

## IMPACT 4 POLICY SERIES

# Transformative Synergies

Catalyzing Vocational Excellence and Social Entrepreneurship through Lebanon's School-Enterprise Model

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# The Programme

## THE PROGRAMME

**This paper is one of four policy papers developed as part of the Impact for Policies Methodology (I4P) by the COSV Social Economy Unit. It is an integral component of the Social Justice Incubation Programme (SJIP), which is part of the SEE Change (Social Enterprise Ecosystem Change) project, co-funded by the European Union and implemented in Lebanon by Oxfam, COSV, and the Beyond group.**

The Social Justice Incubation Program SJIP represents a pioneering incubation and acceleration initiative specifically crafted for Social Enterprise (SE) organizations. Grounded in the principles of codesign and a collaborative economy, SJIP is uniquely tailored to bolster SE ecosystems within emerging economies. Its mission extends to uncovering and amplifying the diversity of these ecosystems, going beyond the insights provided by official reports and research. Through its comprehensive support, SJIP seeks to empower SE organizations to realize their full potential and make a significant impact in their communities.

Within the framework of SEE Change, the Social Justice Incubation Program has provided support to 20 initiatives, split into four sub-programs:

- (i) School enterprises, focused on co-production between public vocational technical institutes (VTI) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).
- (ii) Community enterprises, targeting multi-actor co-production involving citizens, social enterprises, SMEs, and municipalities to revitalise rural and urban areas.
- (iii) NGOs in transition, designed to assist not-forprofit organisations in their transition to a more entrepreneurial model.
- (iv) Public-private partnership programs, aimed at fostering partnerships between social enterprises and public authorities in the management of community-based services and the utilisation of underutilised public assets.

# THE SJIP FOUR PHASES

The Social Justice Incubation Program (SJIP) is structured into four distinct phases designed to foster growth, collaboration, and systemic change within the social and solidarity economy (SSE):

## 01

### **Understanding the context:**

This phase involves conducting a feasibility study on social and solidarity economy (SSE), aligned with the incubation objectives and international SSE standards.

## 02

### **Nurturing the Collaboration mindset**

In this phase, co-design sessions aim to facilitate collaboration among potential beneficiaries and define the details for implementing seed funds through a sub-grant scheme.

## 03

### **Growing Fast**

During this phase, selected initiatives receive grants ranging from \$20,000 to \$50,000 USD, along with technical assistance for implementing their social and solidarity actions. The incubation programme also envisions the establishment of a peer-support community through informal monthly meetings with stakeholders across Lebanon (SEE UP events).

## 04

### **Growing Well**

In this phase, grant beneficiaries actively contribute to the identification of policy recommendations (Impact4policy). Supported SE initiatives engage in various ways to co-produce policy recommendations for sector-related system change, including exposure to regional peer exchange.

# Abstract

## ABSTRACT

The successful implementation of the piloted “School Enterprise Model” in Lebanon, facilitated through collaborative efforts between the Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education (DGVTE) and Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH (GIZ), stands as a noteworthy paradigm representing a potential inaugural instance of Public Sector Social Enterprise (PSS-E) in accordance with the Institutional Trajectories and Resulting SE Models – by Defourny and Nyssens (2016). This pioneering initiative bears the promise of significantly influencing the future trajectory of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) strategies in Lebanon, concurrently laying the groundwork for the establishment of a legal framework conducive to the proliferation of social enterprises within the national context.

The “School Enterprise model”, as herein conceptualised, is characterised as a form of social business that manifests a commitment to invest in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. Positioned as an independent entity, this model is primarily founded by Vocational Training Institutions (VTIs) and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), or other prospective investors demonstrating a willingness to elevate specific facets of VTI infrastructure into a competitive service provider entity. Significantly, this transformation is engineered while upholding the inherent educational and training objectives.

This policy paper meticulously analyses the challenges confronting the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector in Lebanon. It details the incorporation of three distinct school models, each incubating a fusion of three public Vocational Training Institutes (VTIs) and three SMEs under the umbrella of the Social Justice Incubation Programme (SJIP) implemented by COSV. The analysis presented within the paper underlines the transformative potential of these emergent entities, highlighting their profound impact on the students and the community, as well as on the governance structures of public vocational institutes. Such transformative interventions are anticipated to catalyse an elevation in the quality of education imparted and concurrently enhance employability prospects for individuals engaged in the TVET sector. The paper advocates for the sustainable integration of these innovative models within the broader educational landscape, foreseeing their capacity to effect positive change and foster inclusive prosperity.

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# I. INTRODUCTION

Knowledge and abilities relevant to the workplace are the focus of technical and vocational education and training (TVET). The components of the discipline that are today thought of as TVET have been referred to by a variety of titles throughout history. The terms "apprenticeship training," "technical education," "occupational education," "vocational education and training," "career and technical education," "workforce education," "workplace education," and "etc." all belong in this category (Hollander & Yee Mar , 2009).

Regardless of the used terminology, technical and vocational education and training has a more straightforward connection to economic success than other forms of higher education. The basic rule of thumb here is that TVET programmes have a greater impact on students' employability when they have a stronger connection to real-world business practices (Gamble, 2013). Even though it has generated sound economic growth in certain nations and fallen short of expectations in others, globalisation is encouraging governments to take a renewed interest in this branch of education (Maclean & Lai, 2014). For developing countries that face major economic and social problems, the TVET sector is one of the sectors that can support in up-skilling citizens and in channelling them to the job market; TVET is seen as a means to raise regional productivity and alleviate poverty. Many countries have taken steps to improve partnerships with the private sector and employers, as well as strengthen policy guidance and regulatory frameworks for TVET, as there is a strong correlation between the number of TVET students at the post-secondary level and per capita income (Pavlova, 2014).

On the other side, income, technological, and demographic shifts have an outsized impact on the global economy, and they pose a threat on good job possibilities at a time when the need for workers and income inequality is at an all-time high (Borzaga, Salvatori, & Bodini, 2019) . The rise of Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) is getting a lot of attention as a potential solution to these problems. Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) plays a crucial role in the realm of vocational education, contributing to both the educational system and the broader community. SSE encompasses various economic activities and organisations that prioritise social and environmental objectives over purely financial ones.

When applied to vocational education, SSE can bring about several positive impacts:

## **(i) Inclusivity and Social Integration:**

SSE models often emphasise inclusivity and social integration within the context of vocational education by providing opportunities for marginalised or disadvantaged groups to access training and skill development programmes. By fostering inclusivity, SSE helps in creating a more diverse and representative workforce, promoting social cohesion, and reducing inequalities.

### **(ii) Community Engagement and Participation:**

SSE encourages community participation in decision-making processes. When applied to vocational education, local communities can be involved in the design and governance of vocational institutes. Local communities can play a vital role in identifying the specific needs and skills required for the job market, ensuring that vocational programmes align with the demands of the local economy.

### **(iii) Governance of Public Vocational Institutes:**

SSE principles can be integrated into the governance structure of public vocational institutes. This may involve the establishment of cooperative or participatory management models, where teachers, students, and local community representatives have a say in the decision-making processes. Integrating SSE in governance ensures that vocational institutes are responsive to the needs of both students and the broader community, fostering a sense of ownership and accountability.

### **(iv) Creation of Companies Linked to the Vocational Sector:**

SSE can inspire the creation of businesses or enterprises in the vocational sector that prioritise social and environmental goals. This might involve setting up cooperative enterprises, social enterprises, or other SSE structures. Companies formed within the vocational sector under SSE principles can contribute to sustainable economic development, job creation, and skill-building while addressing local challenges and needs.

### **(v) Ethical Entrepreneurship and Sustainable Practices:**

SSE promotes ethical entrepreneurship by emphasising fair wages, environmental sustainability, and social responsibility. When applied to vocational education, this ethos can be instilled in students, preparing them for careers that prioritise both profit and societal well-being. SSE-linked companies in the vocational sector can serve as role models for responsible business practices, showcasing the potential for profit-making enterprises that are also socially and environmentally conscious. Integrating Social and Solidarity Economy principles into vocational education fosters inclusivity, community engagement, ethical entrepreneurship, and sustainable practices. By applying SSE principles to the governance of public vocational institutes and the creation of companies linked to the vocational sector, a more holistic and socially responsible approach to education and economic development can be achieved.

As indicated, Technical and Vocational Education and Training is crucial for economic growth, and this is especially true for nations like Lebanon that have experienced ongoing economic and financial crises. TVET has been shown to be an effective means of lowering youth unemployment and closing the skills gap in Lebanon's job market (Vlaardingerbroek, Bringing Vocational Education Into the Mainstream, 2016).



Employment and economic growth, particularly in the small and medium-sized business sector, can result from individuals acquiring the skills and knowledge to start and run their own firms, which can be facilitated by TVET. Given the importance and the size of the sector, public TVET institutions in Lebanon have struggled to keep up with the changing demands of the labour market, the development of new business practices, the reduction of the skill gap, and the identification of suitable employment opportunities for their graduates. These difficulties can be attributed to several factors including academic gaps, lack of sustainable resources, skill mismatch, lack of communication with private companies, foreign competition, economic and financial crisis, and a limited sense of entrepreneurship around the country especially among the most vulnerable and in rural areas.

It is crucial to note that COSV specialises in leveraging Social and Solidarity Economy (SSE) as nexus of several policies related to the development cooperation. SSE is a human-centred strategy for community development with the potential to unify the various policy fragments. When it comes to Technical and Vocational Education and Training, SSE can play a number of roles, including those related to the case of Schools Enterprise model that have the potential to address a number of TVET challenges in fragile contexts, such as those related to the quality of the TVET offer, the financial sustainability of Public VTI institutions, student employability, the needs of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in terms of skills gaps or innovative facilities. According to us, the SSE approach is embedded in our incubation programme as an existing strategy in broader interventions in socio-economic, educational, social cohesion, social justice, and livelihood policies.

Given our strategy and to combat the major problems hindering the progress of public technical and vocational education and training in Lebanon, COSV designed the “School Enterprise” model under the Social Justice Incubation Programme (SJIP)<sup>1</sup>, and then implemented the incubation of three piloted cases in collaboration with GIZ, and RPS in 2022 and 2023. According to COSV, the School Enterprise is defined as a social business that is willing to invest in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. It is a third entity where the main founders are Vocational Training Institutions (VTIs) and SMEs or other types of investors willing to upgrade part of the VTI bodies into a competitive service provider company, all while maintaining their educational and training goals.

The three piloted cases required collaboration between local private businesses and the public schools to create a new brand. Through the co-managed School Enterprise, the private sector was able to contribute to the TVI's upgraded facilities, equipment, and materials, while the TVI, with the help of coaching, training, and funding, co-developed a set of products that its faculty and students can produce through a work-based learning (WBL) approach, and the private sector could then sell and re-finance the TVI with the proceeds.

This policy paper is one of a series of other policy papers produced by the social economy unit research team under the Impact4policy (I4P) component of the Social Justice Incubation Programme that is part of the SEE Change project.

This policy paper aims to identify the challenges that the Public Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions face in Lebanon and then presenting the incubated cases while shedding light on what has been observed during the incubation period and what findings can be utilised to support policy recommendations.

This policy paper employed a mixed method approach, analysing secondary data and conducting primary research to better comprehend the implementation of the school Enterprise model and evaluate the collaborations between the featured VTIs and the corporate sector. Several stakeholders in the piloted models were interviewed using a semi-structured format, with both open-ended and closed-ended questions included. Furthermore, on-site visits to the piloted VTIs and private companies were made to witness the model's implementation in action. Descriptive data on the procedures, routines, views, and difficulties of VTIs working with private companies have been acquired through first-hand observation. The results are presented under section "Three Piloted Case Studies". In addition, the legal consultant was brought in to provide all decrees, statutes, and other legislation pertaining to the TVET sector.

This is also to note that there are some limitations to this policy paper; the findings may not apply to all contexts due to the small size of the sample used for interviews and field observations. The study recommends piloting additional collaborative models to further investigate their efficacy. Second, there is the possibility of bias due to the dependence on self-reported information during interviews. Finally, the results and any replications should be interpreted with caution, given the fact that study's scope is limited to a particular setting and time frame in Lebanon. In the remaining sections, the status of the TVET sector is analysed while shedding the light on the challenges that face the sector, the legal framework is presented, the three piloted cases are discussed, and a brief comparison between traditional VTIs, Investment-based approach VTIs and SSE VTIs before providing some policy recommendations.

## II. TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN LEBANON

### 2.1. Overview

Since its inception, Lebanon's TVET programme has been an integral part of the country's educational infrastructure, equipping young adults with the hands-on experience and theoretical understanding they need to succeed in the workforce.

There are two primary levels to the TVET educational system: intermediate and higher. TVET operates independently from the conventional educational system and its functions at the same time, noting that business, engineering, hospitality, health, agriculture and dairy production, and technology represent only a few of the vocational pathways offered through the technical education programmes.

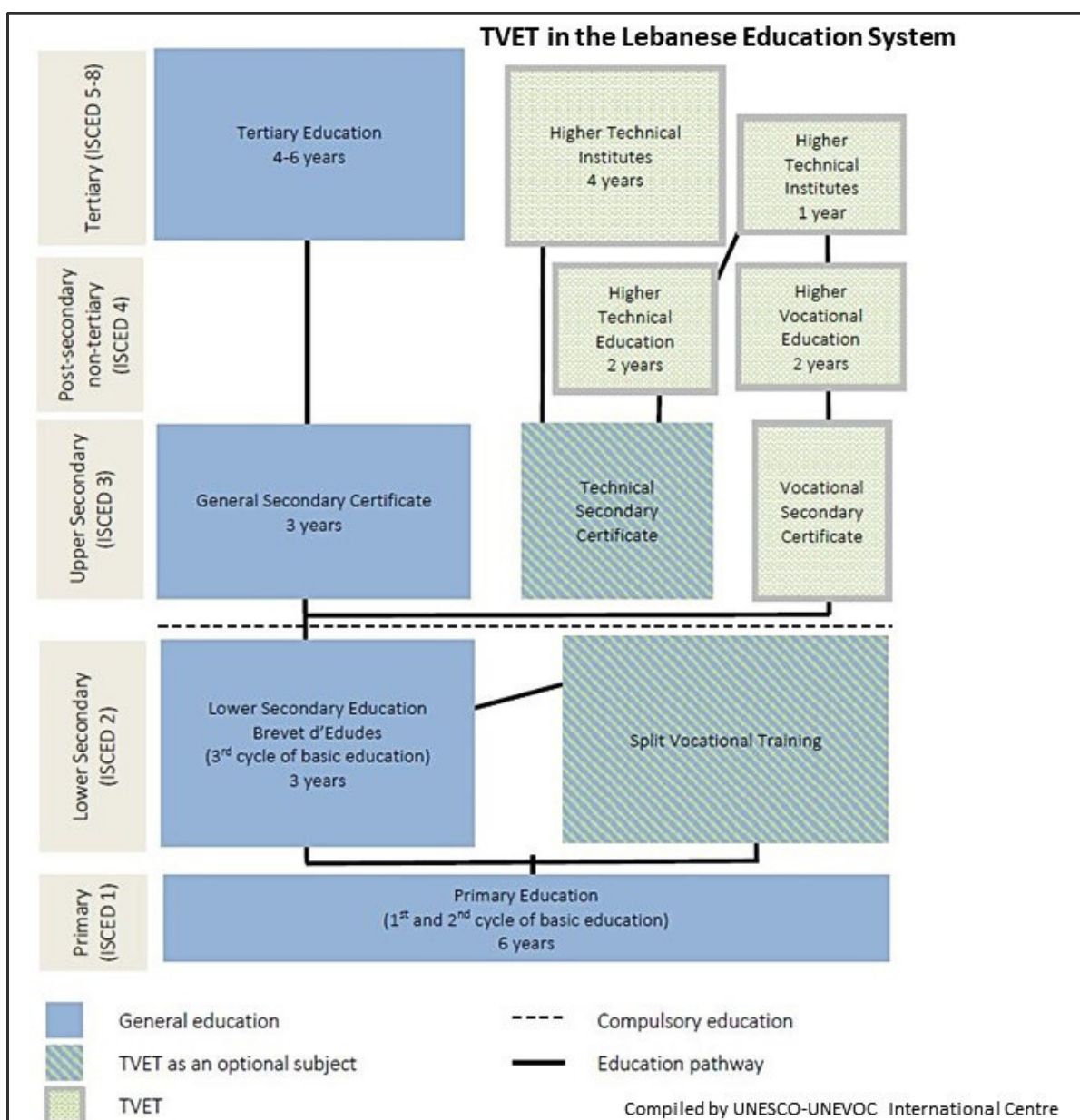
There is a variety of providers, such as private training facilities, business associations, and government institutions that offer non-formal TVET training in addition to traditional educational programmes, and the focus of a students' education can be tailored to their own interests and future professional aspirations.

Students between the ages of 15 and 17 who have finished their regular secondary education are the target audience for the intermediate (pre-tertiary) level. The first three years are spent on a broad secondary education, while the last two are spent on specialised training. Students who are at least 17 years old and have finished the intermediate level or its equivalent are targeted for the advanced level.

Schools at this level typically provide associate's, bachelor's, and master's degrees in a specific technical or vocational field. These schools provide advanced degrees and certifications in a variety of fields, including architecture, auto repair, nursing, culinary arts, and computer science.

Depending on the level and type of certification, these programmes might last anywhere from one to four years.

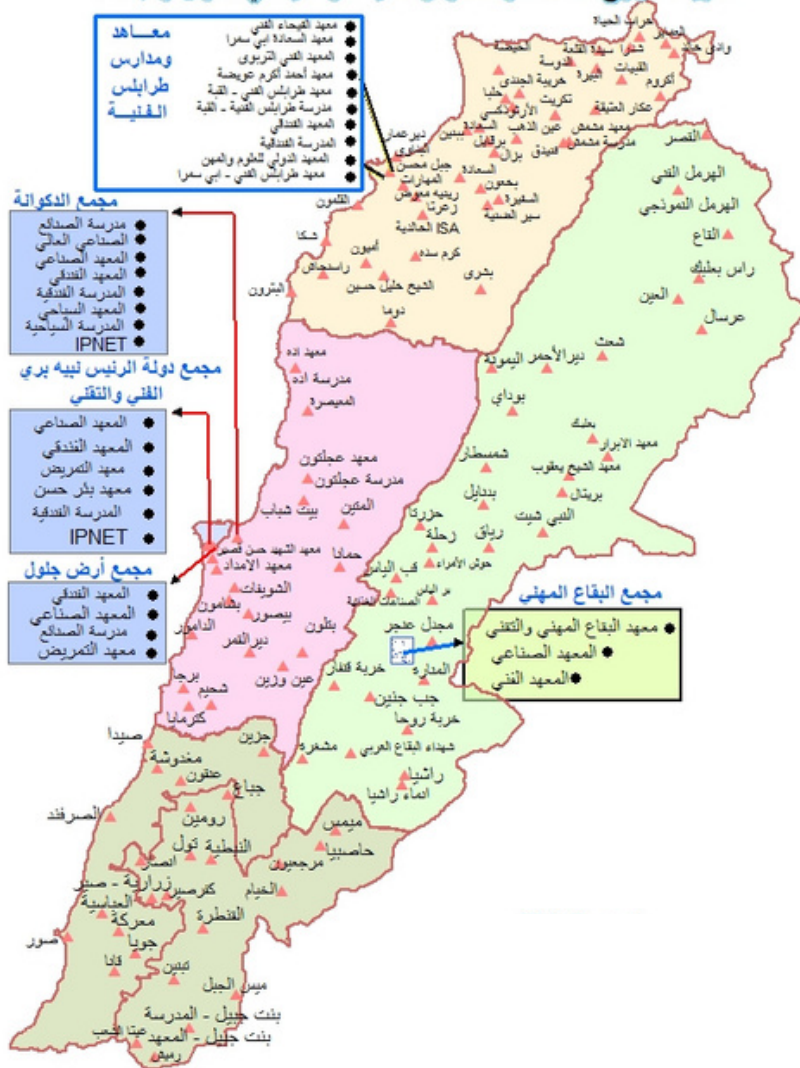
The diagram below provides a detailed illustration of the TVET schooling system compared to that of the general education in Lebanon (UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2019).



Currently, Lebanon is home to 158 public and 259 private vocational and technical schools, providing formal education to approximately 109,700 students in the 2021-2022 academic year. Additionally, there are 790 non-formal TVET providers, 158 of which are public institutions, and six joint projects offering learning opportunities. Numerous stakeholders are involved in the TVET sector, including parliament and policymakers, public and private TVET providers, national ministries and public bodies, United Nations bodies, donors and international NGOs, social partners, labour unions, syndicates, students, trainees, parents, and the general community. Each stakeholder plays a distinct role in implementing, supporting, or influencing TVET.

The map below presents the geographical distribution of all TVET schools around Lebanon as of 2011. This map is interactive, and it provides the name and contact details of every school alongside a list of all the specialisations or training programmes offered by said school.

## خريطة توزيع المعاهد والمدارس الفنية الرسمية في القرى والبلدات



While the map above may make it seem like nearly all areas around Lebanon have access to at least one TVI, it is worth noting that the geographical distribution of TVIs does not appear to be aligned with actual needs or a balanced geographical distribution. Instead, it seems to be influenced by various factors, including political considerations and individual interests.

Despite the sector's significance and the combined efforts of international donors and the ministry of education to improve it, TVET in Lebanon faces significant challenges due to the country's political and economic instability as well as specific barriers related to the sector. There is a lack of coordination and fragmentation in Lebanon's TVET sector, according to a UNESCO-UNEVOC national profile. The lack of uniformity in TVET programmes and degree requirements limits the employability of its graduates. Inadequate funding means that the TVET sector is understaffed, with stale curricula and inadequate tools for hands-on learning. This has led to the sector's current state of stagnation and the prevalence of internal inefficiencies concerning curriculum and instructor quality, all of which require swift correction (Vlaardingerbroek, 2016).

Lebanon's economy, largely driven by the service sector, does not generate enough high-skill jobs to accommodate graduates, particularly in humanities and literature disciplines. Consequently, a university education does not guarantee employment or suitable opportunities. Unfortunately, TVET is often associated with academic failure, as it is seen as an alternative pathway to the labour market. Furthermore, jobs in the TVET sector are frequently linked to low wages, poor working conditions, and limited career prospects, discouraging many young people from pursuing this type of education.

Students in TVET who aspire to continue their study at the university level confront an extra barrier to entry. Undergraduate entrance for students who have completed TVET programmes in Lebanon is more competitive than for students who have graduated from Lebanon's more traditional high schools because universities often impose their own admission requirements. This, in turn, has repercussions for the spectrum of job prospects a TVET student can access. Furthermore, the TVET system has been stressed in terms of employment chances due to the continuing Syrian refugee crisis. As a result of the influx of refugees, workers, especially those with a background in technical and vocational education and training, have less leverage in the labour market. However, there are additional ramifications of the lack of unions or associations representing members of widespread TVET fields like carpenters, plumbers, electricians, etc. This disjointed voice not only affects the public's enthusiasm for TVET programmes, but also the labour rights and social standing of those who complete them.

Furthermore, protests beginning in late 2019, a shift to online classes in 2020 due to a pandemic and rising poverty because of the financial and economic crisis have all disrupted educational institutions over the past five years, causing hundreds of students to drop out. And since the purchasing power of their income has dropped by 90% due to the currency collapse and soaring inflation, teachers have been demanding a raise in their salary. Lebanese Education Minister Abbas Halabi has stated that raising teachers' salaries is impossible without also raising salaries for police officers, fire-fighters, and military personnel. Therefore, it appears unlikely that public school teachers will receive a salary increase (Raydan, 2022).

The absence of partnerships and collaborative efforts also presents challenges. One of the key governing difficulties facing the public TVET sector is insufficient partnerships with the private sector, according to the recently proposed national strategy framework for TVET in Lebanon by the Government of Lebanon, ILO, and UNICEF for the years 2018-2022. As the private sector has little faith in the efficacy and relevance of public sector training providers, preventing them from collaborating with public institutions on TVET programmes, this is presented as particularly noteworthy. The inclusion of the private sector also seems to be limited on the policy level, as the Lebanese governing system for TVET lacks a systematic mechanism for consulting private sector representatives in the shaping of policies and priorities, as well as in the design, implementation, and evaluation of training programmes (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2018).

The major challenges that constraint the growth of the TVET sector, are summarised below:

**Perceived Stigma:** one major challenge is the prevailing perception that TVET is inferior to academic education. There is a societal bias that favors traditional academic paths, leading to a lack of interest and low enrollment in TVET programmes. The stigma associated with vocational education should be addressed to promote its acceptance and value.

**Skills Mismatch:** A significant challenge is the mismatch between the skills acquired through TVET programmes and the labour market needs. Outdated curricula and a lack of collaboration between TVET institutions and industries is graduating students who lack the necessary skills and competencies demanded by employers.

**Limited Funding and Infrastructure:** Insufficient financial resources and outdated infrastructure pose challenges to the development and modernisation of TVET institutions in Lebanon. The lack of funding hampers efforts to upgrade facilities, acquire modern equipment, and provide high-quality training programmes.

**Limited Industry Engagement:** There is a need to strengthen the engagement and involvement of private sector employers in the development of curricula, provision of internships and apprenticeships, and job placement opportunities for TVET graduates.

**Quality of Teachers and Professional Development:** The quality of TVET teachers and their professional development opportunities require attention. Enhancing the skills and expertise of teachers through continuous training and professional development programmes will improve the quality of TVET education and training.

**Weak Information and Guidance Systems:** There is a lack of robust information and guidance systems that can effectively inform students about the various TVET options available to them, career prospects, and the skills in demand. Strengthening career guidance and counselling services can help students make informed decisions and promote the attractiveness of TVET pathways.

**Limited Recognition and Certification:** There is a need to enhance the recognition and certification of TVET qualifications to ensure their equivalence with academic qualifications. This includes establishing national standards, accreditation mechanisms, and systems for the recognition of prior learning, enabling smoother transitions between TVET and higher education pathways.

**Weak Legal framework:** The rigid legal framework that governs the TVET sector is hindering the advancement of the sector; there is a need for legal revision by the Directorate General of Vocational Education and Training (DGVET) and reconsideration of the governance structure of the VTIs, the use of funds, income generation opportunities, and linkage to the market to allow their advancement towards more sustainable models.

Addressing the above-mentioned challenges requires a comprehensive approach that involves collaboration between the government, TVET institutions, industries, and other stakeholders. Adequate funding, curriculum modernisation, industry engagement, and promoting the value of TVET are crucial steps in overcoming these obstacles and unlocking the full potential of TVET in Lebanon.

The Lebanese government has demonstrated its commitment to reform across all sectors, including education and TVET, through various policies, resolutions, and international conferences. Notably, the CEDRE and Brussels III conferences have emphasised the role of education, including TVET, in providing employment opportunities and driving sustainable economic development. This strategy document reaffirms Lebanon's dedication to establishing quality, relevant, and inclusive TVET programmes that enhance youth employability and contribute to sustainable economic growth. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education has, for instance, devised a national TVET strategy to boost the employability of graduates, improve the quality of TVET programmes, and increase cooperation among stakeholders. As part of the plan, a national TVET council will be created, and a national qualifications' framework will be developed.

## 2.2 Governing and Supporting Bodies

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is the governing body responsible for education in Lebanon from preschool to university. The Directorate General of vocational and technical education (DGTVE) operates under MEHE and is responsible for administering TVET in both public and private institutions, including NGOs. The DGTVE's role revolves around the development of TVET curricula, the coordination of TVET initiatives across the country, issuing diplomas and certificates and organising public TVET exams. The Directorate General of Higher Education (DGHE) helps TVET students transition into tertiary education. DGHE facilitates the transition of TVET students into tertiary education. Students can choose between general or technical education at the tertiary level.

The National Employment Office (NEO) is another governing body under the Ministry of Labour (MoL), responsible for providing demand-driven workforce management. NEO acts as a mediator between unemployed individuals and employers by offering retraining and short vocational courses to the unemployed. NEO generally supports NGO-run TVET programmes and creates employment policies. It also issues certificates for graduates of these programmes, although these certificates are not officially recognized by MEHE.

The National Centre for Vocational Training (NCVT) is responsible for quality assurance in TVET through accrediting TVET programmes offered by vocational schools, technical colleges, and private training centres. NCVT also offers fast-tracked TVET programmes and training at the community level in various regions through its mobile trucks. NCVT works with UNICEF, UNHCR, and IECD to increase the number of trainers and implement competency-based short-term programmes (UNEVOC, 2019).



On the other hand, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) offers informal vocational training courses and financial support through NGOs or in social development centres. The Directorate General at MOSA subsidises partial or full tuition for VTE students at some of the largest NGO-operated schools such as Al-Aamilyah, Al-Makassed, Father Kortbawi Institution, and the Antonine Technical Schools (GHNEIM, 2018) . The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) oversees TVET education in the agricultural sectors and animal husbandry through its General Directorate of Agriculture, which is responsible for 31 agricultural centres and seven agricultural technical schools.

Additionally, there are several private and non-governmental organisations that play a role in the governance of the TVET sector in Lebanon, such as UNICEF, ILO, UNESCO, The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the Association of Volunteers in the International Service (AVSI) and the Welfare Association for Research and Development (WARD), etc. These organisations support the TVET through a multitude of interventions including providing training and certification programmes, conducting research and policy analysis, advocate for policy changes and work to improve the quality of TVET education and training in the country.

## 2.3 Policy & Legal Framework

Multiple laws and decrees govern the TVET sector in Lebanon. The Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education was first established in 1963 through decree 14658. It was then organised through decree 15742 of March 11, 1964, which is considered the most fundamental decree in the TVET sector. Below is a comprehensive list of the relevant decrees and laws in this sector, organised by chronological order:

- Decree No. 5768 of 23 December 1960: this decree established the higher TVET Council to serve as an advisory board to the DGTVE and lead on policy making, however the council has not met since 2000. This has resulted in weak coordination between TVET providers and weak policy framework for TVET in Lebanon (ILO study, p.15).
- Decree No. 9404 of 4/5/1962 and its amendments (regulating public schools for vocational and technical education)
- Decree No. 15742 of March 11, 1964, and its amendments (for the creation and organisation of the General Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education) – the decree stipulates that the Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education will be established, an educational technical institute to train TVET staff and to carry research to improve the pedagogy of TVET in Lebanon.
- Decree No. 7880 dated 25/7/1967 and its amendments (regulate the fields and stages of vocational and technical education certificates)
- Decree No. 8349 of May 2, 1996: set to organise the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Education and outline its main functions. “A ministry of TVE was set up in 1996 and was operational for four years. In 2000, the ministries of Education, HE and TVE became one ministry. This Decree organised the Ministry of Technical and Vocational Education before it was merged with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.”

- A decree concerning the Fields, Levels and Certificates of Technical and Vocational Education (No. 8590) was issued in 2012. This decree regulates vertical and horizontal progression within the qualification system and delineates the prerequisites for each level and is considered one of the most relevant decrees nowadays in TVET. However, Decree 8590 does not determine the recognition and equivalence of academic and TVET qualifications, nor does it specify the competencies required at each level.
- Decree No. 9533 of 17 December 2012 stipulates that examination centres should be equipped to host students with various disabilities: inclusion of people with disabilities (PwD) in TVET.
- Decree No. 10895/2018: Establishes the National Commission for Employment and Vocational Training, responsible for coordinating TVET policies and programmes.
- Law No. 62/64 dated 30/12/1964 (regulating private vocational education)
- 2 May 1987 – the Law Number 8/87 regulates the Agricultural Technical School in Lebanon, decree issued by the Council of Ministers based on the proposal of the Minister of Agriculture.
- Law No. 247 dated 7/8/2000 and its amendments, which include dismantling the Ministry of Vocational and Technical Education and attaching it to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

As for legislation, the Parliamentary Commission on Education is the main legislative channel that enacts education laws and passes yearly budgets. It is the highest planning and strategy development authority. Furthermore, the Centre for Education Research and Development (CRDP) at MEHE plays a complementary role by reviewing all educational programmes and often participates in the commission that advises on matters related to education in general including TVET. The Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education has the right to participate, along with public or private institutions, in the implementation of projects that fall within the scope of its competence, through agreement contracts between the directorate and these institutions<sup>2</sup>. The contract must provide for the establishment of an executive committee of project representatives, provided that the number of members of that committee is no less than three and no more than six.

A special budget is allocated to each project by virtue of a decision by the DGVTE. Funding sources are typically one or a combination of the following: Budget of the Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education under total expenditure contracts, and Partners' contribution to the implementation of the project. Public VTIs alone cannot enter into any agreement contracts with NGOs or private companies without the legal involvement of the directorate in the contract and its approval of the fund. This is clarified in Article 8, Clause 2 of decree 15742 of March 11, 1964. Regarding the funds and their use, it is indicated that the internal fund is placed as a trust in the Lebanese treasury in the name of the Directorate of Vocational and Technical Education, and one of the employees of the Ministry of National Education is appointed as a trustee. The trustee organises a special register for the fund's accounts in accordance with the provisions of the Public Accounting Law.

Transactions are concluded in accordance with the provisions of the Public Accounting Law. In addition to the appropriations noted in the general budget for this purpose, the following expenditures are taken from the internal fund:

1. Expenditures for implementing joint projects between the Directorate and official and private institutions
2. Expenses of scientific and technical school trips within and outside the Lebanese territories and all related expenditures.
3. Miscellaneous emergency expenses (supplies, furniture, and equipment)
4. Expenditures resulting from the investment of vocational and technical education schools, including: Purchasing the necessary technical means for investment, and paying the wages and compensations of employees and non-employees who work for investment.
5. Other expenses specified by decrees.

# III. THE THREE PILOTED SCHOOL ENTERPRISE CASES

A more efficient and adaptable TVET ecosystem can be developed through public-private partnerships, which pool the resources and expertise of both the public and private sectors. Collaborations of this nature strengthen ties across schools, businesses, and government, all working together to better serve the requirements of the workforce. These partnerships help close the skill-gap between the classroom and the workplace by enlisting the help of companies in the creation of curricula, as well as by offering internships and job placement services. Given the significance of collaborations in overcoming the problems plaguing this vital sector, COSV's School Enterprise Model under SJIP mandated the collaboration of three VTIs and three SMEs. Before discussing the three piloted cases, below is a summary on the Investment-based approach for VTIs that are available in Lebanon.

## 3.1. VTIs with Investment-Based Approach in Lebanon

Despite the significance of collaborations between VTIs and companies, it is important to highlight that public VTIs are restricted in their power to generate revenue or contract with non-governmental organisations and private enterprises that entail financial transactions without the consent of the DGVET. However, there are very few VTIs in Lebanon that use an investment-based approach. Those VTIs are authorised by the DGVET and include: Zgharta Technical Institute in two specialisations, Dekwane Hotelier School, and Bir Hasan Hotelier School.

Interviews with the directors of VTIs that have an investment-based approach were conducted with the aim of gaining comprehensive insights into their operational model, the challenges faced, and their potential engagement with the private sector. The interviews focused on three main aspects: the investment-based approach, the social and solidarity economy, and public-private collaborations. The interviewed VTIs exhibit a diverse range of specialisations, spanning from professional and technical diplomas to address the diverse needs of industries. While the number of registered students for the upcoming school year (2022/2023) has decreased to an average of 800 from the previous year's count average of 1000, the geographic distribution of students from various districts around the schools remains a testament to their accessibility and influence.

Under the investment -based approach , the VTI s concentrate primarily on food production and catering and a unique model of woodworking in Zgharta TI. The investment -based approach operates through a committee structure, facilitating the acquisition of raw materials essential for any new project or request from a customer.

The money is received from the DGVTE, and the amount generated is returned fully to the DGVTE. A recurring challenge lies in the centralised nature of decision-making and the associated funding limitations. Participants in the survey have recommended revisiting the existing legislative framework to empower institutions with more autonomy and encourage partnerships with local private sector entities to bolster investment outcomes.

While the concept of social entrepreneurship is recognised as influential in addressing various social and economic concerns in Lebanon, the interviewed VTIs displayed limited familiarity with them. However, there is a recognition of the potential transformative impact that such initiatives could have, particularly in terms of employment generation and community development. The interviewed VTIs perceive the notion of public-private partnerships as highly beneficial within the TVET sector. However, challenges arise due to the centralisation of approval processes and constraints imposed by the existing regulations. Despite these challenges, there is an overwhelming willingness among VTIs to collaborate with the private sector. This partnership is seen to bridge the gap between theoretical education and practical industry needs. Areas were identified for collaboration including staff training, curriculum development, business management expertise, and investment initiatives.

The findings of the interviews highlight the importance of improving the VTIs with investment-based approach in Lebanon. Despite challenges posed by centralisation and funding limitations, these institutions exhibit a readiness to evolve and embrace collaboration with the private sector. By addressing regulatory frameworks, fostering local partnerships, and streamlining financial processes, the TVET sector in Lebanon can not only adapt to the changing landscape but also drive meaningful change within the communities they serve.

## 3.2 The Three Piloted Case

Based on the Institutional Trajectories and Resulting SE Models – by Defourny and Nyssens (2016), COSV designed the SJIP and included the School Enterprise Model defined as a collaborative social business aimed at improving the quality of the TVET sector.

It is a third entity where the main founders are two separate parties: a Vocational Training Institute (VTIs) such as a public technical school, and a social business or enterprise (or any other types of investors) willing to upgrade part of the VTI bodies into a competitive service provider company, by maintaining the VTI's educational goals. According to Defourny and Nyssens, the entrepreneurial no-profit (ENP), social cooperative (SC), social business (SB), and public-sector social enterprise (PSE) models are the outcomes of various "institutional trajectories" across the entire economy. In Figure 1 below, the four models with "starting points" in the triangle are based on the three "interest principles" that were used to identify and locate the initial organisational types identified previously.

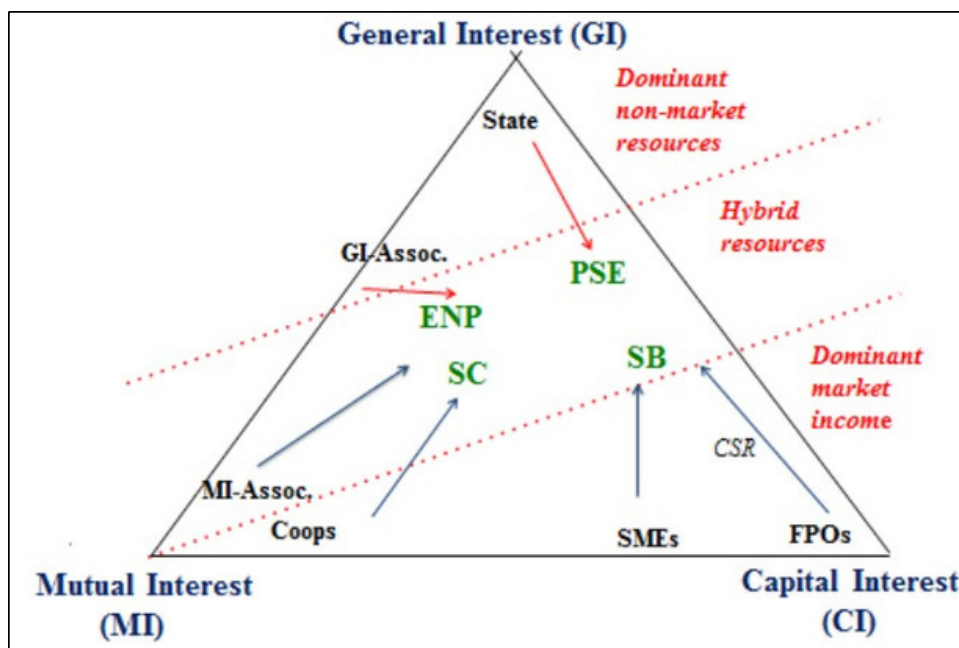


FIGURE 1: INSTITUTIONAL TRAJECTORIES AND RESULTING SE MODELS

Additionally, the paths essentially include one of the following actions: an "upward" shift in the focus of capital or mutual interest organisations toward a strategy or behaviour that prioritises the greater good of society in the firm's social or societal purpose as illustrated in the upward-pointing arrows in blue. Alternatively, a "downward" movement of general interest organisations, which have relied on non-market income or were completely subsidised by public authorities, towards more market-oriented activities to supplement their existing resources as illustrated by red arrows pointing downwards. Based on the SU unit research team's observations, The "School Enterprise Model" fits the Public-sector social enterprise model since the public VTI is moving from the general interest "providing education" towards a productive scheme that includes collaboration with SMEs to generate income. The public VTIs collaborated with private companies in different sectors and entered the market through private companies' networks and channels to sell the products that they are co-producing at the schools' facilities. The schools' infrastructure, educational curricula, faculty, and student training, as well as the development of a product brand, have all contributed to many educational improvements, and would have been impossible to acquire and without the collaboration with private enterprises and without receiving the support from the DGVET.

The SE unit research team also observed how VTIs can advance social justice policy by promoting equal access to education, addressing workforce disparities while reflecting the needs of employers and answering them through designing trainings and updating curricula, engaging with communities through open trainings to community members, fostering inclusivity, supporting entrepreneurship, and empowering students to become self-employed. These efforts collectively contribute to creating a more just and equitable society. The table below showcases some characteristics of school enterprises in relation to social economy and social justice.

<b>SCHOOL ENTERPRISE</b>	
<b>Social Economy Attributes</b>	<b>Social Justice Attributes</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vocational Technical Institute leads an economic activity related to its educational offer.</li> <li>The economic activity led by the VTI has a primary social aim of improving the educational offer /performance.</li> <li>The School Enterprise can operate also as a “transition enterprise” where students, especially those disadvantaged, can be supported to start a medium/long-term employment contract in a “safe” environment.</li> <li>The school can lead economic activities via a third entity (creation of a dedicated enterprise for the scope including different shareholders)</li> </ul>	<p>These types of Social Enterprises can directly influence the policy of the TVET sector by addressing the educational offer, youth employment, rights of PWDs (Person with disabilities), women empowerment, development of vocational teachers’ capacities, rural area growth, financial sustainability, and several other legal aspects.</p>

The three school enterprises that were incubated under the SJIP are presented in figure 2 below:

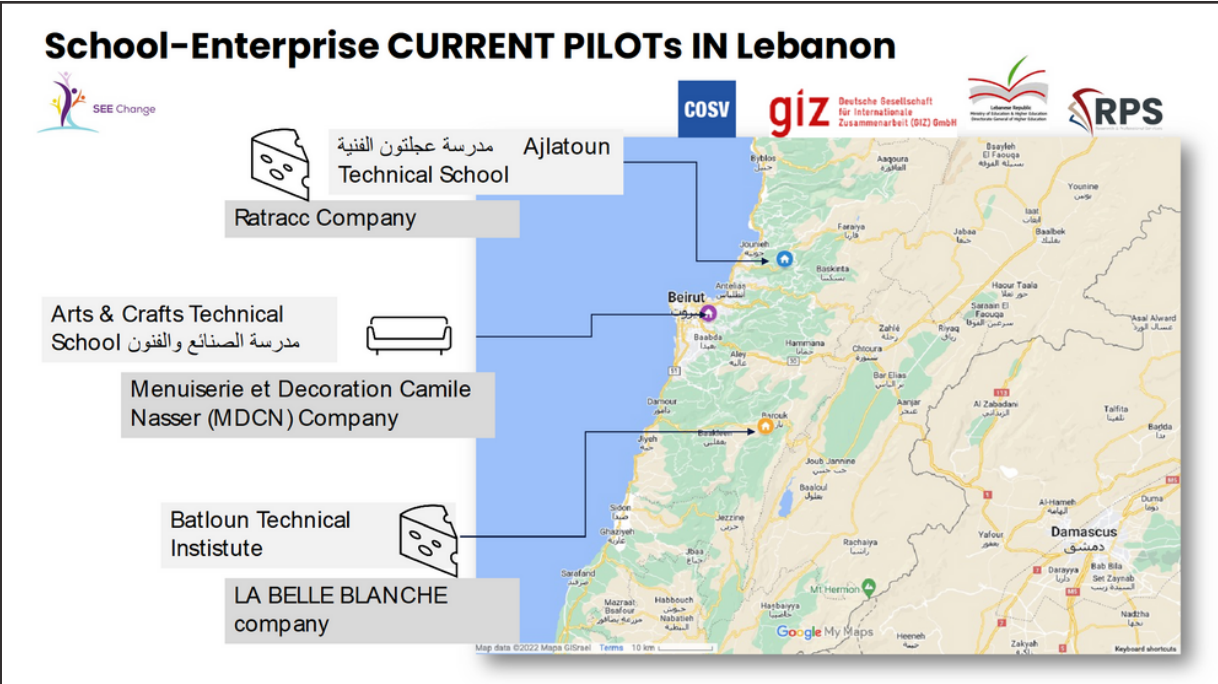


FIGURE 2: THE THREE PILOTED SCHOOL ENTERPRISE MODELS

As indicated in figure 3 below, the SME partners with the public VTI for a new production line (Dairy or Wood Furniture based on the pilot). Unused school facilities are converted into production units, the VTI curricula are updated to support the production, and the new product is sold in the market where the generated revenues are used to cover the operational costs, while the profits are reinvested in the school for maintenance and innovation purposes.

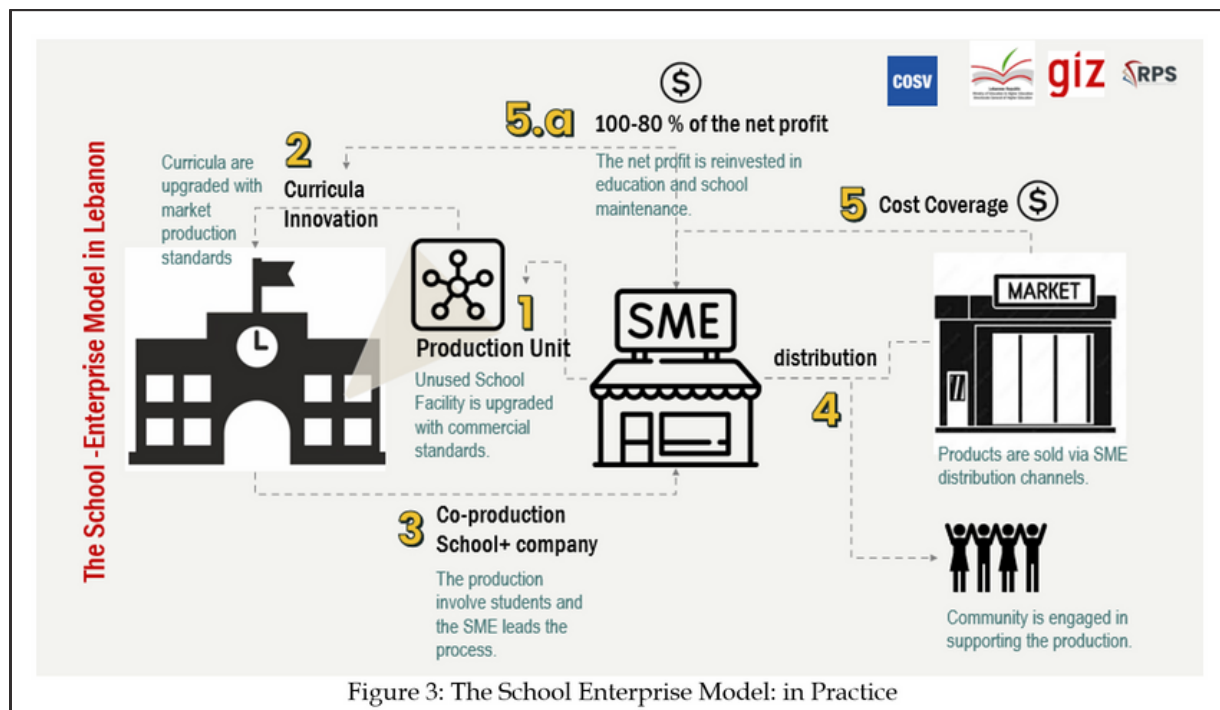


Figure 3: The School Enterprise Model: in Practice

FIGURE 3: THE SCHOOL ENTERPRISE MODEL: IN PRACTICE

The operational framework is presented below:

### Phase 0 – January to June 2022

The Principals of the VTIs were selected and the managers of the companies were identified. They met and worked together for the development of the preliminary partnership framework, and they have identified a social business plan with the facilitation of the GIZ and RPS MENA team.

### Phase 1 - September 2022 to January 2023

The unused facilities of the public VTIs are refurbished and equipped to become active production Units.

### Phase 2 – January to May 2023

GIZ provided technical assistance for curricula updates while integrating the required skills for the production process of dairy and carpentry and trained the start-up staff on the curricula and other related technical skills through a series of trainings. This also included certifying the skills through a third assessment body (APAVE). The phase also included utilising in-kind contribution of the grant in social media marketing expertise, special additional in-depth training (where needed) and tax advisory.



### Phase 3 – May to July 2023

Under the responsibility of the engaged companies the School Enterprise started the production

### Phase 4 – July to September 2023

Products with new branding are marketed through the companies' distribution channels.

### Phase 5 – March 2024

The preliminary revenues from the sales of the products will cover the cost, in the case of profit generation during the incubation period, this will be completely reinvested in the production unit. Legal advice is also provided for the “new” entity/partnership that will manage the production unit.

## 3.2.1 Batloun Technical Institute and La Belle Blanche



### BATLOUN TECHNICAL INSTITUTE & LA BELLE BLANCHE COMPANY – SCHOOL-ENTERPRISE MODEL

The School-Enterprise model being implemented through this initiative represents an innovative and mutually beneficial partnership between the Batloun Technical Institute and La Belle Blanche LLC. Under the project "Mda3ekra" and with the support of the SJIP, the school is repurposing its unused facilities to establish a cheese production unit. What sets this model apart is its commitment to student involvement in the production process. By actively engaging students in cheese production, the initiative not only equips them with practical skills but also enhances the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) by providing a real-market learning environment. La Belle Blanche's expertise in the cheese industry enriches the project, ensuring its success.

The final touch is the distribution of the cheese through La Belle Blanche's market channel, a brilliant way to transform educational outcomes into a sustainable source of revenue for the school, further improving TVET opportunities and school governance. This School-Enterprise collaboration exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to education and industry partnership, benefiting both students and the community

**Stage:** Start-Up      **Location:** Batloun Chouf District Lebanon

**Websites:** [La Belle Blanche](#) [Batloun Technical Institute](#)

**Social Enterprise Model (ICSEM, standard):**

PSE Public-Sector Social enterprise results from a movement towards the marketisation of public services which embraces "public-sector spin-offs"

**Collaborative Model:**

Public VTI (vocational technical institute) and SMEs.

**Current Services offer**

**Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Enhancement:** A crucial aspect of the service offer is the enhancement of TVET within the school. The service provider collaborates closely with the educational institution to design a curriculum that aligns with real-market practices. This involves developing course materials, training modules, and practical exercises that allow students to actively participate in the cheese production process.

**Student Engagement and Skill Development:** The heart of the service lies in engaging students in hands-on learning experiences. The service provider works alongside educators to facilitate student involvement in cheese production. This includes training them in various aspects of production, quality control, and safety protocols. Students gain practical skills, problem-solving abilities, and a deep understanding of the cheese manufacturing process.

**Quality Control and Assurance:** To ensure the cheese produced meets industry standards, the service provider offers quality control and assurance services. This involves implementing quality control protocols, conducting regular inspections, and providing guidance on maintaining product quality. The goal is to produce high-quality cheese that can compete in the market.

**Industry Expertise and Know-How:** Leveraging the partnership with La Belle Blanche LLC, the service offer includes access to industry expertise and know-how. Experts from the private sector collaborate with school staff to share best practices, innovative techniques, and insights into cheese production. This mentorship ensures that students receive a well-rounded education in the field.

**Market Distribution Strategy:** The service provider assists in the development of a market distribution strategy for the cheese produced. This includes market research, branding, packaging, and the establishment of a distribution channel through La Belle Blanche's networks. The aim is to turn the educational output into a revenue-generating product, with proceeds potentially supporting the school's governance expenditures.

**About SJIP:** Under SIJP the partners received a grant of 42,000 USD to rehabilitate the TVI production premises, equip the premises according to the main activities to be produced, and purchase the necessary and adequate equipment. They will train the staff according to their job descriptions and do "tasting" activities. They will also package, label and distribute the products to be purchased by customers. According to La Belle Blanche, the programme helped them access a wider network, learned new ideas and received more customers, while for the institute, this collaboration strengthened the hospitality programme and attracted new students to learn and train on dairy production especially that the area is in need for skilled workers in the field.

**Impact  
(2022-2023)**

**Skill Development and Employment Opportunities:** The initiative has been instrumental in developing practical skills among students. Through training and active involvement in cheese production, 83 students have acquired valuable expertise in dairy production.

This practical education has translated into real employment opportunities, with one student already employed by Batloun Dairy factory, showcasing the direct and immediate impact of the program on students' career prospects. The fact that more students are expected to join the workforce soon underscores the sustainability and success of the initiative in bridging the gap between education and employment.

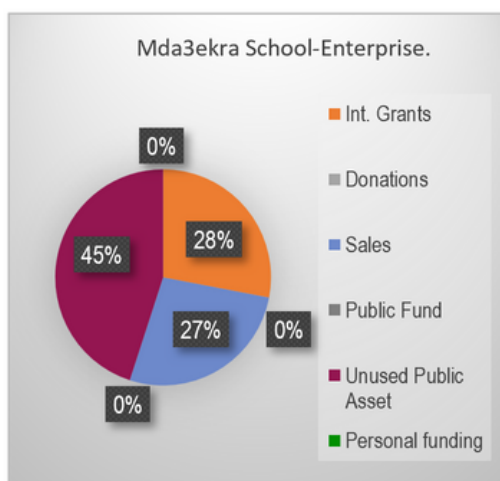
**Support to Local Farmers:** The project goes beyond just student training. It has extended its reach to the community by providing special training to five local farmers in milk production. This support enhances the local agricultural sector and contributes to the overall economic development of the region. As these farmers improve their milk production skills, they can contribute to the sustainable supply of milk for cheese production.

**Product Diversification and Market Access:** The collaboration with La Belle Blanche has enabled the production of a unique Labne cheese product called "Mda3ekra." This product diversification not only adds value to the initiative but also creates a niche market opportunity. La Belle Blanche's support in distributing the products to four selling points expands market reach and introduces fresh Labne to a wider audience. This not only generates revenue but also showcases the quality and versatility of the cheese produced under the project.

**Industry Expertise Transfer:** The partnership with La Belle Blanche has been pivotal in transferring industry expertise to the school and the students. This knowledge transfer ensures that the cheese production activities meet industry standards and best practices, enhancing the overall quality of the cheese produced.

**Community Development:** Beyond education and employment, the initiative contributes to the development of the local community. It creates economic opportunities, enhances the skill set of local farmers, and introduces new products to the market. This, in turn, fosters a sense of community engagement and growth.

<b>SDGs target</b>	SDG 4 Quality Education - SDG 8 Decent Work and economic Growth
<b>POLICY sector OECD-DAC</b>	11330 Vocational Training 11110 Education policy and administrative management 11120 Education Facilities and Training 25040 Responsible Business Conduct



**The hybrid resource model of the School-Enterprise "Mda3ekra"** is a pioneering approach that holds the promise of not only revolutionizing education but also positively impacting public governance for vocational and technical institutes (VTIs). This innovative model exemplifies the power of collaboration, demonstrating how public institutions like Batloun Technical Institute can engage external partners effectively to elevate their educational standards and financial sustainability.

By closely collaborating with the private sector represented by La Belle Blanche LLC, the VTI enhances the quality of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), offering students a curriculum that aligns with real-world industry practices. Simultaneously, the initiative's revenue generation potential through unique product sales reinforces responsible resource management, alleviating governance expenditure burdens. This holistic approach extends its benefits beyond education to empower local industry growth, provide a talent pipeline for La Belle Blanche, and contribute to economic development.

**The unique value proposition of the School-Enterprise "Mda3ekra"** initiative lies in its innovative approach that seamlessly integrates education, industry, and sustainability. Here's an elaboration of its distinct advantages:

**Hands-on Learning and Industry Alignment:** "Mda3ekra" offers students a rare opportunity for hands-on learning in a real-market environment. This practical experience equips them with valuable skills and knowledge that are directly aligned with the cheese production industry. The curriculum is designed to meet industry standards, ensuring that graduates are job-ready, thereby bridging the gap between education and employment.

**Collaboration with Private Sector:** The partnership with La Belle Blanche LLC brings unparalleled industry expertise and resources to the table. This collaboration enriches the educational content and mentorship, allowing students to learn from professionals with real-world experience. It demonstrates how public institutions can effectively engage with the private sector to enhance education.

**Financial Sustainability:** One of the standout features of "Mda3ekra" is its potential for revenue generation through Labne product sales. This innovative approach to funding education not only eases governance expenditure burdens on the public sector but also promotes financial sustainability. It showcases responsible resource management and self-sufficiency in education.

**Market Diversification:** The unique Labne product "Mda3ekra" introduces a niche offering to the market, diversifying the product portfolio. This diversification can lead to increased market share and revenue opportunities for La Belle Blanche, demonstrating the advantages of industry collaboration with educational institutions.

**Community and Economic Impact:** Beyond education, the initiative positively impacts the local community. It supports local farmers through specialized training and contributes to economic development. The emphasis on community engagement fosters a sense of social responsibility and growth.

**Talent Pipeline:** La Belle Blanche gains access to a pool of well-trained graduates who are familiar with the company's operations and standards. This serves as a valuable talent pipeline, potentially reducing recruitment and training costs for the private sector partner.

**Innovation in Governance:** The initiative showcases a new governance model for VTIs, emphasizing the potential for public-private collaboration to enhance educational quality and financial sustainability. It serves as a model for future governance improvements in vocational and technical institutes.

### 3.2.2 Ecole Technique Ajaltoun and RATRACC



#### AJLATOUN TECHNICAL SCHOOL & RAATRAC COMPANY SCHOOL – ENTERPRISE MODE

In 2017, Rabih and Fadi, both educators, forged a unique partnership driven by their shared passion for teaching and a vision for making a positive impact on their community. This dynamic duo recognized the potential of collaborating on a project to not only advance their careers but also contribute significantly to their society. Their unwavering belief in their partnership's potential prompted them to seize a remarkable opportunity presented by COSV. With their eyes set on a promising future, Rabih and Fadi applied, driven by the desire to achieve professional success and establish a distinguished social reputation. Their project envisioned a mutually beneficial alliance between a public vocational school and RATRACCC, a prominent fresh white cheese producer. At its core, the project aimed to bolster collaboration between these entities, offering students valuable training in dairy product production. Leveraging the vocational school's existing facilities and equipment, the plan required strategic additions and enhancements to provide students with comprehensive skills in dairy production. Rabih and Fadi envisioned not only empowering students with practical skills but also fueling the growth and development of the regional dairy industry.

**Stage:** **Start-Up**

**Location:** **Ajaltoun**

**Websites:** [RATRACCC LLC](#) [Lycee Technique d'Ajaltoun](#)

**Social Enterprise Model (ICSEM, standard):**

PSE Public-Sector Social enterprise results from a movement towards the marketisation of public services which embraces “public-sector spin-offs”

### Collaborative Model:

Public VTI (vocational technical institute) and SMEs.

### Current Services offer

The school enterprise created by the collaboration between the Public Vocational School of Aljatoun and RATRACCC company offers a comprehensive range of services and products aimed at enhancing the skills and knowledge of students while also contributing to the growth of the dairy industry. Here's an elaboration of the services and products offered:

**Dairy Product Training Programs:** The school enterprise provides specialized training programs for students interested in the dairy industry. These programs cover various aspects of dairy product production, including cheese, yogurt, and other dairy items. Hands-on training is a core component, allowing students to gain practical experience using the equipment and facilities provided by RATRACCC.

**Curriculum Development:** The collaboration involves the development of a tailored curriculum, designed to align with industry standards and best practices in dairy production. The curriculum ensures that students receive a well-rounded education in dairy technology, including quality control, safety regulations, and sustainable practices.

**Industry Expertise:** Students have access to experts and professionals from RATRACCC who share their knowledge and experiences, providing valuable insights into the dairy industry. Regular workshops, seminars, and guest lectures further enhance students' understanding of the field.

**Internship Opportunities:** Students are offered internships or work-study programs at RATRACCC, allowing them to apply their classroom learning in a real-world industrial setting.

**Research and Development:** The collaboration may involve joint research and development projects between the school enterprise and RATRACCC. This can lead to innovation in dairy product manufacturing techniques, quality improvement, and product diversification.

**Product Sales:** The dairy products produced through this collaboration, such as fresh white cheese, can be marketed and sold to generate revenue. Revenue generated from product sales can be reinvested into the program to enhance facilities, equipment, and educational resources.

**About SIJP:** Under SIJP the partners received a grant of 42,000 USD to rehabilitate the TVI production premises, equip the premises according to the main activities to be produced, and purchase the necessary and adequate equipment. They will train the staff according to their job descriptions and do "tasting" activities. They will also package, label and distribute the products to be purchased by customers. According to La Belle Blanche, the programme helped them access a wider network, learned new ideas and received more customers, while for the institute, this collaboration strengthened the hospitality programme and attracted new students to learn and train on dairy production especially that the area is in need for skilled workers in the field.

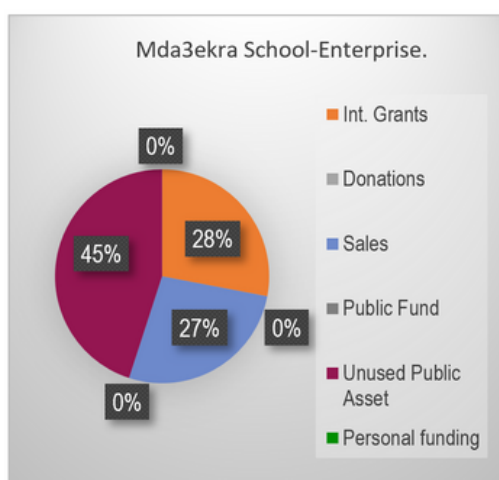
### Impact (2022-2023)

The collaborative effort between the Public Vocational School of Aljatoun and RATRACCC company has had a significant impact on both the students and the community at large. By purchasing the necessary equipment and machines and preparing the school's available space for training, the initiative has brought about several positive outcomes:

**Enhanced Skills and Empowerment:** The provision of specialized equipment and facilities has enabled students to receive comprehensive training in dairy product production. This hands-on education equips them with practical skills and knowledge, empowering them to create their own source of income. By learning how to produce 100% natural dairy products, students gain a valuable skill set that can be applied in entrepreneurship, potentially improving their financial well-being.

**Affordable Dairy Products:** As a part of their training, students involved in the program have the opportunity to produce dairy products of high quality. These products can then be made available to the community at affordable prices.

	<p>This accessibility to reasonably priced, locally produced dairy items benefits the residents by providing them with healthier and more affordable food options.</p> <p><b>Sustainability and Local Economy:</b> By supporting the growth and development of the local dairy industry, the collaboration contributes to the sustainability of the region. It reduces the dependency on external sources for dairy products and strengthens the local economy by encouraging entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency.</p>
<b>SDGs target</b>	<p>SDG 4 Quality Education SDG 8 Decent Work and economic Growth</p>
<b>POLICY sector OECD-DAC</b>	<p>11330 Vocational Training 11110 Education policy and administrative management 11120 Education Facilities and Training 25040 Responsible Business Conduct</p>



**The hybrid resource model of the school enterprise established by the Public Vocational School of Aljatoun and RATRACCC** company embodies a dynamic approach to resource utilization. This innovative model seamlessly integrates the expertise of educators and industry professionals, fostering a holistic learning experience for students. By sharing equipment and optimizing existing facilities, the initiative maximizes efficiency in both education and dairy product production.

Financial sustainability is achieved through the sale of dairy products, enabling self-sufficiency and further resource expansion. Community engagement and support play a pivotal role, fostering a sense of shared responsibility and mutual benefit. Collaborations with government and NGOs enhance the program's reach and impact, while internship and work-study opportunities bridge the gap between education and industry. Embracing continuous improvement and innovation, this hybrid resource model ensures a sustainable, impactful, and ever-evolving educational endeavor that empowers students, benefits the community, and bolsters the dairy industry.

**The unique value proposition of the school-enterprise created by the Public Vocational School of Aljatoun and RATRACCC** company lies in its distinctive blend of education, industry collaboration, and community engagement. Here's an elaboration of the elements that make this initiative stand out:

**Comprehensive Education with Practical Experience:** This school-enterprise offers students a well-rounded education that combines traditional classroom learning with practical hands-on experience.

They not only gain theoretical knowledge but also acquire real-world skills in dairy product production, setting them apart from graduates of conventional educational programs.

**Industry Integration and Expertise:** By partnering with RATRACCC, the school-enterprise brings the expertise of a successful dairy company into the classroom. Students benefit from the knowledge and insights of industry professionals, ensuring that their education is highly relevant and industry aligned.

**Economic Empowerment:** The initiative empowers students by equipping them with marketable skills. Graduates are not only capable of producing dairy products but also have the potential to become entrepreneurs, generating their own income streams. Additionally, the increase in production capacity creates job opportunities within the community, reducing unemployment.

**Resource Sustainability and Self-Sufficiency:** The hybrid resource model ensures the program's sustainability. Revenue generated from product sales helps cover operational costs, reducing dependency on external funding sources. This self-sufficiency sets it apart from programs reliant solely on grants or donations.

In summary, the unique value proposition of this school-enterprise is the fusion of education, industry expertise, community involvement, and sustainability. It not only prepares students for successful careers but also addresses unemployment, promotes affordable and nutritious food options, and fosters a sense of shared responsibility within the community. This holistic and innovative approach sets it apart as a transformative educational initiative with far-reaching benefits.

### 3.2.3 Ecole des Arts et Metiers and MDCN





## DEKWENEH TECHNICAL SCHOOL & MDCN COMPANYSCHOOL – ENTERPRISE MODEL

The Public Vocational School in Al Sanayeh, Beirut, with its rich history as one of the region's oldest technical institutions, underwent a significant transformation when Mrs. Antoinette Khanfour became its director in 2010. Despite limited resources, she collaborated with private companies and donors, leading to the establishment of production factories, with a particular focus on carpentry due to its market demand, especially post the Beirut Blast. Mrs. Khanfour revamped the curriculum with support from GIZ and created a co-production unit with Kamil of Menuiserie et Decoration Camile Nasser (MDCN) by repurposing underutilized school facilities. The school also participated in the Social Justice Incubation Programme with COSV, aligning its efforts with broader social and economic development goals. Mrs. Khanfour's leadership transformed the school, providing practical education and addressing local job market needs.

**Stage:** Start-Up

**Location:** Ajaltoun

Menuiserie et Decoration Camile Nasser (MDCN) in partnership with Ecole des arts et métiers-Dekweneh (Public Vocational School)

### **Social Enterprise Model (ICSEM, standard):**

PSE Public-Sector Social enterprise results from a movement towards the marketisation of public services which embraces “public-sector spin-offs”

### **Collaborative Model:**

Public VTI (vocational technical institute) and SMEs.

### **Current Services offer**

The school-enterprise, under the leadership of Mrs. Antoinette Khanfour and its collaboration with private companies, offers a range of services and products that cater to both the educational and market demands.

**Carpentry Workshops:** The school's carpentry program includes hands-on workshops where students learn the art of woodworking. They gain practical experience in crafting furniture, cabinets, and other wooden products.

**Production Factories:** The establishment of small production factories within the school's premises allows students to apply their skills in a real-world setting. These factories produce a wide range of wooden products, such as furniture, decorative items, and construction materials, which can be sold in the market.

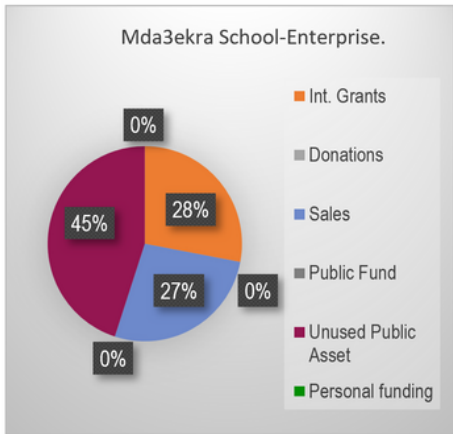
**Custom Woodworking Services:** The school-enterprise may offer custom woodworking services to external clients. This includes creating bespoke wooden items or providing carpentry services for specific projects, catering to the unique needs and preferences of customers.

**Curriculum Development:** To ensure that the vocational training remains relevant and up-to-date, the school continually updates and adapts its BT curricula. This ensures that students are equipped with the most current industry knowledge and skills.

**Market-Ready Graduates:** By focusing on vocational training in high-demand fields like carpentry, the school ensures that its graduates are well-prepared to enter the job market. This not only benefits the students but also contributes to addressing the skilled labor shortage in the local market.

**About SJIP:** Under the Social Justice Incubation Programme (SIJP), the partners received a grant of \$42,000 to cover the expenses for renovating the carpentry facility. Their plan includes organizing four Train-the-Trainer (TOT) sessions, with each session training a minimum of eight trainers. These teachers will receive compensation for instructing the students, with a goal of training between 40 to 60 students in total. This training will accumulate approximately 120 to 150 hours of instruction. Furthermore, the partners aim to commence the sale of carpentry products and potentially employ some of the trained students in their future projects.

<p><b>Impact</b> <b>(2022-2023)</b></p>	<p>The collaboration between the school and the company has had a significant and multifaceted impact on both educational and economic fronts. Here's an elaboration of the impact:</p> <p><b>Machinery and Equipment Procurement:</b> The joint effort enabled the selection, procurement, and setup of the necessary machinery and equipment required for the school-enterprise's operations. This infusion of modern equipment not only enhanced the quality of education but also facilitated the production of high-quality carpentry products.</p> <p><b>Staff Training:</b> Eight staff members were trained to proficiently handle various activities related to teaching students how to produce and design wooden items, such as tables, chairs, and other pieces of furniture. This training not only improved the skills of the staff but also ensured that students received expert guidance.</p> <p><b>Diversification of Projects:</b> The school-enterprise has expanded its operations to encompass four distinct projects. This diversification demonstrates their adaptability and responsiveness to market demands, allowing them to cater to a broader range of customers and needs.</p> <p><b>Revenue Generation:</b> With the successful execution of projects and the sale of carpentry products, the school-enterprise has started to generate revenues. These funds are being reinvested into the facility, thus ensuring its sustainability, as well as into the procurement of raw materials to support ongoing production.</p> <p><b>Student Employment:</b> In a noteworthy development, the school has provided employment opportunities to two of its students to work on one of the projects. This not only serves as an income source for the students but also serves as a practical application of the skills they acquired during their training. As revenues continue to grow, the school expects to employ more students, contributing to local employment opportunities.</p> <p><b>Brand Registration:</b> The school is actively working with the support of the COSV legal team to register its brand as "Arts &amp; Crafts Woodwork (ACW)." This step is vital for establishing a distinct identity in the market and elevating the reputation of the school-enterprise's products..</p>
<p><b>SDGs target</b></p>	<p>SDG 4 Quality Education SDG 8 Decent Work and economic Growth</p>
<p><b>POLICY sector OECD-DAC</b></p>	<p>11330 Vocational Training 11110 Education policy and administrative management 11120 Education Facilities and Training 25040 Responsible Business Conduct</p>



**The hybrid resource model of Arts & Crafts Woodwork (ACW) school-enterprise** combines traditional education with modern equipment and experienced staff. Financially, grants, donations, and revenue from diversified projects sustain operations. Human resources include dedicated teachers, skilled students, and private company partnerships.

Collaborations with COSV and the Social Justice Incubation Programme provide support and guidance. ACW's revenue streams, including product sales and custom woodworking services, ensure financial stability. Additionally, they employ trained students and work on brand development, registering as "Arts & Crafts Woodwork (ACW)." This integrated approach blends education, finances, and partnerships, enriching vocational training and fostering community empowerment.

The unique value proposition of the Arts & Crafts Woodwork (ACW) school-enterprise model lies in its multifaceted approach, bridging education and industry while making a positive impact on various fronts:

**High-Quality TVET Education:** ACW offers top-tier vocational education, equipping students with modern skills and expertise through a combination of traditional curriculum and hands-on training with state-of-the-art equipment.

**Real-World Experience:** By operating production factories, ACW provides students with valuable real-world experience, making them job-ready and highly competitive in the carpentry and woodworking industry.

**Sustainable Funding:** ACW's diversified revenue streams, including product sales and custom woodworking services, ensure the financial sustainability of the institution, reducing its dependence on external funding.

**Employment Opportunities:** ACW actively employs its own students, creating immediate job opportunities upon graduation and contributing to local employment, particularly crucial in the aftermath of the Beirut Blast.

**Community Impact:** The school-enterprise model enhances community development by producing marketable products and providing skilled labor for reconstruction projects, aligning with broader social and economic goals.

**Industry Collaboration:** ACW's partnership with a private company brings industry expertise, mentorship, and access to market insights, ensuring that students receive training aligned with market demands.

**Brand Identity:** ACW's effort to register its brand "Arts & Crafts Woodwork (ACW)" enhances its reputation and recognition in the market, further adding value to its products and services.

**Empowerment Through Skills:** ACW empowers students by imparting practical skills, contributing to personal growth, self-sufficiency, and the development of a skilled workforce in the local community.

In summary, the unique value proposition of the ACW school-enterprise model lies in its ability to simultaneously provide top-notch technical education, foster financial sustainability, create employment opportunities, contribute to community development, and establish strong industry partnerships. This holistic approach not only benefits students but also makes a positive societal and economic impact.

### 3.3 General Observations on the Collaborative Model

Based on our observations and the interviews that we conducted with the focal points of each project, it was evident that the members' responsibilities, commitment, and their passion for the project within each pair of entities had a significant impact on the collaborative model's performance. The success of the combined efforts of the VTI principal and the private company manager was proportional to how involved and quick to react each member was.

According to La Belle Blanche's owner, Sari Bou Karroum, among the many issues that this project addresses in connection to public VTI, is the need to upgrade their facilities and to provide students with a high-quality education so that they can acquire the "know-how" to produce and start their own businesses. Even though "we are not generating any revenues" as a private firm, we were able to expand our network through this collaboration and gain valuable insights from the coaching sessions, particularly in the areas of procurement and finance. In my opinion, the "good" we are doing and the community service we have committed to through this project will pave the way for future grant funding opportunities. Thanks to this effort, we were able to make an impact without having to worry about marketing and our name got out of town; we became famous beyond our own town.

Rabih, the owner of RATRACC, indicated that this project can take the school to a different phase, they can participate in national and international competitions, and they will surely succeed and be among the top if they committed to the production standards. We, RATRACC, and I personally receive free marketing, and will be proud to see the school and its students advancing in the future, especially that we are part of the process.

According to Antoinette, the principal of Ajaltoun Technical School, the collaboration with MDCN helped in decreasing operational costs, upgraded the carpentry facility, and started producing items with students. Now we have secured several projects to produce closets, cabinets, chairs, and tables that are already generating revenue, and we are reusing them to upgrade further facilities, and scale up the school on different levels including the quality of our courses. The project helped us secure some employment vacancies for trained students who are now producing directly for our external projects.

The collaborative model in the TVET sector presents numerous mutual benefits, including facilitating cost-sharing arrangements. Both the VTI and the private company can share facilities, equipment, and expertise, leading to optimised resource utilisation and reduced operational costs. Below is a list of the perceived benefits:

## BENEFITS FOR PUBLIC VTI PARTICIPATING IN THE SCHOOL-ENTERPRISE MODEL

### 1. Practical Learning Opportunities for Students:

- Hands-on Experience: Students actively engage in the production process, gaining practical skills that go beyond traditional classroom learning.
- Real-world Challenges: Involvement in the actual production unit exposes students to real-world challenges and provides them with a more comprehensive understanding of the industry.

### 2. Innovation and Curriculum Development:

- Dynamic Curriculum: With active participation of SMEs, the curriculum can be adapted in real-time to reflect industry trends and demands.
- Innovation Hub: Collaboration fosters an environment of innovation where students contribute to the development of new ideas and solutions, aligning education with industry needs.

### 3. Industry-Ready Graduate:

- Relevant Skills: Students graduate with skills directly applicable to the current needs of the industry, making them more attractive to employers.
- Workplace Culture: Exposure to a real work environment enhances students' adaptability and understanding of workplace culture, facilitating a smoother transition into the workforce.

### 4. Community Development:

- Local Job Creation: The collaboration between the public institute and SMEs contributes to local economic development by creating job opportunities within the community.
- Strengthening Social Fabric: The initiative strengthens the connection between education and local businesses, fostering a sense of community and mutual support.

### 5. Resource Optimisation:

- Shared Facilities: Utilising existing facilities within the school can lead to cost savings for both the public institute and the SMEs.

## BENEFITS FOR SMES PARTICIPATING IN THE SCHOOL-ENTERPRISE MODEL

### 1. Access to Skilled Workforce:

- Talent Pipeline: SMEs gain access to a pool of skilled and motivated students who have been actively involved in the production unit. This can serve as a talent pipeline for the SME, potentially leading to recruitment opportunities.

### 2. Innovation and Fresh Perspectives:

- Collaborative Innovation: Working closely with students involved in the co-production and innovation of curricula provides SMEs with fresh perspectives and innovative ideas. This collaboration can be beneficial for product development and process improvement.

### 3. Cost-Effective Labour; Student Internships:

- SMEs can engage students as interns, providing cost-effective labour while offering students valuable hands-on experience. This mutually beneficial arrangement allows students to apply their skills in a real-world setting while SMEs benefit from enthusiastic and skilled interns.

### 4. Community Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):

- CSR Opportunities: Collaborating with a school in a socially responsible venture aligns with CSR goals and initiatives, contributing to the positive governance of the SME.

### 5. Access to Educational Resources:

- Research and Development: SMEs can leverage the educational resources and facilities of the vocational and technical institute for research and development purposes. This collaboration may lead to the creation of innovative products or processes.

### 6. Shared Facilities and Resources:

- Cost Savings: Utilising existing facilities within the school can lead to cost savings for SMEs.

- Efficient Use of Resources: The shared model promotes efficient use of resources, reducing waste and contributing to sustainability.
6. Diversification of Funding Sources:
- Public and Private Funding: Co-funding from both a public institute and SMEs ensures a diverse and stable source of financial support, reducing dependency on a single funding stream.
7. Networking Opportunities:
- Industry Connections: Students benefit from networking opportunities with professionals in the industry, potentially leading to internships, mentorships, and job placements.
  - Collaborative Ecosystem: The collaborative ecosystem enhances the relationship between academia and industry, promoting knowledge exchange and long-term partnerships.
8. Social Impact:
- Ethical Business Practices: The social enterprise model emphasises ethical business practices, instilling values of social responsibility in students and promoting responsible entrepreneurship.
  - Community Engagement: The enterprise contributes positively to the community by providing goods or services, further enhancing its social impact.
- Shared resources, such as equipment and workspace, contribute to operational efficiency.
7. Market Exposure and Networking:
- Showcasing Products: The school-enterprise model provides SMEs with opportunities to showcase their products or services to a wider audience, including students, faculty, and the local community.
  - Networking Opportunities: Collaborating with the school creates networking opportunities with educators, students, and other SMEs, fostering a supportive business ecosystem
8. Diversification of Partnerships; Academic and Industry Partnerships:
- Participation in the school-enterprise model strengthens the connection between academic institutions and industry, potentially leading to partnerships with other educational institutions and research centres.
9. Long-Term Social Impact:
- Contribution to Education: SMEs become active contributors to the education sector, playing a role in shaping the skills and knowledge of future professionals.
  - Community Development: Involvement in education-based initiatives positively impacts the local community, aligning with the social and economic development goals of the SME.

## 3.4 Challenges Faced by the Collaborating Parties

The overall economic viability of the project is a source of concern for the private company's business. With the additional tax burden that comes with owning machines and equipment, the corporation faces the daunting task of covering all taxes. Monthly management fees are not enough to entice the private sector, which views them as inadequate pay. Time availability is another issue caused by the company's engagement; this is especially true for consulting firms that frequently travel for business purposes. There are unique difficulties that VTIs face. Industries like carpentry, where the cost of equipment is quite high, face the additional challenge of inadequate budget allocation.

Additionally, raw materials, such wood for carpentry, are costly and hard to come by. This highlights issues in the value chain and makes one wonder about the sustainability of the support programme and the reliability of the supply of resources. Another limitation is that directors of VTI can only enter commercial relationships with outside parties if there are no monetary dealings with the school. Additionally, there are administrative burdens and restrictions imposed by the DGTVE making it a requirement to sign all contracts with financial implications.

There is a special problem with equipment and machinery ownership. It becomes clear that the private sector owns the equipment through auditing the finances. Nevertheless, the VTI's facility is the designated location for equipment. Asset ownership, trademark rights, and profit sharing are all areas where the collaborative model's legal structure is unclear yet being discussed and studied to overcome the mentioned issues. A proposed MoU provided at the end of the paper is still being developed to clarify the role and the legal liability of each entity and to secure the rights of each as well.

### 3.5 Comparison between Traditional, Investment-based and Collaborative Models

The matrix below highlights several differences between the available VTI models and the piloted collaborative one. It addresses major aspects related to the quality of education, income generation, facilities and costs, employment, governance, and decision making, as well as human rights.

Aspects/Type	Traditional VTI	Investment-Based VTI	SSE VTI
Quality of Education	Standard and any quality upgrade needs funding	Standard and any quality upgrade needs funding	Market-led upgrade of curricula, staff and students are being trained
Income Generation	Not Applicable	Depends on available projects and clients	Continuous production and selling with the support and lead of the private company
Facilities and Costs	Needs funds	Depends on the decisions made by DGVET	Using revenue to upgrade facilities and lower operational Costs

Employment	Traditional Employment	Traditional Employment	Self-employment opportunities and employment within projects
Governance and Decision Making	Centralised	Centralised	More flexible under the guidance of DGVET
Human Rights	Education	Education	Education, community engagement, and livelihood



## IV. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the three piloted cases and on the close observations, a more coherent and synergistic relationship between private companies and VTIs under the SSE umbrella can be established, while promoting the integration of practical experience into education and creating a skilled workforce that meets the demands of the evolving job market in Lebanon.

Below are major conclusions and recommendations resulting from the incubation programme:

**1**

### **Recognition of the Special Legal Status of School-enterprise as Public Sector Social Enterprise Model:**

The potential recognition of the public sector School-enterprise model in Lebanon, supported by the Directorate General of Vocational and Technical Education (DGVTE), could grant it a special status under the social and solidarity economy legal framework. This would provide legitimacy, institutional support, regulatory clarity, and alignment with national policies, enhancing credibility and fostering partnerships. Such recognition may also open doors to incentives and contribute to the SSE model's role in bridging the gap between education and the workforce and elevate the SSE model's status, making it a key player in the intersection of education, social development, and economic growth in the country.

**2**

### **Industry-aligned Curriculum through Private Sector Collaboration**

Encourage ongoing collaboration between private sector companies and VTIs to ensure that vocational and technical programmes are continually updated to meet industry demands. This collaboration can be facilitated through organised internship and apprenticeship programmes, providing students with practical experience and companies with access to a skilled workforce. The collaboration should focus on aligning educational curricula with the cutting-edge knowledge and skills required by the private sector.

**3**

### **Tech Integration for Innovation in TVET**

Promote innovation within the TVET sector by integrating cutting-edge technological advancements. This can be achieved through initiatives such as tech-focused hackathons and performance-based grants for innovators. Advocating for larger budgets allocated to public institutions managing the TVET sector will support the implementation of these initiatives

**4**

## **Streamlined Legal and Administrative Processes for VTIs**

Advocate for the revision and streamlining of regulations concerning VTIs to facilitate administrative and financial transactions. Decentralisation of decision-making processes will enable VTIs to initiate revenue-generating activities efficiently. This streamlining will empower VTIs to make quicker and more efficient investment decisions, enhancing overall operational efficiency.

**5**

## **Formalised Regulatory Framework for Collaborative Social Enterprises**

Develop a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework tailored to govern collaborative social enterprises involving VTIs and private companies in specific sectors. This framework should cover legal recognition, accountability standards, financial reporting requirements, and eligibility criteria, ensuring a transparent and cooperative operational environment.

**6**

## **Tax Incentives for Private Sector Participation**

Propose the introduction of tax incentives to motivate private companies to perceive collaboration with VTIs as a valuable proposition. This financial encouragement aims to foster increased engagement and investment in vocational education, strengthening the partnership between the private sector and VTIs

**7**

## **Strengthening Local Private Sector Partnerships, and Formalizing Collaborative Agreements**

Advocate for stronger connections between VTIs and local private sector entities, such as restaurants, car mechanic shops, and factories. These partnerships create symbiotic relationships, providing students with practical training opportunities and fostering the establishment of socially impactful enterprises at the local level. They also encourage the establishment of formal contracts between VTIs and private companies, outlining clear terms of collaboration or partnership. These contracts should address critical aspects such as the ownership of equipment, defined roles, and operational responsibilities, ensuring a smooth and mutually beneficial collaboration.

**8**

## **Increased Public Budget Allocation for TVET**

Adequate funding is essential for enhancing infrastructure, curriculum development, teacher training, and acquiring up-to-date equipment. This investment is crucial to empower students with relevant skills and aligning the workforce with evolving industry demands.

# 9

## Transparent Revenue and Dividend Distribution Mechanisms

Advocate for the adoption of transparent mechanisms for the equitable sharing of revenues and dividends generated from joint ventures or sales between VTIs and private companies. Clearly defined protocols will ensure fair distribution, fostering sustained cooperation and mutual benefits

## V. PRACTICAL STEPS

As the SEE Change project closes, COSV and partners have shown interest in carrying it on to demonstrate the school Enterprise model's potential for delivering much-needed returns to communities and stakeholders; in order to maintain the model and capitalise on the successful outcomes from the piloted cases, the COSV team, GIZ, and RPS Mena met with the General Director of the DGVET on December 19, 2023. The Director-General approved the MoU between the DGVET and the TVI, and now she is awaiting the Arabic version to revise it and send it to the ministry's legal department for final review. She assured the team that she would speed up the process once she had the Arabic translation.

Since both parties, the DGVET and the VTI acknowledge the advantages of working together, drawing on past successes in areas such as attracting qualified workers to aid in economic recovery and growth, encouraging private institutions to form partnerships with public ones within the bounds of legal requirements, and ensuring the continued viability of vocational education and training programmes. The MoU is developed to create job opportunities and reduce poverty by promoting effective technical and vocational education and training (TVET) that meets the needs of productive sectors and private sector institutions. The MoU aims to address the current skill gap in the labour market and the spread of unemployment and underemployment, and it seeks to ensure the long-term viability of Lebanon's TVET sector.

In addition, the General Director is open to working together in the future on any prospective opportunities that may arise in relation to social entrepreneurship. The most important thing to take away from this is that she made a commitment to include the SE in her priorities, which would hopefully stimulate the attention of donors in sponsoring such projects.

## VI. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS OF THE MODEL

A Considering the limitation in term of time and funds under the SIJP in SEE CHANGE project, and the current challenges at country level, such as the energy access, the instability of inflation, but also in the light of the positive transformative process that the pilot is activating, COSV and GIZ are already planning for a phase II of the programme. This includes as provided in Figure 4 below:

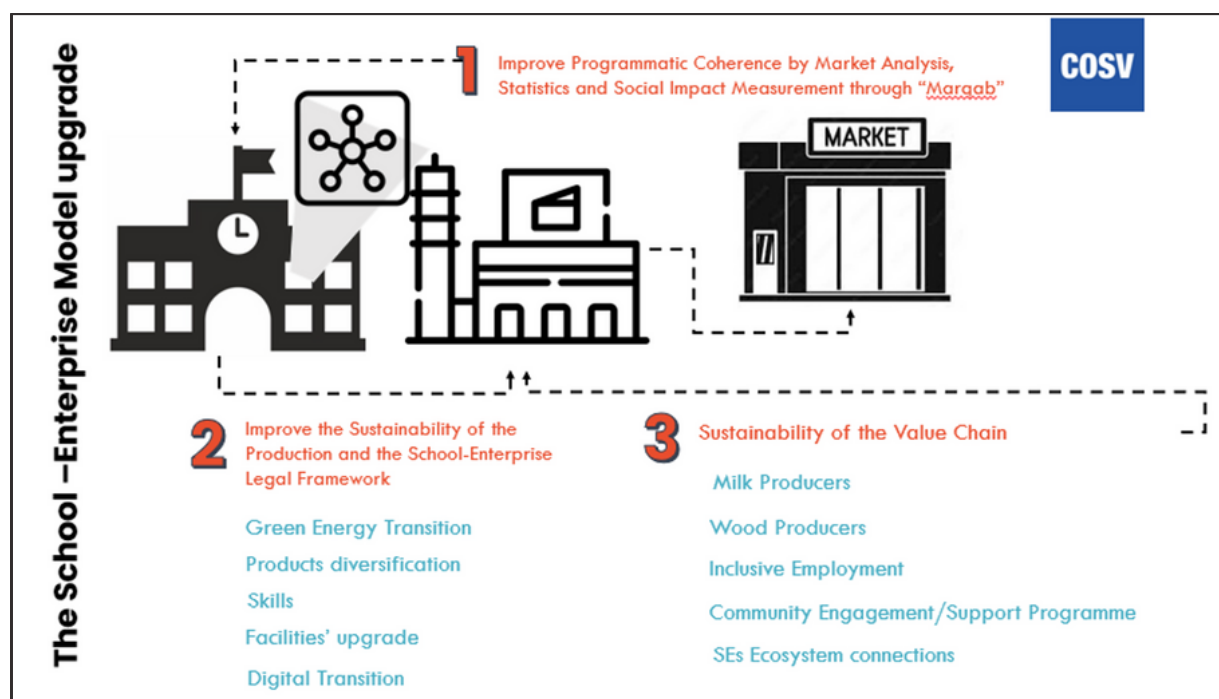


FIGURE 4: POTENTIAL UPGRADE OF THE SCHOOL-ENTERPRISE MODEL

1 - The improvement of the programming production and curricula innovation by adopting a smart market analysis using the MARQAB methodology (please refer to paragraph 10 of this document); This action could involve all the VTI students in understating the market by experiencing the data collection and relationship with SMEs before to end the studies.

2 - The improvement of production's general operational scheme, by integrating the energy efficiency and all the green and digital economy requirements for the production unit. This forecasts the advancement of a better-defined legal framework for school enterprise recognition or inside the DGVTE regulation or in the current Social Entrepreneurship legal framework that is currently under discussion in the Lebanese Parliament (Advocacy component of SEE CHANGE).

3 - Development of the value chain: SMEs and VTI schools involved in the pilot are already establishing a new value chain in the area where they are by involving farmer and milk producers to improve the quality of the milk, or a suitable use of the natural resources. In the plans, they were willing to involve the community in alternative channel distribution such as community market and fairs.

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# IMPACT 4 POLICY SERIES

## About COSV

COSV is an Italian NGO working in development cooperation for over 40 years worldwide and now stabilized in the Med Area and Africa. We adopt a human-centered collaborative approach that prioritizes understanding local contexts and needs, ensuring that development strategies are tailored to the unique socio-economic, cultural, and environmental aspects of each community. Specializing in pioneering innovation projects, COSV intricately weaves together the critical elements of social cohesion, economic transformation, and good governance. This triad serves as the cornerstone of their strategy, aiming to foster environments where communities can thrive both socially and economically while being governed by principles of fairness and accountability. Through this nexus, COSV endeavors to catalyze positive change, ensuring that development is both inclusive and equitable.

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## About the Impact 4 Policy series

"Impact4Policy" is a dynamic methodology developed by the **COSV Social Economy Unit** – research team. It is designed to conduct an agile and thorough impact analysis within incubation and acceleration programs. The "Impact4Policy" methodology aims to identify the key elements, features, typologies, and emerging models of social and solidarity economy (SSE) initiatives, while providing valuable insights for sector-based policy recommendations. Through the combined use of qualitative and quantitative data analysis of the supported initiatives, "Impact4Policy" leverages the active involvement of participants, field observations, and global comparative benchmarking, such as the ICSEM model, incorporating peer review and/or peer exchange processes as well. The significance of "Impact4Policy" lies in its ability to extend the impact analysis of SSE initiatives beyond the typical temporal boundaries of support programs by adopting a holistic and dynamic approach. This allows not only for the assessment of the immediate effectiveness of the initiatives but also for the promotion and monitoring of their long-lasting impact on sector-based policies and community well-being. By placing particular emphasis on sustainability and scalability, "Impact4Policy" aims to ensure that SSE initiatives contribute significantly and continuously to sustainable economic and social development.

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