



**BROKEN
CHALK**

Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the United
Nations Human Rights Council 4th Cycle – 50th Session

Right to Education Country Review: Libya

Submitting Organization: BROKEN CHALK

April 2025

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Broken Chalk is an Amsterdam-based NGO established in 2020 that monitors and minimises worldwide human rights violations in education. We aim to promote universal and equal access to education for all.

We encourage and support achieving societal peace with our international sponsors and partners by advocating for intercultural tolerance, preventing radicalism and polarisation, and tackling educational inequalities.

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I. Introduction

1. The following report has been drafted by Broken Chalk as a stakeholder contribution to the fifth cycle of the Universal Periodic Review [UPR] for Libya. As Broken Chalk's focus is on combating human rights violations within the educational sphere, the contents of this report and the following recommendations will primarily focus on the Right to Education.
2. Libya's education system comprises nine years of compulsory basic education, consisting of six years of primary education followed by three years of preparatory education. In secondary education, there are both general and specialised pathways, including, for example, vocational and technical schools. Furthermore, higher education is delivered through universities and higher technical and vocational institutesⁱ.
3. Before 2011, Libya achieved near-universal enrolment in primary and secondary education. However, over the past decade, conflict and economic instability have severely impacted the education system, leading to damaged infrastructure, insufficient resources, and a shortage of qualified teachers. As of 2022, approximately 160,000 children and 5,600 teachers urgently require educational supportⁱⁱ.
4. The COVID-19 pandemic deepened Libya's education crisis, with school closures starting in mid-March 2020. This disrupted access to learning for children already affected by conflict. At least 165,000 children require access to schooling, and the lack of digital infrastructure, compounded by limited internet connectivity, leaves vulnerable groups, such as internally displaced children and migrants, disproportionately affectedⁱⁱⁱ.
5. Despite Libya's high enrolment rates in primary and secondary education, significant disparities persist, particularly among marginalised groups. Children with disabilities encounter substantial barriers to accessing education, including inadequate infrastructure and limited specialised support.
6. Approximately 27,500 migrant and refugee children face obstacles such as a lack of documentation, language differences, and discrimination, which hinder their educational opportunities^{iv}. Additionally, children in conflict-affected areas suffer from damaged infrastructure and limited access to learning materials, further impeding their academic prospects^v.

II. Brief overview of the last UN-UPR cycle

7. During the third Universal Periodic Review (UPR), Libya received 285 recommendations from UN Member States, of which 13 specifically addressed the right to education; Libya supported all of these recommendations. These recommendations centred on enhancing educational infrastructure, ensuring equal access to quality education for all children, and improving outcomes for girls and marginalised groups^{vi}.
8. In its national report for the UPR, Libya highlighted initiatives to restore conflict-damaged schools, offer teacher training programmes, and advance inclusive, quality-focused educational policies^{vii}. Consequently, Libya committed to several policy changes following the UPR, including the launch of the "Schools of the Future" initiative to modernise facilities and integrate technology into classrooms^{viii}. Plans were also made to establish Teacher Training Institutes in major cities such as Benghazi, Tripoli, and

Sabha, aiming to recruit and train more educators to tackle shortages and improve pupil-to-teacher ratios^{ix}.

9. In response to the accepted recommendations and in collaboration with UNICEF, programmes have been initiated to rehabilitate schools and provide psychosocial support to students affected by conflict^x. Such efforts were also extended to include distributing educational materials and ensuring the continuity of learning during periods of instability^{xi}.
10. By the mid-term assessment in 2022, progress had been prominent in reorienting educational infrastructure and implementing teacher training initiatives. However, challenges such as ongoing security concerns, limited resources, and disparities in access between urban and rural areas persisted^{xii}. Additionally, frequent disruptions, political instability, population displacement, and damage to infrastructure have consistently hindered and exacerbated the implementation of the reforms above^{xiii}. Therefore, it prevents the full realisation of the right to education for all Libyans.
11. During the 2022 assessment, approximately 160,000 children and 5,600 teachers were identified as urgently needing educational support due to prolonged conflict and economic challenges. The pupil-to-teacher ratio remained high, and disparities in access were especially evident among internally displaced persons and marginalised communities^{xiv}.
12. While Libya has shown commitment by accepting all education-related UPR recommendations, the complex political and security environment continues to pose significant challenges. Sustained efforts, both domestically and with international support, are crucial to effectively implement reforms and fulfil the right to education for all children in Libya.

III. The Ongoing Impact of Armed Conflict and Political Instability on Education

13. One of the main factors that has persisted and undermined the right to education for a long time is the protracted armed conflict and political instability in Libya. The state of Libya since 2020 has resulted in the destruction of educational facilities and the displacement of communities due to the volatile security conditions, intermittent hostilities, and weak governance structures. For example, in 2020 alone, 16 schools were destroyed, affecting around 15,890 students^{xv}.
14. Persistent hostilities and insecurity have not only damaged school buildings and essential facilities but have also prompted widespread displacement, disrupted regular schooling and hindered the establishment of safe learning environments^{xvi}. The Libyan Ministry of Education has made efforts to restore damaged facilities. Still, it has consistently faced delays due to shifting frontlines and limited resources, thereby making the provision of safe and conducive classrooms a persistent challenge^{xvii}. As a result, parental confidence in the security and quality of education has declined, often discouraging school attendance and destabilising the continuity of learning^{xviii}.
15. The immediate consequences of these conditions are evident in the number of learners and educators requiring urgent support. By 2022, approximately 160,000 children and 5,600 teachers were reported to need immediate educational assistance due to factors including conflict, displacement, and deepening economic instability^{xix}. Such instability

has led to psychological distress among students and teachers, negatively impacting attendance rates, staff retention, and overall learning outcomes^{xx}.

16. While UNICEF and UNESCO have supported the introduction of mobile learning initiatives and emergency education programmes, these interventions have struggled to compensate for the lack of a stable, nationally coordinated system that can withstand ongoing violence and political fragmentation^{xxi}.
17. In the longer term, these circumstances pose serious threats to Libya's ability to develop and sustain a robust, inclusive, and high-quality education system. Ongoing insecurity impedes the government's capacity to implement comprehensive curricular reforms, standardise teacher training, and ensure equitable access to education for all children, particularly those in marginalised communities or conflict-affected regions^{xxii}. Without lasting improvements in governance, institutional stability, and equitable resource distribution, existing disparities are likely to widen, leaving vulnerable populations even further behind.
18. Ultimately, this environment endangers Libya's future social cohesion and economic development, as successive generations are denied the stable educational foundations essential for progress and nation-building. However, it is understandable that such conflict cannot be solved immediately and that it might take time.

IV. Socio-Economic Inequalities and Resource Constraints in Education

19. Branching from the protracted armed groups, a problem arose regarding chronic socio-economic disparities and recurring economic instability that continued to undermine equitable access to quality education in Libya. The prolonged political fragmentation has limited fiscal oversight, and inadequate public investment has restricted access to essential learning materials, infrastructural improvements, and consistent teacher development^{xxiii}.
20. These challenges are felt most acutely in rural and marginalised communities, where insufficient funding and poor resource distribution leave schools struggling to provide even the most necessities, such as textbooks, stationery, and well-maintained classroom furniture^{xxiv}. In these contexts, families often face additional financial burdens related to education, which intensifies already difficult living conditions and adversely affects school attendance and engagement^{xxv}.
21. Such constraints directly affect classroom environments, teaching effectiveness, and educational outcomes. Data from the Ministry of Education's *Annual Education Indicators Report 2021* indicate that shortages in educational resources contribute to overcrowded classrooms, reduced instructional quality, and difficulties in retaining qualified teachers^{xxvi}. UNICEF field assessments have identified instances in which an estimated 40 percent of learners lack reliable access to core learning materials, severely impairing their progress in foundational skills such as literacy and numeracy^{xxvii}. Meanwhile, a lack of adequate training opportunities, outdated curricula, and insufficient facilities further limit educators' ability to deliver high-quality instruction^{xxviii}.
22. These structural challenges have profound implications for Libya's broader educational development and social cohesion. UNESCO analysis suggests that persistent inequalities in resource distribution inhibit investment in educational initiatives and impede efforts to modernise teaching methods and curricula^{xxix}. Without policy reforms that address governance inefficiencies, reduce poverty, and ensure fairer resource allocation,

systemic imbalances will persist. Ultimately, these entrenched disparities risk perpetuating cycles of disadvantage, as communities most in need of robust educational opportunities remain locked within environments that fail to provide meaningful learning experiences and avenues for personal advancement.

V. Marginalised Groups and Barriers to Inclusive Education

23. Significant barriers continue to hinder the full inclusion of marginalised groups in Libya's education system. Children with disabilities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), migrants, and refugee communities often face disproportionately tricky circumstances, including unaddressed language needs, discriminatory practices, and the absence of necessary infrastructural adaptations^{xxx}. Although the Ministry of Education has acknowledged these issues, the capacity to implement comprehensive inclusion strategies remains limited due to governance constraints, inadequate staff training, and a shortage of specialised educational materials.^{xxxi}
24. Data from UNICEF indicate that migrant and refugee children frequently struggle to access formal schooling, often lacking documentation and encountering social stigma within classroom environments^{xxxii}. UNESCO has observed that children with disabilities experience physical barriers, such as inaccessible school buildings, as well as pedagogical hurdles, stemming from a curriculum and teaching methods not adapted to their needs^{xxxiii}. These factors contribute to higher dropout rates and reduced educational attainment, perpetuating cycles of disadvantage for vulnerable learners who already contend with instability and socio-economic challenges^{xxxiv}.
25. Efforts to address the problem remain inconsistent and limited in scope. While some initiatives have sought to train educators in inclusive teaching methods and sensitise communities to the rights of marginalised learners, these programmes have yet to be scaled up nationally^{xxxv}. Without a more coordinated approach—ensuring accessible facilities, inclusive curricula, supportive teacher development, and targeted policy reforms—vast segments of the population will continue to be excluded from educational opportunities^{xxxvi}. This systemic exclusion not only undermines the fundamental right to education but also restricts Libya's broader aspirations for social cohesion, economic prosperity, and sustainable development.

VI. Recommendations

26. Broken Chalk proposes School-Based Peer Support Groups to help students, teachers, and community volunteers support each other in unstable situations. These groups keep learning going and offer academic and emotional help, especially for children with disabilities, refugees, and other vulnerable students.
27. Broken Chalk recommends Localised Digital Teacher Training Clusters in safe areas, such as cities or community centres. Using mobile units and offline tools, these clusters train teachers in modern methods and digital skills. This enables training to continue despite security and infrastructure issues.
28. Broken Chalk suggests a Micro-Grant Programme to help schools and communities with limited resources. By working with local businesses and NGOs, the programme funds classroom supplies, repairs, and teacher support. A pilot phase ensures good management and builds community trust.

29. Broken Chalk advises tailoring Micro-Grant funding for marginalised communities. Schools can use these funds for accessibility upgrades, inclusive materials, and specialised resources, making education more open to all.
30. Broken Chalk introduces Mobile Learning Hubs—small, portable classrooms set up in repurposed buses, shipping containers, or community tents. These hubs travel to areas where schools are closed or unsafe, providing temporary but structured education with books, digital tools, and trained educators. This ensures students continue learning even when schools cannot operate normally.

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