectoral department of government.

Firstly the Ministry of Education where, as part of the first phase of the Education Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERfKE1), the National Education Strategy (2006) and the General Framework for the Policies for 2009-2013 include priorities about the capacity development of Ministry of Education staff. This involved developing the directorate responsible for human resource development, developing the capacity of education supervision staff, providing schools with qualified technical staff, upgrading the capacity of school principals, and adopting national standards for teacher professional development. The training department offers professional development to teachers and administrative staff and teachers salaries are linked to successfully completing programmes, examples of which include: Leadership, Teaching and Evaluation Strategies; Computerised Curriculum; Class Learning Environment; etc. As an example the total number trained in ICT between 2002 and 2009 was over 91,000 females and almost 64,000 males. The training was undertaken by the Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Center for Educational Technology.

Secondly, the Queen Rania Al-Abdullah Center for Educational Technology runs programmes that can be undertaken on-line or face-to-face. It is the authorised centre for the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) for which testing is supervised by UNESCO, which also issues the certificates. 95% of teachers have successfully undertaken the ICDL training and Ministry of Education staff have also trained through INTEL courses on integrating electronics into learning and using technology in teaching and (including for parents) through the EduWave programme. The Ministry of Education, which has financed all of the above training, is considering integrating distance and virtual learning (which would be funded by the Ministry of Finance and the World Bank) into the second phase of ERfKE.

Thirdly, the National Institute for Training, which was founded in 1968 to develop human resources in public administration, provides training that serves to contribute to national and regional capacity building for the public sector. There are three branches based in Amman, the University of Yarmouk and the Mu'tah University. There are three types of programmes, which are the Training Path Programmes, training to prepare government institutions to participate in the 'King Abdullah II Award for Government Excellency and Transparency', and other special training programmes. Training Path Programmes developed in 1997 with World Bank support are offered at advanced management level, middle management, qualifying management, basic management and for new employees. The NIT has its own trainers and brings in others from higher education and private and public sectors. They hold about 340 sessions every year for about 6,500 participants. The certificates are issued by the NIT, with the Higher Education Council and the civil service Bureau. The funding comes partly from the government and partly from the fees paid for trainees (some supported by government funding and some by international donors).

Finally, we turn to the Land and Survey Department, which has a strategic plan to train 1,500 employees for the sector. The training is linked to professional development and promotion and most is carried out in-house with government funding. In 2009, 42 training programmes were held attended by 753 employees. The programmes correspond to three levels which are directors, middle management, 3rd level and also there is training for newly appointed staff. They issue their own certificates.

In summary, in the countries considered in this report, public sector employment is important both in the numbers employed and in terms of aspirations. The training organised contributes to the development of the qualifications of the working population. Ministries have training plans linked to national strategies in which human resource development is an integrated factor. Training is provided in-house or in training centres for staff at different levels of responsibility and is free of

charge. Depending on the type and level of training certificates may be formally recognised or are just certificates of attendance, which do not allow for progression of the individuals.

3.3 Training for employees in the private sector

From the evidence in the country reports, the situation in the private sector is much more varied. As seen above the countries of the Maghreb have well-developed institutional arrangements while in other countries the responsibility for taking the initiative to organise and fund training is more commonly the responsibility of the sectors or large enterprises. Labour law in Lebanon stipulates that employers have a responsibility to train employees for the tasks they have been hired to perform and to deliver a certificate for the training. According to the report, though the legislation has been in place for several decades, it is not fully implemented by the majority of private enterprises. This situation is similar in Syria where it is estimated that enterprises have training plans which are not always implemented.

In Tunisia all employees in enterprises can apply for training, but there are some difficulties in ensuring that information is broadly available. Most of the training is of short duration and takes place in public training centres. The courses qualify the individual to do a certain type of work but usually do not lead to recognised certificates or diplomas and therefore there is no formal progression though further training may be available. Assessment is carried out directly by the training providers. The CNFCPP (*Centre National de la Formation Continue et de la Promotion Professionnelle*) has introduced quality procedures for its different structures and services but, at present, the organisations with which they work to implement training are not covered by quality assurance procedures.

In Morocco, training for employees is free of charge for the trainees, the cost being covered entirely by the enterprise either from its own funds or under the different measures for funding training. The level of qualification of workers is very low - one out of four workers has a level under primary school and this figure rises to one out of two in rural areas, which means that the potential demand for adult training is very high. However, training only benefits workers in the formal sector and so 60-80% of the labour force is in fact outside of the scope of training measures as they work in the informal sector.

Since 1996 training in the private sector and for some public sector enterprises in Morocco has been regulated by a decree that established the Professional Tax, which is 1.6% of the annual salary bill that is to be spent on training, of which 30% is for continuing education and training. The way it will be spent can be decided inside the enterprise or at the level of a group. The largest part of this funding goes to fund training through the *Groupements Interprofessionnels d'Aide au Conseil* and through the *Contrats Spéciaux de Formation (CSF)*. The first are non-profit organisations managed by federations of enterprises, which help the companies to formulate their skills needs. The second is a fund run by tripartite bodies that assist enterprises and sectors to establish a training programme. A third measure was established in 2008, called the "*Métiers Mondiaux du Maroc*" which is focused on the development of 4 sectors (automobile, aeronautic, electronic and offshoring) in order to provide high level, skilled staff for these sectors and to respond to the training needs of staff after recruitment.

In the private sector training has been organised for a longer time but is limited to those enterprises that are liable for the Professional Tax. It appears from the country report that the training carried out is far from reaching the target set of 30% of the workforce.

Training in Morocco can either lead to a diploma or can be in the form of short courses mainly for the purposes of upskilling. Training leading to a diploma lasts at least several months and the assessment will depend on whether it is a state-recognised diploma or one specific to the training provider. This is very similar in both the public and private sectors though there is also functional literacy training for employees of which 80% of the costs are covered by the CSF. However, despite a high level of need, literacy courses for workers in employment are in decline. The numbers of people who benefit from functional literacy courses through continuing education and training are about 1% of the total number registered for literacy courses.

In Syria, employees in the private sector represent 65% of all employees with female participation lower than in the public sector. Legislation makes the establishment of Joint Consultative Councils obligatory for sectors with a responsibility to develop vocational training strategies. However, in the private sector, the effectiveness of training varies considerably. Whereas training is well implemented in the banking, assurance and telecommunications sector, there is a concern to develop more training in the tourism and industrial sectors, both of which have relatively good resources in terms of training centres. In the agricultural sector there is also a need to develop more training and the construction sector lacks skilled workers. A new labour law expected at the end of 2009 will specify that 1% of the total salary bill is to be used to fund training.

Incentives to train in the private sector in Syria tend to be better for higher-level employees. However, enterprises fear that if they train, their staff may be poached by other firms, which reduces their incentive to train but information is anecdotal as there are no statistics. Training tends to concentrate on current needs and short-term investment. Good quality training has *de facto* recognition as the sector recognises competence and there is usually some recognition of prior learning. Assessment is practical to assess the competences acquired. Within an organisation there may be progression to the next level.

In Egypt, as in all the countries, training for adults is undertaken in a range of institutions affiliated to the ministries, in school or universities, in private centres and in the workplace. Training addresses all staff, both male and female and generally addresses all age-groups. Information about training programmes is transmitted through the Egyptian Federation of Chambers. Most training leads to attendance certificates and provides no means of progression into formal education and training.

In summary, though training plans may be statutory or strongly encouraged, the authors suggest that implementation remains an issue. In addition it is the large enterprises that are most likely to implement structured training plans. The countries of the Maghreb are interesting examples of a system of continuing training with a solid institutional structure and funding mechanisms. In these cases training is likely to be free of charge for employees if it is organised by the enterprise. The recognition of the training undertaken by employees remains an issue as there will be limited opportunities for progression to the next level. This also raises the issue of incentives for the employees to train – does it/how does it contribute to their career development?

In the next sub-section we present examples of sector based training and then some examples of enterprises.

3.3.1 Sector-based training

This section focuses on three interesting examples taken from the Lebanese report that cover two very different sectors: banking and the industrial sector and then a third, the ICT sector, which is an interesting example of a recent and developing sector with a major influence in the economy.

The first example is the banking sector. Since the early nineties, considerable efforts have been made to improve the functioning and competitiveness of the sector which employs about 1.2% of the labour force. They are essentially young adults, 57% are under the age of 40. Three-quarters have formal training or a university degree and women are well represented at 43% of the total workforce. Training is a right in the collective agreement. The Lebanese Association of Banks offers training for all professional levels and covers over 30 different activities. It covers a wide range of specialisms and helps banks to analyse their training needs and design their programmes.

Training is organised for employees, middle management and senior management in the form of in-house training, intensive courses and specialised sessions. The specialised sessions target mainly employees and almost as many women as men. Two-thirds of the staff targeted by the intensive sessions are men and over 90% middle management. The in-house training sessions are fairly equally divided between employees and middle management and about 40% of the trainees are women.

The Centre for Banking Studies was established in the late sixties as a partnership between the ABL and St Joseph's University in Beirut and provides a range of professional development services to banks and has established a strategy for skills and competence development for banking employees leading to certification offering Advanced Diploma Programmes (6 semesters) and, since 2000, they have offered six Professional Specialised Certificates in several domains that last from 40 to 60 contact hours.

Quality assurance in this sector comes through a well-organised and structured offer of training that is adapted to the needs of banks and carried out by professional trainers. In addition quality is ensured by cooperation with international bodies such as the Paris based *Centre de Formation de la Profession Bancaire*. The author considers that the system functions well and there are no barriers or obstacles encountered by staff that wish to, or need to, undertake training.

A second example from Lebanon is the industrial sector. This sector employs about one quarter of the workforce and is characterised by many small and family owned enterprises, lack of innovation and limited market coverage. The Association of Lebanese Industrialists has a Vocational Education and Training Committee that develops policy for the whole sector and there are also several product-based sector syndicates. The ALI organises topic based seminars, workshops, etc. on topics such as quality, certification and management. Training seminars organised by the product syndicates tend to be technical in orientation. The most active are of them are the food industries and the paper and packaging industries, both of which regularly receive international donor support, including from bilateral cooperation agreements.

Membership of these organisations is not compulsory and training is only organised for its members, which means that many small enterprises that do not elect to join will not have access to the training offered. However, almost no regular programmes are organised for workers in the industrial sector outside of those for members of the above organisation and syndicates and those supported by international donor funding. One exception is a programme supported by the Directorate General for Vocational Training and the Food Industries to establish a technical school in the Bakaa. This initiative is also supported by EU funding but is struggling to become

operational. If successful, it is thought that this new model of private-public partnership could be duplicated for other sectors.

The information and communication technologies sector in Lebanon is growing in size and economic importance. It currently employs almost 7000 staff in mainly large firms (60%) and 30% are in medium sized firms. Firms that offer both hardware and software production, account for 60% of the employment. There are two key bodies, the Professional Computer Association and the Association of Lebanese Software Industry. The first acts mainly as a lobbying group while the second is committed to improving the competitiveness of the sector including through seminars, and promoting ISO certification. The point to note here is the involvement of sector professional bodies in human resource development through more informal means such as seminars. Other professional associations in Lebanon such as for accounting and engineering also provide seminars and courses for their members.

In summary, in all three sectors, the trend is towards very structured training that takes account of the current and future needs of the sector using different approaches. The banking sector organises human resource development at all levels in-house and working with a range of training providers including universities. The training is quality controlled, including through partnership with an external (French) organisation. The industrial sector is more complex with many small enterprises and several product-based syndicates which create a variety of needs that are in part supported by donor funding and they are also seeking to establish new types of funding partnerships between the public and private sectors. The ICT sector is again quite varied but with a high percentage of large firms. The emphasis is on the professional development of the sector through its professional associations.

3.3.2 Enterprises

Several reports noted that though there is an obligation or strong encouragement for firms to have training plans, they may not exist or may not be carried out. This is attributed to a training culture that is only developing slowly in the private sector. The illustration here is from the country report on Jordan and concerns two large enterprises: the Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. Ltd and Safeways.

The Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. Ltd has a strategy for developing the professional capacity of its staff through training, which is organised at the Abdel-Hameed Showman Training Centre and is linked to their annual evaluation. Training needs analysis is carried out through a survey of all the over 3,300 employees who all participate in at least three training programmes every year. All employees have easy access to the training centre facilitated by the company and certificates are issued to those who pass the exams. In 2008 about 260 training courses were carried out for 2,440 employees, most of them inside Jordan but about 10% outside the country. Training included programmes for recently qualified engineers.

The Sultan Training Centre is responsible for the training and professional development of the 1,600 employees of Safeways, a retail department store with 23 branches in Jordan. Training is carried out in-house and all recruits have a one-day induction course and then three types of training are offered: head office and operations; customer courtesy and customer services. Other training is provided according to needs. Certificates are issued by the training centre.

3.4 Chambers of Commerce

Training organised through the different Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture was highlighted in the country reports on Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. The training addresses the needs of small- and medium-sized enterprises in the three countries providing courses for different types of firms, management training, business start-up support and also programmes linked to the acquisition of formal education diplomas such as MBAs.

The Euro Jordanian Advanced Business Institute of the Chamber of Industry is a non-profit organisation established in 2004 to develop SMEs in Jordan. It works with universities and training providers to organise seminars focused on management and practical skills. Their budget is collected annually from the industrial sector and they offer short management development programmes, roundtables for the industrial sector, in-company customised programmes and consultancy services. For the first 10 months of 2009 they carried out 38 programmes for 1,031 trainees that were middle and senior management from the industrial sector and 75% were male. The programmes are free for enterprises from the industrial sector but enterprises from other sectors have to pay. Certificates are awarded by the centre and in some cases their programmes are accredited by a university, e.g. by the University of Jordan and the Durham Business School for an MBA programme.

In Lebanon the different Chambers of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture are also active in training. For example the CCIAB (Beirut and Mount Lebanon) has a training centre which functions in partnership with the French *Institut de Formation par Alternance* and offers courses, seminars, workshops and professional diplomas. The sessions offer practical training moderated by professional trainers that is of immediate benefit to firms. The CCIAB of Tripoli and North Lebanon operates a business development centre that incubates, hosts and provides training to support business opportunities. They offer training in all the areas that new businesses need such as assurance, business plans, legal aspects, etc. Since 2009 training is offered through the SME Manager Training Programme offered at three Professional Membership grades with a certificate to attest the completion of the programme. Many other courses are offered to support enterprise creation and development, such as by the Berytech Technical and Health Centre in the University of St Joseph or the Euro Lebanese centre for Industrial Modernisation.

In Syria, the Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Agriculture and Tourism include human resource development in their strategic objectives and some have appointed human resource teams. These teams receive intensive training in order to have the skills to be able to provide the necessary support to enterprises. Training takes place in a number of different types of centres including the centres established by the Chambers. There are also centres for specific trades or sectors (such as clothing and textiles) and some training is provided by the centres of the different ministries or by private training providers.

Case study of Aleppo:

Many enterprises are family run businesses that have no human resource strategy and do not offer any training to their employees. A survey in the Aleppo area in 2005 of almost 4,000 enterprises demonstrated that less than 1% of them in the industrial sector have obtained ISO 9001.

The same survey showed that 95% of the enterprises employ fewer than 50 people. Most of these enterprises considered that they did not need “complicated modern management”.

There is strong cooperation in the area with the Syrian Enterprise Business Centre as well as with other organisations from the Arab region and the EU that have established training laboratories and providing technical support.

Since 2000, there has been an apprenticeship scheme jointly run by the Ministry of Education and the Chambers of Industry that addresses young people in VET schools. A key achievement is that this initiative is the first partnership between the government and the private sector that is instrumental in introducing new trades and specialisations.

Source: Syria country report

3.5 Recognition of learning and quality assurance

Recognition is clearly an area of concern for all the country authors. The exception is for education and training courses that lead to formal diplomas, which is more likely to be the case in the public sectors, e.g. in the three Maghreb countries. In Egypt also there are education and training opportunities for adults in employment who wish to obtain a diploma from the formal education system. They can also undertake training that does not lead to a recognised diploma and most training leads to attendance certificates. This mirrors the situation in the private sector in most of the countries where trainees usually obtain only a certificate of attendance. However as the author of the Syrian report points out, if the training is relevant to the sector needs, then recognition will be *de facto* in the labour market. This raises the issue of the recognition of non-formal education and training possibly within a national qualifications framework or similar mechanism (e.g. register) in order to begin to put in place opportunities for individual employees to build on their qualification level and to be able to take up opportunities to progress.

In Morocco, legislation is being developed to bring in validation of prior learning and a national qualifications framework, both of which are being experimented in pilot sectors – construction and textiles/clothing. In each case the piloting is being carried out for specific employment fields and trades. At present, given the lack of statistical data on training activities it is difficult to estimate how much progression actually takes place due to training.

Quality assurance of training is another issue for attention. Quality assurance in Morocco tends to depend on the training providers, though the Ministry of Vocational Training is introducing measures to better monitor training. They include a system of qualifications for the trainers, more structured approaches to developing the training concepts and plans, and piloting the validation of prior learning system. The report on Lebanon states that the quality of the training depends wholly on the trainers and providers. For many of the employers in the sector, training is not considered to be important for their activity and the author considers that the sector lacks motivation to organise training. Few workers actually benefit from the training offered. This is certainly a good summary of the general situation concerning the quality of training in the private sector in all the countries included in the study.

3.6 Obstacles

The authors point to a number of obstacles which can be illustrated by country examples. In Egypt the main obstacles arising are that training plans tend only to exist and be implemented in large companies and the Arabic Occupational Classification is not implemented. There is a lack of engagement of employers in training as they fear poaching and do not see training as an investment. For employees there is a lack of information and guidance and little incentive to train in terms of their career and salary progression. This tendency for training to be more common in large companies appears to be the situation in all the countries covered by the study (but it is also the common situation in most EU member states too).

The issue of poaching was also raised by the Syrian report which also drew attention to several other issues in both the private and public sector. Although all government sector organisations have training plans, the effectiveness of the implementation is not very high as there is rarely a human resource management strategy and there is not a clear training needs analysis process. There is also an issue about the complicated procedures and difficulty in organising training around the production plan. Many employees do not recognise the benefits of training. In addition it is difficult for married employees to attend, given their family responsibilities and many people have a second job to increase their income. By way of comparison recent studies in OECD countries and in the EU found that significant proportions of adults not participating in education and training declare that it is for reasons linked to family responsibilities and lack of time¹⁴. Having a second job clearly creates a situation where training outside of working hours becomes very difficult.

The Moroccan report raises issues about the implementation of government decisions and draws attention to the fact that training does not yet benefit from the instruments needed in the form of validation of prior learning and an NQF. The authors suggests that training favours employees that already have a good level of education and training and that the procedures for benefitting from financial support to organise training are long and complex and, therefore, not adapted to SMEs. There is also a need for awareness-raising about the benefits of training for small firms. Training is of very variable quality. One outcome of this situation is that in the period 2002–2008, only 25% of the credits allocated for the CSF (*Contrats spéciaux de formation*) were actually spent and about 1,400 enterprises benefit a year despite the fact that about 200,000 are eligible. A training market is developing but at present it is only accessible to a small percentage of the enterprises.

The Tunisian report also focuses on mechanisms and their implementation as funding instruments do not cover all categories of enterprises and in addition the informal sector, which is important in the Tunisian economy, cannot benefit from the advantages of the funding support for training. Funding for innovation has grown more slowly than the other funding instruments given the complexity of the procedures. It would appear that the engagement of certain public sector actors such as ATFP (*Agence Tunisienne de la Formation Professionnelle*) and ONTT (*Office National du Tourisme*) is insufficient to respond to the human resource development needs of the enterprises they cover.

3.7 Main issues arising

There are a number of shared issues discussed in the country reports and summarised as follows:

1. It would appear that human resource development and training are better implemented in the public sector than in the private sector (e.g. SY). Some country ministries have human resource development plans that are implemented through training (SY, MO).
2. In the private sector the large companies are more likely to organise training for their employees than SMEs, especially in sectors that are key for the economy. This is the case for petroleum and the industrial sector in Jordan and for banking in Lebanon and Syria. In Morocco it includes the automobile sector, aeronautics, electronics and offshoring as part of the *Métiers Mondiaux du Maroc* measure and in Tunisia the agricultural sector.

¹⁴ For studies that include an exploration of the obstacles to adult learning, see: OECD, *Beyond Rhetoric; Adult Learning policies and Practice*, 2003; OECD, *Promoting Adult Learning*, 2005; European Association for the Education of Adults, *Adult education trends and issues in Europe*, study for DG EAC, 2006

3. For SMEs there are two types of issues. Firstly there is clearly a need to raise awareness about the advantages of training (SY) and secondly in some countries where funding support is available, the procedures may be complex and discourage small firms from applying (MO, TN). There is also a perception that training can lead to poaching of trained workers for their enhanced skills.
4. The different Chambers play an important role at local level in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria for SMEs of different sectors. Sector bodies are also important in both of these countries, as well as in Lebanon and Tunisia.
5. Funding mechanisms have been established in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia that oblige enterprises to pay a training levy which may be mutualised through special funds or fund in-company training directly.
6. From the point of view of the employees, some of the reports mention that incentives to train are few in terms of salary and career enhancement and the obstacles may be inhibiting especially if people have two jobs and/or family responsibilities.
7. The lengths and outcomes of training (type of award, progression, etc.) vary considerably among and within the countries. In general the most common situation is that attendance certificates only are awarded. This raises the issue of the recognition of non-formal education and training possibly within a national qualifications framework or similar mechanism (e.g. register) in order to begin to put in place opportunities for individual employees to build on their qualification level and to be able to take up opportunities to progress.
8. There are few formal quality assurance mechanisms in place. The most effective appears to be the labour market.
9. The informal sector of the economy is relatively important in all the countries but is not covered by measures to support training.
10. Elearning is not yet sufficiently developed to be a valid alternative to face-to-face training.
11. There is a lack of statistical data about training that takes place. Data is collected by different types of institutions, bodies and providers. This does not make it possible to obtain an overall and reliable perspective.

4 People who are unemployed and/or out of the labour market

This second group for which descriptions of the education and training provided and data were requested was for people who are either unemployed or are not in the labour market. Each report has focused on the categories and information that are most relevant for the country. When the terms of reference were drawn up a number of possible groups were identified but some are more prominent in the reports than others as will be seen in the sub-sections that follow. The different groups included:

- graduates of higher education and school-leavers who have achieved a qualification and for whom labour market entry courses are organised;
- youth – early school leavers under the age of 18;
- working children;
- adults undertaking literacy courses;
- beneficiaries of active employment measures;
- upskilling or re-skilling following redundancy
- registered unemployed;
- women entering or returning to the labour market;
- education/training for the agricultural sector/rural areas.
- other as relevant to your country.

This pillar aimed to include government-funded measures, programmes funded through international cooperation and programmes organised by NGOs. The data gathered for the country reports followed the list of items in Annex 1.

Two different types of groups are included in the adult education presented under this pillar. The first is unemployed people, i.e. those who are on the labour market or trying to enter it. The second is the pool of people not counted in the active population, but who may be active in the informal sector (with or without remuneration). Women are particularly present in this latter group with those in rural areas being especially vulnerable. However, this is not necessarily reflected in the provision.

Average unemployment remains around 15% in the countries in this study with some variations and with a much higher rate for young people. Two countries illustrate the situation.

In Egypt, despite improvements, unemployment remains high among young people and particularly for young women. Educational attainment does not protect against unemployment. Official employment figures show a decrease in unemployment from almost 12% in 1998 to under 9% in 2008 with the biggest improvement in rural areas which may be due to an increase in activity in the informal sector and in unpaid labour. Data included by the author of the country report indicates that in 2006, female unemployment was four times higher than that of males, which is one of the highest ratios in the world. 82% of the unemployed are under the age of 30 with very high percentage that are first time entrants and holders of a secondary school diploma. Unemployment rates are lower for people with lower educational levels; they increase sharply for technical secondary school graduates and then decrease for graduates of post-secondary training and higher education. The country reports notes that figures can vary among sources and some independent sources give higher unemployment figures.

There is an 8.5% unemployment rate in Syria but it is much higher in the female population due to a supposed preference of employers to hire male staff. The highest levels of unemployment are in the category aged 20-24 years old (37.6%) and in the 25- 29 year olds (22.4%). Among those with just basic schooling the unemployment rate is 35.8%. This suggests that the highest group will be females with basic schooling between the ages of 20–29 years old. It is however difficult to estimate the real unemployment rate as some of the people registered as unemployed in fact have employment in the private sector but are seeking public sector employment.

As can be seen from these examples, the vulnerable groups are those mentioned earlier in this report (see Section 2): young people and especially young women, higher education graduates, though the situation for young people with just secondary education may be worse. However both countries point to the difficulty of obtaining good quality data given variations in sources and the fact that some people may be declared as unemployed but nevertheless working in the informal sector to earn a living.

The data gathered by the country reports is presented under a set of thematic headings. Firstly there are examples of national systems for tackling training for unemployed people. Secondly some examples of sectoral approaches are given. The next sub-sections focus on specific populations and needs (youth, literacy and higher education). The obstacles to which the authors drew attention are grouped and are followed by the final sub-section bringing together the issues arising.

4.1 Mechanisms and funds

In this section we have included detailed examples of how the national systems for providing training for unemployed people and those out of the labour market are set up and function in four of the countries: Tunisia and Morocco for the Maghreb and then Syria and Jordan for the Mashrek.

4.1.1 Tunisia

The report covers the training for first job seekers and for long-term unemployed which is provided by public and private organisations. The main ministry responsible is the Ministry of Education and Training but other sectoral ministries also organise training for job seekers for their sector (e.g. agriculture, health, tourism, artisan trades). The main public provider is the *Agence Tunisienne de Formation Professionnelle* (ATFP) in particular for the industrial sector. In addition the *Agence Tunisienne de l'Emploi et du Travail Indépendant* also organises training for job seekers.

Four categories of job seekers constitute the majority:

- young males and females who have left the initial education system at the end of the 9 years of basic schooling;
- school leavers with the *baccalauréat*
- students who have dropped out of higher education
- higher education graduates

Four main types of programmes are organised to address the issue of youth unemployment:

1. Training for university graduates to improve their chances of labour market integration.
2. Labour market integration contracts for university graduates and long term unemployed that give them the possibility of retraining.
3. Qualification contracts that enable job seekers to train in the field in which skilled employees are needed.

4. Training for enterprise creation and other technical training needed for setting up an enterprise.

Training is organised by:

The Agence Tunisienne de Formation Professionnelle: It has 135 training centres, almost 2,000 trainers and almost 900 information and guidance staff. The mission of the centres, created in 1993, is to train both young people (initial training) and also adults taking account of social and economic needs. They implement training programmes in partnership with enterprises, organise programmes of continuing education and training and provide technical assistance to enterprises. The demand for training addressed to ATFP is continually rising, as is also the range of training required and the levels.

The Agence de Vulgarisation et de la Formation Agricole: This organisation has 30 training centres spread across the country and offers initial and continuing training for workers in the agricultural and fishing sectors. The demand is low and there are currently about 400 trainees a year.

Training institutions under the responsibility of Office National du Tourisme: There are 8 training centres mainly on the coast and they provide training for the hotel and catering industry at three levels from skilled worker (CAP) through technician (BTP) to higher technician (BTS).

The private sector training for job seekers has been in place since 2001. There are over 500 centres that propose training in over 170 specialisms. These centres are grouped into two Chambers and come under the supervision of the *Direction Générale de la Normalisation* of the Ministry of Education.

Though all of the above centres are predominantly focused on initial training, they also provide adult training. The number of trainees in training centres (all types) is growing regularly and has increased from 61,377 in 2006 to 76,223 in 2008. For public sector training, the trainees do not pay for their training which is covered by the different programmes but do pay a registration fee. Private providers charge fees but they can be covered by the 'training cheque' system which was introduced in 2007 and allows some of the costs to be covered for the sectors and specialisms targeted each year depending on identified needs of the economy.

In some cases, if the trainees do not have the required level to follow a cycle to a diploma level, a certificate of competence may be available. All adult training certificates and diplomas are part of the national qualification classification and therefore the assessment of the trainees is part of the regular procedure and the qualifications are fully recognised and progression is within the classification system. Adult training programmes follow a competence-based approach.

Concerning quality assurance, a *Référentiel National Qualité de la Formation Professionnelle* has been developed and is currently being used by 80 training centres and also centres that come under the AVFA and the ONTT.

4.1.2 Morocco

There are three types of training for different categories of unemployed people:

- job seekers that have qualifications;
- adults who do not have functional literacy;

- young people that are still within the age of compulsory education but who are not in school.

One of the characteristics of the Moroccan labour market is the high level of unemployment of individuals with a higher education degree. One of the objectives of the public employment policy is to remedy this situation. A number of programmes have been established by the public employment service, the National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Competences (ANAPEC), to support labour market integration:

- MOUKAWALATI: aims to encourage self-employment of unemployed graduates through supporting enterprise creation and providing support to existing businesses.
- IDMAJ: aims to support the first employment of graduates in the private sector.
- TAEHIL: improves the employability of unemployed graduates through training either for to fill positions for which employers cannot find suitable candidates or for training for reconversion for a different employment field. Both types of training receive state funding. The training is implemented by external providers that are public training centres, higher education institutions or private training providers accredited or approved by the ANAPEC.

These programmes aim to improve the employability of 50,000 job seekers during the period from 2006 to 2008 but, by the end of 2008, the results were well under the objectives – with about half that number having benefited from training. However the job integration rate of those beneficiaries was over 75% and almost half were university graduates. In order to increase the number of beneficiaries ANAPEC has set up a regional programme of needs analysis in order to assess the skills needs of enterprises in different regions. The aim of all these activities is to give diploma holders the competences needed for labour market integration.

4.1.3 Jordan

The ‘National Agenda’ addresses the issue of unemployment, the low average income of Jordanian employees and low productivity. The first phase (2007–2012) is concentrating on reducing current unemployment of which 60% are people who have, at best, the secondary school leaving certificate (*Tawjihi*). The second phase (2013–2017) will focus on increasing average income and the third phase (2018 onwards) on transforming the economic sectors towards creating a knowledge economy. For the first phase there is, therefore, a focus ensuring that vocational training responds to the needs of the labour market through upgrading skills, replacing imported labour by qualified local labour and restructuring the vocational and technical education sector.

For the public sector, two training measures are presented:

1. Ministry of Labour
2. Vocational Training Corporation (VTC)

Ministry of Labour: The Ministry of Labour has focused on creating the infrastructure that can undertake training, which includes setting up the National Training and Employment Project, restructuring the Vocational Training Corporation and establishing a National Centre for Quality Assurance and Accreditation for the Employment-Technical and Vocational Education and Training Fund (E-TVET) sector.

Vocational Training Corporation (VTC): The VTC, which comes under the Ministry of Labour, provides training for unemployed people aged 16–35 years old, of both genders though there are more males than females. The vocational preparation programmes target the semi-skilled and

skilled levels, as well as offering an applied secondary education programme, craft worker programmes and health and safety programmes for supervisors. There are also upgrading programmes for a range of fields. The training is provided in eight institutes and 34 centres across the country. In 2009, 6,200 unemployed people were accepted for training. Trainees receive certificates on passing the exams, which are by level and therefore create the possibility of progression. Funding comes through the government from the ministry of Finance but VTC also has two other sources of income, through selling its services and from international donors.

4.1.4 Syria

Training for the unemployed is undertaken by:

- PCEED – the Public Cooperation for Employment and Enterprise Development
- SKILLS – Superior Knowledge by Intensive Labour Learning Schemes, which is a scheme established by SEBC and ETF to provide training for unemployed HE graduates.

Each is presented in more detail below.

1. PCEED – the Public Cooperation for Employment and Enterprise Development supports training, business incubation, SME development and programmes for women. The social partners are involved from the business sectors, the Chambers, the banking sector and the NGO sector. All the programmes supported must provide training in order to continue to receive support. The programmes cooperate with different international organisations and donors. Training is free of charge. Information to the programme is frequently through job fairs and the only condition for participating in training is to be aged 20–55 years old. The duration of programmes is very variable from 1 week to 6 months. The curricula are competence based and the assessment is usually undertaken by the employer, after which trainees receive an attendance certificate. There is no recognition of prior learning and trainees are expected to attend the whole course.
2. SKILLS – Superior Knowledge by Intensive Labour Learning Schemes, is a scheme established by SEBC and ETF to provide training for unemployed HE graduates. The programme aims to facilitate job creation and to provide enterprises with the skills they need. It works in partnership with SMEs, private companies and the Chambers. Funding is provided by the SEBC so the trainees do not pay fees. The main fields covered are managerial, English language, computer training and there is also on-the-job training depending on the enterprise. The programme addresses 18–25 year olds that have completed secondary school and have a minimum level in English. Selection is by interview and the programmes, which are competency-based, last one year after which there is a six-month on-the-job training period. This type of training has a high level of recognition by the business sector and prior learning is recognised through the assessment. Progression is into employment. The quality of the training is assured by SEBC and ETF.

In summary, these four systems focus on the key populations already identified. The majority of the provision focuses on the under 35 year olds with a strong focus on preparing graduates for employment through different types of schemes in some cases linked to recruitment. Training also targets beneficiaries who left secondary school and those who did not complete basic education.

A range of ministries are involved, both the ministries of education and sectoral ministries that have an interest in training for their sector. There is a mix of public and private sector involvement. Though in some countries numbers of people trained are increasing (e.g. Tunisia) there is a need to

continue increasing the numbers (e.g. Morocco). Tunisia is the only country of the four in which all the training that is state-organised has a formal quality assurance mechanism through the *Référentiel National Qualité de la Formation Professionnelle* that is intended to contribute to ensuring the level of quality. An interesting scheme to reduce costs when training is organised by private providers is implemented in Tunisia. It is the 'training cheque' scheme which allows costs to be covered for sectors and specialisms targeted as part of the national economic development strategy.

Despite the observation in the country reports that the activity rate of women is lower than that of men, despite an increase in young female graduates, no programmes targeting young women (school or higher education graduates) in particular were noted.

4.2 Sector-based initiatives

In all of the countries there are sector-based initiatives which are either organised by the state but address the needs of particular sectors or are organised by the specific sector. Most of these programmes target predominantly young people, but often with the focus being placed on developing skills for a particular type of employment or sector.

In Egypt the Training Organisation of Housing and Reconstruction (TOMOHAR) focuses on construction skills and targets 15 to 45 year olds. Training is undertaken in vocational training centres according to the skills requirements of the region. Courses last 4 months, trainees obtain an attendance certificate and it also allows workers to obtain the license they now need to practice skilled trades. It is a development arising out of the National Skills Standards Project.

In Jordan two initiatives are interesting to note: the programme of the Agricultural Engineering Association and that of the Private Hospital Association.

The Agricultural Engineering Association offers a programme for newly qualified agricultural engineers giving them the practical training they need to integrate the sector and perform effectively. The long term goal is to create more opportunities for recent graduates in the private sector and thus to contribute to reducing unemployment including for the female graduates. The project also seeks to support the agricultural sector with qualified staff. The programme was initiated almost 20 years ago and the number of trainees for the period 2000-2006 was 1,380. It offers a number of courses such as marketing, computers, communication, etc. The programmes last 6 months and the trainees receive a salary.

The Private Hospital Association runs the Nursing Employment and Training Programme (NTEP) to train male nurses who have recently graduated from university but will not find work, as there is less recruitment of male as opposed to female nurses. The programme started in 2008 and to date 417 male nurses have been trained through on-the-job training for which they receive a salary (half of which is reimbursed by the NTEP).

In Lebanon the National Employment Office provides skills training, training for the unemployed and retraining in the fields of industrial trades, car repair, air conditioning, nursery assistant, ticketing and reservations, hair dressing, restaurant trades, construction trades, etc. The conditions for entry are to hold Lebanese nationality, to be over 14 years of age, to have the adequate level of education for the employment for which training is requested and to fulfil health conditions where necessary. The training is free of charge and transport costs are covered. There is no evaluation of the curricula or training process and there appears to be a decrease in the uptake of these courses.

The ILO funds activities that include a training initiative towards the Nahr El Bared Palestinian refugee camp in the north of Lebanon as part of the reconstruction initiative. Training covers both the construction sector and the business sector. Courses organised include:

1. Short cycle employment-oriented vocational courses for unemployed youth and job seekers in the priority construction industry.
2. Business management training, provision of equipment and access to micro-finance.

The funding also aims to reinforce the capacity of the employment authority and the job centres in order to better assist job seekers.

4.3 Training for unemployed youth

Given the demographics and thus the high priority of youth employment, there are many initiatives in all the countries. The section focuses on two countries: Jordan and Syria where there are public sector and private sector initiatives to assist young graduates in entering the labour market with skills that should help them stay in employment. The examples presented are a mix of programmes that offer employment training and others in which a work contract that goes beyond the training period is linked to the training.

In Jordan the National Training and Employment Project aims to alleviate poverty and unemployment among young Jordanians and is implemented in cooperation with both the public and private sectors. It provides training and recruitment for young job seekers with funding through the Employment-Technical and Vocational Education and Training Fund (E-TVET). The age group targeted is the 18-36 year olds (both males and females) at different educational levels, though especially targeting school leavers. Young people with special needs are also included. 13,500 trainees were registered and by June 2009 over 4,000 had completed their training and found employment.

Training initiatives also target a certain number of sectors such as the textile industries; nursing (male nurses only); IT and Communications engineering; hotel services; sales; electronic and electrical appliances; metal and wood product industries; and agriculture. It is also possible to organise courses for any other services for which skilled employees are needed. The programmes last 3 to 6 months taking place both in the training centre and on-the-job. Enterprises that participate are required to sign a contract for a minimum of one year to provide an internship following the training in order to give work experience to the qualified trainee. There are incentives for the trainees in terms of the wages (not less than the standard minimum wage rate for employed workers at the same skill level), a transport allowance, social security and healthcare.

One specific sector concerned by the NTEP is construction for which there is an objective to train and employ 30,000 civilians and military staff in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and the private sector. The initiative is called NET and funding comes through the E-TVET Fund, the Ministries of Finance and of Labour, the private sector and in-kind contributions from the military. During the programme the trainees are considered as employees and receive a wage. Two groups of trainees qualified in 2009, one in June (2,684 graduated out of 4,000 recruited) and one in October (2,591 graduated out of 3,600 recruited). Support for this initiative is being provided by a French company, CREDIJ, that is training the trainers, developing curriculum and evaluating the trainers and trainees. This is an example of cooperation with a foreign non profit organisation that brings specialist skills and expertise. The certificates are awarded by the CREDIJ that is accredited by the French Ministry of Education. NET is being monitored for certification for ISO-9001.

The fourth initiative in Jordan is the Satellite Units Initiative (SUI) managed by NTEP. They are production units established in cooperation with investors particularly for labour intensive industries to provide work experience for unemployed young people. The scheme provides the production site, subsidises workers' wages and covers the cost of social security, meals, pre-training and transportation. The investor covers the equipment and machines, the running costs, training on the job, management staff, the non-subsidised part of the wages and also the registration with the social security, healthcare and transportation. A contract of at least a 2-year duration is signed after the end of the initial 18 month training period.

The Leather Manufacturing Committee in Syria runs a sector specific programme in the Aleppo area to provide training for unemployed, poor adults, including those with special needs, and to provide semi-skilled workers for the sector. The training targets male adults aged 16–35 years old and also orphans and is competence-based. It lasts for 3 months after which the trainees are assessed by the Leather Committee and the staff of the training centre. The training is recognised by the leather sector and the trainees find employment.

In summary, training focuses on young people (children and young adults) from the end of compulsory schooling to about 30 years of age. Programmes are offered for all educational levels but there is a particular emphasis on labour market integration of graduates. Most of the courses last a few months though some are linked to an internship or recruitment programme. The programmes do not focus on additional qualifications but on giving school and higher education leavers the competences they need to enter the labour market or to set up their own businesses. Programmes for higher education graduates and school leavers are developed in all of the countries included in the study.

4.4 Education for literacy

Literacy is an issue in all the countries to a greater or lesser degree. Examples of programmes in Lebanon, Morocco, Syria and Algeria are presented in this section even though the literacy rates are quite different from country to country. While both Lebanon and Syria have quite high adult literacy rates – 90% and 83% respectively, Algeria and Morocco are grappling with a far larger percentage of illiteracy and the ensuing problems (respectively 70% and 51-57% depending on estimations).

In Lebanon, the National Committee for Illiteracy and Adult Education was established in the mid nineties and is chaired by a representative of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The overall aim is to support sustainable development through tackling illiteracy and making literacy a human development priority. The current literacy rate in 2009 is estimated at 90%¹⁵. The NCIAE cooperates with both the public and private sector and delivers education mainly through the Ministry's regional centres, Community Development Centres. Priority is given to programmes addressing health awareness, school health, women's empowerment, social awareness and rehabilitation. Programmes include literacy, vocational training, training for early school leavers, computer literacy, etc.

The literacy programmes are of different types and offer about 160 hours of education over 6 to 9 months using textbooks, workbooks, and instructors' manuals. There are different types of programmes based on a life skills approach (influenced by UNESCO), learning for life for early

¹⁵ Human Development Report 2009, *Overcoming barriers: Human mobility and development*, UNDP 2009

school leavers and reproductive and adolescent health, as well as programmes specifically for illiterate and semi-literate women. They have successfully trained over 1,600 trainers from the Ministry, NGOs, military and correctional institutions. As part of the fight against illiteracy, there is a programme, UNILIE, through which university students receive credits towards their degree for participating in literacy training and other social work.

Eliminating illiteracy is a major national programme in Jordan that lasts 32 months divided into two parts and at the end the learner receives a certificate equivalent to the 6th grade of basic schooling. There are many more centres across the country for women (446) than for men (27) as illiteracy remains much higher in the female than male population. This disparity is reflected in the numbers enrolled: 5,500 women out of a total of 6,000.

Literacy training is organised both for young people and adults in Morocco. Given the high rate of illiteracy in the adult population (estimated by the author of the report at about 40%), it is of critical importance and has major consequences for social and economic development. A strategy to combat illiteracy was formulated by the *Charte Nationale d'éducation et de formation (CNEF)* and is implemented by the *Direction de la lutte contre l'analphabétisme* (Directorate for Combating Illiteracy) in the Ministry of Education. There are four main programmes:

1. General programme: activities organised by the Ministry of Education generally in schools with teachers who are delivering the programme receiving overtime pay.
2. Public sector programme: activities organised by other ministries.
3. Civil society programme: literacy programmes organised by the non-profit sector, which can be wholly or partly funded or these organisations undertake the activities with their own resources.
4. Enterprise programme: literacy for employees.

These programmes are open to all children and adults over the age of 15 and registration on courses is on a voluntary basis though in some initiatives such as developing micro credits or local development, literacy courses may be an obligatory component. About 650,000 individuals follow these programmes every year. There has been a decrease in the number registered in Ministry of Education programmes but a rise in those registered in programmes run by other ministries. The two biggest programmes are the public sector programme and the civil society programme while the enterprise programme is very small. These programmes develop many competences in addition to literacy, such as self-esteem, confidence, etc., but are not part of a certification system through which they can be recognised. The Directorate for Combating Illiteracy is also developing interactive tools for learning Arabic and French. Another programme is being developed with Italian cooperation using television and it aims to engage family learning by which the young members of the family help the adults.

Literacy courses in Syria respond to a very important issue as the author of the country report refers to recent surveys that suggest that there is an illiteracy rate of 19% (which is nevertheless much lower than Morocco or Algeria). A target has been set in the current Five Year Plan to reduce it by 50% by 2015 and progress is reported as being. Literacy courses are provided by the Adult Learning Directorate of the Ministry of Commerce and are free of charge. Cooperation with UNESCO has made it possible to establish centres in poor regions and to provide learning materials for blind people. The Women's Union is active in this area. The main problem for access is reaching the people who need the literacy training. The literacy programmes last 6 months with a further 3 months programme possible. Attendance is obligatory for 80% of the programme that is competence-based. At the end the learner is awarded a literacy certificate. Quality assurance is

mainly through Ministry of Commerce monitoring and, according to the country report, is assured by good curricula and well-trained trainers.

A final example comes from the report on Algeria. Literacy is an important area of government intervention for individuals as the literacy rate in the early 2000s was about 70%. The government has committed a substantial budget of 50 billion dinars between now and 2016 with the aim of eradicating illiteracy in order to increase social inclusion. Three government departments are involved in the implantation of this action: the Ministry of National education, the Ministry of Vocational Education and Training and the Ministry of Solidarity in the National Fight against Illiteracy Programme. The activities include:

- developing training programmes linked to literacy;
- adapting the teaching techniques to suit the population;
- developing learner-centred methods;
- support learner autonomy;
- provide initiation into the use of ICTs in the framework of the extension of the network to all households.

Assessments have identified the populations the most concerned by illiteracy. They are sedentary or nomadic rural populations (males and females, adults and children). The second group are those who have been affected by terrorism and also people who have never been to school. This action concerns all the population including women in rural areas for whom there are specific activities including encouragement to create micro-enterprises.

In summary, all the examples witness to the substantial efforts that are being implemented to tackle the problems of illiteracy both for the young and for adults. In all cases the illiteracy rate has an adverse effect on economic and social development in addition of course to personal development and social inclusion. Literacy courses are linked to vocational training and acquiring computer skills in some cases (see Lebanon) and to the acquisition of broader social and life skills programmes in other cases (both Lebanon and Morocco). In Syria people who successfully complete the programme are awarded a recognised certificate.

There are two interesting schemes to note. In Lebanon university students can receive credits towards their degree for participating in literacy training and other social work. This type of service learning programme may be interesting to consider in other countries of the region and also the programme developed in Morocco with Italian cooperation using television as it aims to engage family learning.

4.5 Education and training for out-of-school children and early school leavers

The author of the regional report for UNESCO (see above p12) reports that in the Arab Region in general more than 6 million children of school age are out of school and of that total about 60% are girls. Nearly two-thirds of them have never been to school.

The Moroccan report presents an example of education and training for children that are within the regulations for compulsory education but not attending school. It is estimated that about 200,000 children leave school before the end of the primary cycle in Morocco and that there are over a million children of compulsory education age who are out of school. This group are clearly on the frontier between initial education and 'adult' education given their rather particular situation. The

strategies for tackling this problem will have repercussions later on adult education both general and vocational.

Several programmes have been set up to address these very specific education needs of 9 to 14 year olds. They are non-formal, 'second chance' schooling programmes that have different objectives depending on the age of the children. The programmes are managed by the Direction for Non-Formal Education of the Ministry of Education and are organised in partnership with NGOs and funders (e.g. international organisations and bilateral agreements). The programmes either allow the children to return to school or to give them a first vocational training allowing them to enter the labour market with some skills. For those under 9 years of age the aim is to (re-)integrate them into the primary education programme while for the 11-12 year olds the aim is to take them towards initial vocational training. For those over the age of 12 the aim is to help them successfully integrate the world of work. Similar programmes have been undertaken also for children who work (such as in the craft sector or girls in domestic work and also for children in very difficult situations (street children and children in prison).

4.6 Higher education programmes

At the other end of the spectrum, in Lebanon a number of initiatives are managed by higher education institutions and target, among other beneficiaries, unemployed people. The Continuing Education Centre of the American University of Beirut has provided courses for professional development for almost 20 years. They include:

- certificate and diploma programmes in a range of sectors such as accounting, finance, marketing, human resource management, etc;
- computer studies;
- a new certificate aimed at helping professionals working in vocational and technical education to be more professional – Vocational and Technical Education Certificate.

They also offer a vast range of programmes covering nutrition, health, graphic design, management, etc. as well as corporate management programmes. The programmes can lead to formal certificates and diplomas or to attendance certificates. Notre Dame University, also through its Continuing Education Department, offers courses to individuals in the fields of English for business, business courses and computer courses. Courses are grouped into programmes with the possibility of obtaining a certificate on completion. AMIDEAST also offers training programmes for both employed and unemployed people in business studies, communication, English, conflict resolution, etc.

These programmes have been included as interesting examples of the role of higher education. Other examples are included in Section 5 as there is obvious overlap between programmes targeting mainly unemployed people at a high educational level and those that can be followed on individual initiative.

4.7 Obstacles

A number of obstacles are underlined in the different countries for training adults who are unemployed or out of the labour market.

The Moroccan author points out that there is no system of quality assurance for these different programmes for unemployed people despite that fact that there is a need, especially for the literacy programmes that have substantial difficulties in keeping adults in learning. Only about half the numbers registered on the programmes actually take the exam at the end.

In addition there is a lack of monitoring and of sufficient information about the employment training for unemployed, qualified young people so that it is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the programmes despite substantial funds having been invested. The procedures are considered complex and long which can discourage providers from proposing subsidised programmes. On the other hand it appears that there have been cases of providers selecting applicants who had already been recruited. The objective of labour market integration may not be reached, given that in some cases the trainees are fired before the end of the programme. There are also cases of trainees dropping out of programmes because they are not receiving help for their transport.

In Syria since many people prefer to work in the public rather than the private sector, they may be declared unemployed when in fact they are working. The report suggests that many people do not consider that training is needed after leaving school and enterprises are not prepared to introduce professional on-the-job training. In addition there is a lack of professional trainers. Furthermore, provision of training may be limited by funding. Two specific obstacles concern the migration of nomadic Bedouin tribes that leads to people dropping out of literacy classes and in the agricultural season adult learners will not attend class.

Since status is linked to the type of employment, the Egyptian country report suggests that it may appear preferable to be unemployed rather than in the 'wrong' job. This is quite similar to the Syrian situation concerning the public sector. According to the country report, training in Egypt tends to be supply-driven and leads to mismatches in the labour market. It also tends to be institution-driven, rather than labour market driven, though various initiatives in recent years have addressed issues of curriculum, particularly through donor assisted projects.

The author of the report on Lebanon raises the issue of whether vocational and technical education institutions, of which there are about 100 in the public sector and over a 1,000 in the private and NGO sector, have failed in their mission to prepare Lebanese youth for the labour market. There appear to be many issues including lack of parity of esteem with the general education sector, lack of information to parents and students, funding and structural problems, corruption and a lack of policy and strategy at national level. Some training is offered to adults, but the courses are not regular and tend to depend on availability of funding as the courses are run as a commercial undertaking.

4.8 Main issues arising

1. In all the countries, a major focus for adult education and training for unemployed people is young people at all educational levels. Given the high percentage of young people in the population and the numbers coming onto the labour market every year, the need is great. With some variations among the countries, the specific groups that receive training are:
 - a. Young people who have completed higher education but need additional skills training in order to find employment, e.g. Morocco, Jordan, Syria (with private sector collaboration).
 - b. Young people who left school at the end of the secondary cycle or who did not complete secondary school e.g. in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon (for Palestinians).
 - c. Children who did not complete (or in some cases even start) the primary cycle, e.g. in Egypt, Morocco.
2. Literacy programmes for the unemployed exist in all the countries. The important target groups for literacy courses are women (since their literacy rates are lower than men in all the countries), adults and children in rural areas and nomadic people in some of the

countries. Skills training programmes depend on functional literacy and in some cases programmes for literacy and basic employment skills or other life and social skills are linked.

3. With the exception of Tunisia, much of the training for unemployed people, whatever their age, does not lead to a recognised diploma or certificate. The duration and types of courses are very varied going from short labour market integration courses of a few months to longer courses leading to a qualification. In Jordan the VTC training also leads to certificates at specific levels allowing for progression for trainees.
4. One of the issues raised is the number of ministries which have a responsibility for training for their sector, e.g. 22 in Egypt which results in a variety of procedures, provision and outcomes.
5. In some countries there is a mechanism in place to collect funds from enterprises to fund training for the unemployed. This is the case in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. Part of which goes into mutualised funds to cover training needs of the unemployed.
6. For the individuals registered for training, the obstacles to completing are many. For example, they drop out of courses because transport costs are not covered or due to a nomadic way of life or the need to work during the agricultural season, etc. As has frequently been observed in European countries since the 1980s, an adapted offer of education and training for adults, and especially for those in disadvantaged groups, needs to include the necessary social and personal support to allow people to enrol, follow and complete programmes.

5 Education and training undertaken on the initiative of the individual

This section is the most difficult to deal with in this synthesis report. It focuses on adult lifelong learning and includes a variety of learning activities that are formal or non-formal, including courses provided by private training centres, e.g. for foreign languages, IT and specific skills. It also includes adults registered for courses organised by universities. For this pillar the reports were asked to provide significant illustrations, but not to attempt to be exhaustive. Most of the data is descriptive and looks at the provision of courses or programmes. There is a certain amount of inevitable overlap with the previous sections since the frontiers between the categories cannot be rigid.

5.1 Non-formal learning

This type of learning is present in all the countries. It frequently concerns, as in many other countries also, foreign language and IT courses but also, for example, a range of vocational courses and business studies. These courses are more often available in urban areas and tend to address a population that already has a certain level of education. This is the case in Egypt, Syria and Morocco for example. In most cases the individuals pay for themselves though in some countries (e.g. Morocco), for those who are employed it may be possible to have the cost covered by their employers. Information is obtained from the institutions or by Internet and in all these cases the quality assurance comes through the procedures in place in the institutions offering the courses. The short courses may be recognised by employers but have no formal recognition. There may, however, be implicit recognition through the fact that a course is provided by a recognised organisation like the British Council of the Goethe Institute or by an IT company (e.g. IBM, Microsoft) or it leads to the ICDL.

Three examples are presented here. The first two are examples of countries (Tunisia and Jordan) where there is an offer of non-formal education and training that is regulated by the State. The third is the example of a sector-focused offer.

In Tunisia training is available to individuals who wish to improve their competences and their recognised qualifications through the:

1. Virtual University of Tunis,
2. The *Institut Bourguiba des Langues Vivantes*
3. The *Instituts Supérieurs de Travail*
4. The *Programme National d'Enseignement des Adultes*.

The Virtual University of Tunis: It was established in 2002 to develop on-line programmes for the Tunisian universities. It currently proposes eight programmes of which four are at Master's level. All the programmes are recognised by the Ministry of Higher Education and address a diversified public either registered in initial or continuing education. Students pay for courses, which cost considerably more than registration fees for initial courses in universities.

The Institut Bourguiba des Langues Vivantes: This institute is attached to the University of Tunis and proposes language courses in a number of different languages for adults in 15 different centres. There are about 6,000 students registered every year. They pay for their courses and at the end of a full cycle of four years they receive an attendance certificate.

The *Instituts de Promotion Supérieure de Travail*: There are 5 IPST situated in the main cities. They are public sector centres and come under the *Centre National de la Formation Continue et de la Promotion Professionnelle* (CNFCPP). Their mission is to organise training programmes and skills re-training programmes for adults to improve their educational level, develop their competences and prepare them to pass vocational diplomas and to continue into higher education. Courses are organised in the evening and through distance learning and trainees pay for them. The diplomas are the same as for initial training leading to recognised diplomas at four levels from technician to engineer.

The *Programme National d'Enseignement des Adultes*: This programme deals with literacy and aims to reduce illiteracy to less than 10% by the end of 2009. The education is free of charge.

The offer of education and training covers all fields: vocational courses, higher education, foreign languages and literacy but the numbers of adults registered are lower in all cases than the objectives set and also the number of diplomas awarded.

The second example of non formal learning under ministry responsibility is Jordan where non-formal learning includes the Ministry of Education programmes as well as Community Learning Centres. There are 285 centres across Jordan that are licensed by the Ministry of Education to issue certificates for a wide range of courses offered to both male and female trainees who cover their own training costs. Ministry of Education programmes include courses for adults who did not finish school and literacy programmes. They come under the National Strategy for Non-Formal Education. Eliminating illiteracy is a major national programme that is divided into two phases that each lasts for 16 months after which the learner receives a certificate equivalent to the 6th grade. There are 473 centres across the country but only 27 for males as illiteracy is much higher among the female population. Over 6,000 learners are currently registered of which 5,500 females. Other programmes offered are home learning which is designed to encourage self-learning. Learners study at home but take the regular school exams. There are also evening classes and programmes that target young early school leavers.

The ICT sector in Lebanon provides an interesting example of a sector in which many NGOs are active in offering training, including outreach, to disadvantaged groups, displaced people, in the regions, etc. The sector works through public-private partnerships to reduce upfront costs and offer the best technical and management skills. There are two training programmes of this type:

- Project ICT Academy which provides fully equipped and staffed technical centres to help local people connect to internet through a wide variety of courses and seminars at low cost and certificates are issued.
- PCA Internet Point of Presence which was initiated to address the 'digital divide' and to ensure a right of access to ICT and the acquisition of computer skills to people in all regions of Lebanon creating, among others, better professional opportunities. There are currently over 40 centres functioning.

5.2 Higher education

In most of the countries there is an offer of higher education either based on universities in the country or on cooperation with foreign universities. In some cases the programmes are run through distance learning. There are also 'open' universities establishing programmes.

In Lebanon the Arab Open University offers higher education to adults through face-to-face courses in four degree programmes: English language, ICT, Business studies and Computer studies. Distance learning is not offered though there is a variety of support media available to students such as CD Roms, on-line materials, websites, etc. In Egypt there are also higher education courses, which in some cases can be taken through distance learning. There are also many examples of foreign universities providing distance-learning courses. The students/trainees in Egypt either fund their own education or have received a scholarship from the government or an NGO. Entry requirements and the length of courses will vary according to if they are formal higher education or short language or other courses.

The Moroccan report also discusses the possibility of obtaining diplomas from foreign higher education institutions; a fast developing sector that is market-led, which for the author of the report raises the issue of ministry control. Programmes are offered by public or private higher education institutions and based on a partnership between a foreign and a Moroccan HE institution. This type of course has existed for about 20 years and most are at Master's level. The issue for the individuals who obtain these diplomas is that though they may have labour market recognition, they are not recognised by the Moroccan state. There are also other continuing training programmes established recently by Moroccan universities that lead to a university diploma, but not to a state-recognised diploma. For all the continuing education courses offered by Moroccan universities, there is a need to ensure that they are relevant and that the universities have the capacity to carry them out, but there are no data about these forms of training.

Open Education (higher education) also exists in Syria where it started in 2001 to provide flexible higher education for the increasing number of secondary school leavers. All the universities can provide open access and the funding comes both from the funding for universities and from the fees paid by the students. Access is open to all secondary school diploma holders. Quality assurance is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Higher Education. In addition there is the Syrian Virtual University which was established in 2002 and is fully accredited and endorsed by the Ministry of Higher Education to provide international degrees and the programmes of American, European, Australian and Canadian partners as well as programmes developed by the SVU itself. They provide, for example, continuing education for Ministry of Education staff. The programmes are at Bachelor's and Master's levels in engineering, economics and human sciences and funding comes from fees paid by the students. Access is open to a wide public but tends to be limited by the number of access centres, as all exams have to be conducted in these centres. Quality is assured through strict procedures.

In summary, the issues raised by the authors of the country reports are in part those posed by the internationalisation of higher education in the Arab Region through the programmes and degrees proposed by foreign universities alone or in cooperation with local universities. The issues are of the market nature of the ventures, quality assurance and the future recognition of the diplomas both nationally and internationally. The second major issue is opening up sufficient access to higher education to respond to a growing demand including by adults.

5.3 Sector specific skills

In Jordan there are several sector-based initiatives that allow adults to improve their skills. They include the Business Development Centre, the Engineers Training Centre, the Garment Design and Training Services Centre, the National Institute for Specialised Nursing, the Sustainable Training Centre and the Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Professional Training Academy. These initiatives aim to provide better skills levels for the particular sector. In the case of the Business Development

Centre, they support SMEs to work more effectively on the regional and international market. In fact clients who follow the different programmes may be employed or unemployed and come from either the public or private sectors. In some cases the training is supported by a national programme, e.g. the Garment Design and Training Services Centre, where the training is supported by the E-TVET fund. This initiative clearly could be included in all three of the pillars as the provision addresses all groups.

5.4 Programmes for women

One report (Jordan) mentions programmes that specifically target women (outside of literacy programmes). They are the programmes run by several institutions which include the Jordanian Fund for Human Development, the Queen Zein Al Sharaf Institute for Development and the Jordan National Commission for Women. These programmes cover a broad range and include personal skills, employability training, self-employment skills, ICT training, English language training, etc.

5.5 Main issues arising

1. Literacy programmes for the general public exist in all the countries and have been dealt with in more detail in Section 4 above. For this pillar it is worth mentioning that there is funding for initiatives implemented by NGOs or in Community Centres (e.g. JD, LB, MO).
2. Specific courses are offered for women that include literacy and also a range of skills such as training in IT, employment skills, language training, etc. (e.g. JD). Given the declared need to improve the activity rate of women in the formal labour market it is surprising that there are not more dedicated courses.
3. In all the countries there appears to be a growing number of private training centres that offer courses in IT, foreign languages and management or business skills as well as in vocational skills. As in many other countries, such training leads to an attendance certificate or one awarded by an international body, company or programme (e.g. CISCO, ICDL) and they are not recognised within the national system, even though they may be very useful for gaining or keeping employment. A point raised several times is the lack of any quality control or monitoring of this type of provision.
4. Higher education institutions offer a range of courses, either diploma or degree courses to adults which in some cases may be taken through distance learning and an open university approach (e.g. EG, LB, SY, TN).
5. There has been an increase in the number of higher education programmes on offer, including by foreign universities. One of the issues raised is whether and how the countries can ensure the quality of such courses and also keep down the cost to the students. Higher education undertaken through adult continuing provision may cost considerably more than the same course for a student registered in initial higher education. Three major issues need to be addressed: the recognition of the diplomas obtained, quality assurance and some regulation of the development of a market place for higher education qualifications.

6 Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Conclusions

6.1.1 The context

In all the countries included in the study there are substantial economic and social reforms underway which create important challenges for adult education policies and provision. There are a number of major concerns that are common to all the countries even though they may be of differing importance. The pressure of demographics in the region, with high percentages of the population under the age of 15 years old, has a very substantial effect on the labour market situation as well as on policy formulation for adult training and on the use of resources. In all the countries the implicit definition of 'adult' (i.e. in terms of the provision of education and training) includes young people over the age of 15 years old. In addition to the size of the youth population, progression in the numbers staying on for secondary and higher education creates a major challenge for governments, sectors and enterprises. Failure to respond will encourage emigration and hence a brain-drain that does not contribute to economic development. Within this overall increase, the numbers and the proportion of female graduates have also increased. Countries are having difficulty in increasing the activity rate of women and in improving employment opportunities for women in line with their qualifications.

However, the majority of workers in the region (60-70%) have only primary education or less which creates a substantial challenge to continuing education and training systems to be able to support economic and social development adequately. While on the one hand girls are doing increasingly well in education systems, the literacy rate of women in the region is lower than that for men and more girls do not go to school (or leave early) than boys. Improving the literacy rate for children and adults remains a concern and will have an influence on priorities for adult learning since it affects both the absolute literacy rates and functional literacy for skills training. Important efforts are still needed (and are underway) to organise adult education for women to support their personal development, as well as the economic and social development of their communities. The importance of girls' and women's education (literacy) as a pillar of human development and social progress has been amply demonstrated.

6.1.2 Political commitment and strategies

There is a political commitment to adult learning in all the countries that focuses on the needs of social and economic development. An important element is raising the literacy levels and/or eradicating illiteracy. However, most of the country report authors suggest that the offer and the uptake of education and training for adults is limited, both in quantitative and qualitative terms, for a variety of reasons that go from an under developed learning culture, both in enterprises and on the part of individuals, to the existence of complex regulations and procedures for benefitting from grants and subsidies.

One of the difficulties appears to be in the effective implementation of existing measures, initiatives and funding procedures. However, there is a lack of good quality and regular data that can be used to assess implementation and results as there is little statistical data collected about training. Furthermore, data is collected by different types of institutions, bodies and providers making it very difficult to obtain an overall and reliable perspective.

Though it is always hazardous to try to characterise systems in a synthesis report, in the countries of the Maghreb adult education/training appears to be more government-led while in the countries of the Mashrek it tends to be more enterprise- and sector-led. Funding mechanisms have been established in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia that oblige enterprises to pay a training levy which may be mutualised through special funds or used by the enterprises to fund training directly. In general in all the countries it would appear that human resource development and training are more widely implemented in the public sector than in the private sector.

There is a clear link between the social and economic strategies developed and the education and training provision as concerns the measures and initiatives supporting education and training for employment. There are some similar priorities among the countries especially concerning access to employment for young people and literacy, though the latter is a more critical problem in some countries, e.g. Morocco and Egypt. In some key sectors and large enterprises there appears to be a strong link between the identification of skills for economic development and the human resource development plans. In many cases, this is linked to improving graduate employment, which is a major issue in all of the countries given the increasing number of higher education graduates coming onto the labour market. The transition from secondary (and even primary) school to work is also a priority, given the high percentage of very young people in the population

6.1.3 Implementation

The reports suggest that training is more common in large companies. Training plans tend to exist and be implemented only in large companies. There is also a question about whether funding instruments effectively cover all categories of enterprises as well as the problem of complicated procedures for accessing funding (especially in the Maghreb countries). It is clear that these instruments do not cover the informal sector, which reduces the chances that people working in this sector would benefit from training.

For SMEs, there is clearly a need to raise awareness about the advantages of training. In some countries where funding support is available, the procedures may be complex and discourage small firms from applying which is not conducive to developing a culture of training. It is suggested that employers hesitate about engaging in training as they fear poaching and do not see training as an investment. There are of course dynamic, key sectors that have a well-structured offer of training as part of the human resource development for the sector.

The different Chambers of Commerce, Trades, Industry and Agriculture play an important role at local level for example in Jordan, Lebanon and Syria in structuring the training offer for SMEs of different sectors. Sector bodies are also important for stimulating training in some of countries.

For employees there is a lack of information and guidance and there may be little incentive to train in terms of career and salary progression. Many employees do not recognise the benefits of training and it may be difficult for employees with family responsibilities to attend courses outside of working hours and many people have a second job to increase their income. Elearning is not yet sufficiently developed to be a valid alternative to face-to-face training.

The lengths and outcomes of training (type of award, progression, etc.) vary considerably among and within the countries. In general the most common outcome is for attendance certificates to be awarded. This raises the issue of the recognition of non-formal education and training possibly within a national qualifications framework or similar mechanism (e.g. register) in order to begin to put in place opportunities for individual employees to build on their qualification level and to be

able to take up opportunities to progress. There are few formal quality assurance mechanisms in place. The most effective appears to be the labour market.

6.1.4 Tackling unemployment

In all the countries, a major focus for adult education and training for unemployed people is young people at all educational levels. Given the high percentage of young people in the population and the numbers coming onto the labour market every year, the need is great. With some variations among the countries, the specific groups that receive training are:

1. Young people who have completed higher education but need additional skills training in order to find employment, e.g. Morocco, Jordan, Tunisia, Syria (with private sector collaboration).
2. Young people who left school at the end of the secondary cycle or who did not complete secondary school e.g. in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon (for Palestinians).
3. Children who did not complete (or in some cases even start) the primary cycle, e.g. in Egypt, Morocco.

Literacy programmes for the unemployed exist in all the countries. The important target groups for literacy courses are women (since their literacy rates are lower than men in all the countries), adults and children in rural areas and nomadic people in some of the countries. Skills training programmes depend on functional literacy and in some cases programmes for literacy are linked with basic employment skills or other life and social skills. One example is Jordan where courses organised for women include literacy and also a range of skills such as training in IT, employment skills, language training, etc. In addition to the State, NGOs and international funds support the efforts to eradicate illiteracy. Given the declared need to improve the activity rate of women in the formal labour market it is surprising that there are not more dedicated courses.

Much of the training for unemployed people whatever their age, does not lead to a recognised diploma or certificate. Two exceptions are Tunisia and VTC training in Jordan. The duration and types of courses are very varied going from short labour market integration courses of a few months to longer courses leading to a qualification.

For the individuals registered for training, the obstacles to completing are many. For example, they drop out of courses because transport costs are not covered or due to a nomadic way of life or the need to work during the agricultural season, etc. As has frequently been observed in European countries since the 1980s, an adapted offer of education and training for adults, and especially for those in disadvantaged groups, needs to include the necessary social and personal support to allow people to enrol, follow and complete programmes.

6.1.5 Private sector courses

In all the countries there appears to be a growing number of private training centres that offer courses in IT, foreign languages and management or business skills as well as in vocational skills. As in many other countries, such training leads to an attendance certificate or one awarded by an international body, company or programme (e.g. CISCO, ICDL) but they are not recognised within the national system, even though they may be very useful for finding or keeping employment. A point raised several times is the lack of any quality control or monitoring of this type of provision.

6.1.6 Higher education

6. Higher education institutions offer an ever expanding number and range of courses to adults. They are either diploma or degree courses, which in some cases may be taken through distance learning and an open university approach. There has also been an increase in the number of higher education programmes organised by foreign universities. One of the issues raised is how the countries can ensure the quality of such courses. Higher education undertaken through adult continuing provision may cost considerably more than the same course for a student registered in initial higher education. Three major issues need to be addressed: the recognition of the diplomas obtained, quality assurance and some regulation of the development of a market place for higher education qualifications.

6.2 Recommendations for addressing key challenges

On the basis of this first set of country reports on adult education in seven of the MEDA countries, despite the fact that they contain rich and detailed information about the adult learning provision in their countries, it is difficult to make very specific recommendations with relevance across the region. This section seeks to suggest ways forward to address what appear to be some of the most crucial issues.

6.2.1 National level:

1. A first and major problem is that there is little structured and regular information and data available about adult learning. It has not been possible in this synthesis report to provide quantitative data that can be compared across countries. There is no regular collection of data about the take up of all adult learning measures in all of the countries. This hinders the evaluation of the effectiveness of measures. There is for example no information provided on whether or not training for employment does in fact lead to employment and whether or not the employment is sustainable. There is a need, underlined by some of the authors, to establish regular impact studies and monitoring and evaluation of provision and measures. **It is suggested that ETF examines with the partner countries how best to improve information systems both upstream and downstream of the education and training provision. This appears to be an essential contribution to improving implementation.**
2. There is also a need for better, regular, quantitative and qualitative information about current and future skills needs in order to ensure that adult education responds to real needs. **It is suggested that ETF examines with the partner countries how capacity can be developed in this field, drawing on the expertise of the public sector and of sector bodies and Chambers of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture and all other relevant stakeholders.**
3. A substantial difficulty appears to be in ensuring that existing policies are effectively implemented. **It is suggested that future work on adult education in the region uses peer learning approaches to share expertise and experience in dealing with the different types of difficulties that need to be addressed including regulations, take up by learners, information and data, evaluation, etc.**

6.2.2 Enterprises:

- The most successful examples of training appear to be in well-structured sectors in which the sector bodies take a lead in developing training and in advising and assisting enterprises in developing and implementing a human resource development plan. This is also the case where the Chambers are involved at local levels. **It is suggested that future work on adult education develops peer learning approaches working with a wide range of stakeholders to share expertise and experience on continuing education and training in enterprises.**
- However the complexity of regulations and procedures reduces the number of enterprises that apply for support to organise training where it exists, which indicates a need to review procedures and regulations with a view to making them more enabling and supportive of training rather than predominantly administrative and selective. **It is recommended that country work plans include a review of these aspects.**
- Furthermore it is suggested in the reports that there is a real need for more awareness-raising towards enterprises about the advantages, uses and purposes of training in order to increase the numbers of SMEs that organise training for their employees. There appear to be few incentives for individuals to request training in terms of their career development and compensations. **It is recommended that awareness-raising about adult education be included in peer learning activities.**

6.2.3 The Beneficiaries

- Whatever their employment status it appears that there is little information for individuals about the education and training offer outside of the limited number of sectors and large companies that have well-developed approaches. **There is clearly a need to develop instruments and tools for improving the information and counselling available to adults.**
- In addition to the classic obstacles and barriers for adults to train, there are some that are specific to the region, such as the difficulty of access for people in rural areas coupled with a higher illiteracy rate in those areas, the priority of the needs of agriculture during the busy seasons and the specific outreach needs of nomadic people. All the countries have programmes underway to tackle these issues. Support in the form of transport costs for all learners that are not earning and child-care for women learners can be important elements that contribute to participation. **ETF may wish to consider comparative impact studies to assess the qualitative as well as the quantitative outcomes of the policies and programmes.**
- Most of the adult learning described in the reports leads to attendance certificates only. There is a need to build better recognition and pathways to encourage people to improve their learning. **It is recommended that ETF consider how to make use of the concrete measures in the *European Inventory of the Validation of Informal and Non-formal Learning* to serve as a starting point for reflection on building recognition systems in the MEDA countries. The work underway in Morocco and Tunisia could also provide a peer learning contribution.**

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Annex 1: Methodology – questions for the data collection

In order to obtain as complete a panorama of the education and training provided, the reports were structured around a set of questions. Information was provided about the following categories in so far as the questions were relevant for each type of education/training and the data available.

1. *Funding*: How is each type of provision funded (e.g. public, private, enterprise, special measures and international cooperation)? Does the individual learner have to pay? Do they have access to a grant or other support and, if so, what does it cover?
2. *Access*: Who can benefit from this type of education/training? Is it limited to certain categories of the population or certain age groups? Are there data on the number of people (by gender and age group and/or other relevant category) who participate each year?
3. *Information and guidance*: Where can adults go to obtain information and guidance? Is it available to everyone?
4. *Institutions where education/training takes place*: Which institutions offer this type of education/training? Who is the provider? The education/training may be provided by a municipality or by a foreign aid project but take place in the local secondary school and/or private training centre. Please include work-based learning where relevant.
5. *Level*: What is the level of the education/training? Please use the categories that are relevant for your country to describe the level of the course or the certificate/diploma obtained or the employment targeted.
6. *Programme*: How long does the programme last? Is it a fixed duration? Does the learner have to complete the full number of hours before being assessed? Does a competence-based curriculum exist? Can the learner choose to be assessed without undertaking the training?
7. *Assessment*: Are the students/trainees assessed at the end of the programme? What body is responsible: ministry, Chamber of Commerce, sectoral body, enterprise, international organisation, other? What type of certificate do they obtain?
8. *Recognition*: Does the education/training lead to a formal certificate or diploma? If so, does it have official recognition? If not is there any non-official recognition, e.g. in a company or sectoral agreement?
9. *Recognition and validation of prior learning*: Does this possibility exist for entry to the education/training? If so how does it function? Is it a formal or informal procedure; formal or informal recognition?
10. *Progression and pathways*: Does this education/training given access to a higher level? What progression is possible?
11. *Open, distance and flexible learning*: Can this type of education or training be undertaken through elearning? Or through another form of distance or flexible learning?

12. *Quality assurance*: What quality assurance measures are in place? Who is responsible (ministry, sector, awarding body, etc.)?
13. What are the main obstacles and barriers for adults who wish to undertake this type of education/training?