

Overall LCRP Education Sector Response Strategy:

The protracted nature of the Syria crisis, which has entered its ninth year in March 2019, has overstretched the capacity of the public education system. To address critical education needs of thousands of school age vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugee children in Lebanon, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), has drawn up the Reaching All Children with Education Plans (RACE I: 2014-2016 and RACE II: 2017-2021).

The overarching goal of the LCRP Education Sector Response Strategy i.e., RACE II, is that “the Lebanese national education system is able to provide equitable access to quality education opportunities for all children and youth”. The Education Sector, led by the MEHE, collaborates towards this goal through three main, equally important, areas of intervention:

1. **ACCESS** to education opportunities: By enhancing access to, and demand from, children, youth, and their caregivers, for equitable formal or regulated non-formal education
2. **QUALITY** of education services: By enhancing quality of education services and learning environments to ensure grade-appropriate learning outcomes for children and youth
3. **GOVERNANCE** of education systems: By enhancing governance and managerial capacities of RACE II implementing institutions to plan, budget, deliver, monitor, and evaluate education services

To achieve this, the sector response aims to drive measurable changes on three key levels:

- **At the child and community level:** sector partners will continue to reach out to the most marginalized and vulnerable populations – Lebanese and refugee alike. Communities will be supported to change their behaviors from negative coping strategies (a consequence of poverty) towards sustained, positive, and informed decisions that engage with education services and institutions. This increase in demand for education will be accompanied by comprehensive subsidies by education services providers to offset the opportunity costs of poorer children enrolling in education opportunities. This includes the opening of an additional Shift in public school to accommodate additional students as well as the subsidies (both in formal and non-formal education) towards enrolment fees, transportation, textbooks, and learning supplies. In addition, partners will support the improvement of learning spaces – both public schools and NFE centers – by supporting the winterization of premises, rehabilitation of built spaces, and accessibility modifications, to name a few. The assumptions assembled around these set of interventions, holds that sustained behavior change interventions and comprehensive subsidies to offset opportunity costs will increase the demand for, and access to, formal and non-formal education. This thereby, would support the overall goal of reducing the numbers of children either out of school or out of learning.
- **At the service delivery level:** institutional stakeholders will coordinate to improve the quality of instruction and learning environments – both in public schools and NFE learning centers. These interventions are predicated on policies/reforms organized at the institutional level – through MEHE.
 - Inside public schools - this includes the roll out of the child protection policy in schools (iteratively across all schools in Lebanon), the training of public-school teachers on child-centered pedagogy (including modules in differentiated instruction, inclusion, gender, teaching with technology, etc.), and the opening of pilot inclusive schools to mainstream children with disabilities into public schools. This additionally includes the deployment of PSS and Health staff; and regular/formal monitoring of teaching practices in all Second Shift schools. These interventions combined, will contribute to improve the teaching and learning environment for students enrolled in public school – with the assumption that such

- interventions will improve attendance, reduce drop-out, and improve real learning outcomes for children.
- For those children who are out of formal education – the MEHE has designed, in collaboration with key technical partners – the Non-Formal Pathway – as a means for out of school children to transition into formal education. This is an important initiative because it includes the standardization of non-formal education content (mirroring the Lebanese curriculum) for all age group, from 03 to 18 years of age. The corresponding programmes that have been deployed in communities are Community-based Early Childhood Education, Basic Literacy and Numeracy, and the Accelerated Learning Programme. The MEHE has also introduced Standard Operating Procedures to maintain minimum standards for the operationalization of these programmes. Going forward, much value would be added by ensuring minimum standards on child protection, accessibility, and learning measurement are also agreed on, for non-formal programmes. It is assumed that standardizing the quality of non-formal programmes with a clear transition pathway – will support out of school children learn sufficiently well to be eligible for entry into formal education.
 - At the institutional level: the MEHE will continuously invest in strengthening existing systems (i.e., data collection, deployment of trained teaching corps and DOPS staff, developing teacher-performance and monitoring standards for formal education, data systems, administering the public-school system, and systemizing the assessment of school buildings). In addition, the MEHE will invest towards newer horizons – i.e., the design of evidence-based and data driven child-friendly policies, the measurement of learning achievements beyond grade-to-grade transition and public examinations, developing durable partnerships, designing a solid contingency plan, and creating a platform to coordinate the delivery of education programming. The combination of these systems-level interventions – is assumed to support systematic shifts towards a more child-centered, policy-driven, and empowered governance structure of the MEHE and its public-school system. An accessible and well-governed public education system will directly impact the learning and education of children enrolled in Lebanese public schools.

By achieving the three main aims of the LCRP Education Sector, interventions by Sector stakeholders will contribute to ensuring the protection of vulnerable populations, support service provision through national systems and support in reinforcing Lebanon’s economic, social, and environmental stability. To achieve these objectives, the sector strategy functions from the premise that if Lebanon has a strengthened education system for an inclusive gender-equitable access to quality education and learning, and if it can provide better employability, personal empowerment and skill sets to its people, then all children, especially the most vulnerable will have the opportunity to learn. Considering that a better response is achieved through complementarity among sectors and that the best way to ensure that all school aged children are reached with learning and are retained in education programmes is through ensuring that the wellbeing of the child is addressed and catered to through a more integrated and inclusive approach to the programming and the response, the strategy is developed on the assumption that the other sectors will be working under the same general guiding principles and will have the same will to cooperate for the best interest of the children and the youth.

The sector acknowledges that children with disabilities continue to face considerable barriers accessing education opportunities, including prevailing social norms and attitudes towards disability, a lack of budgetary allocations supporting inclusion to the public education system, limited teacher capacity, a lack of effective teaching strategies to provide appropriate instruction, and limited access to schools with adequate facilities. In this respect, the sector strategy ensures that education should foster inclusion, human rights awareness and conflict resolution and empowers girls and women by increasing their chances of employment, staying healthy, and participating fully in society.

The education plan for Palestine refugees' children is led by UNRWA and focuses on enrolment support for formal basic education, inclusive education, and psychosocial support. In particular, UNRWA continues to engage with partners to expand educational and learning support services for children to provide them with targeted support including psychosocial support, learning support, vocational training opportunities and referrals to alternative education pathways. During 2019-2020 UNRWA continues to support the inclusion/ integration of PRS students with their PRL peers.

LCRP Education Sector Response Plan 2020:

As of July 2019, more than 1 million children and youth in Lebanon, from all nationalities, aged 3-18 years old have been enrolled in formal education in public, private and subsidized schools and institutes, out of which over 722,000 children belong to the compulsory age group (6-14 years).¹

Priority response areas for 2020 will continue to build on the existing education programme and work further toward improving access, addressing retention barriers, improving quality, equity and inclusiveness and strengthening national capacities and systems through achieving three overarching objectives.

Outcome One: Improved Demand and Access to Education Opportunities

The first outcome that the sector strategy addresses is enhancing access to, and demand for, equitable formal education or regulated non-formal education for children, youth, and their caregivers in Lebanon.

In 2018-2019, the results of the implementation of RACE II have been significant, including enhancing the ability of the education system in Lebanon to host a large number of students.

Working children, particularly those involved in the worst forms of child labor, are among the most vulnerable that are left behind. Children and families in these areas face several educational challenges that require systemic interventions to improve absorption capacity, to accommodate for refugees' demands, and to overcome economic barriers and language difficulties. The risk of child marriage, sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV), and other negative coping mechanism remains high. Young men work to support their families at the expense of continued education.

The protracted situation and the economic situation is not only adversely affected the refugees, but also the most vulnerable regardless of nationalities. It is expected that the number of Lebanese children between 6-14 who might drop out of school, to support their families economically, will increase. This is in addition to the number of students who had to move from private to public schools for the same reasons. In secondary education, which is not compulsory or free, the most vulnerable Lebanese are at a

¹ CERD, 2019

high risk of dropping out from school for not being able to pay their registration fees and education-related costs, including textbooks. Increasing number of Lebanese children in public schools will force schools to prioritize in the first shift, thus pushing more Syrian children into already saturated second shift schools.

Given the alarming percentages of children out of school, especially refugees, the sector has a joint responsibility to design more innovative programmes and initiatives that are aimed to address the unmet educational needs of children who are out of school –the hardest to reach.

In order for the demand generation to be more effective, there needs to be a supply side that is adequate enough to ensure that absorption and retention are possible. The risk here is that with the current funding status, the schools cannot absorb more children eligible to enter Formal Education and funding for NFE remains lower than needed. In order to ensure that the demand is met, the current LCRP sector strategy focuses on different levels of objectives, including improving physical access and environment, improving quality of education and learning and ensuring that systems are strengthened enough to respond to the needs of the most vulnerable and to build for a sustainability that goes beyond the crisis at hand.

All being said, there is still a scope to increase enrolment, strengthen demand, and improve infrastructure in the current Education sector response. To achieve improved access to education opportunities, the sector response plan focuses on two outputs.

Output 1.1 - Children, youth, and their caregivers, are provided with the necessary support to increase their demand for formal education or regulated non-formal education

Moving from the premise that access to information and knowledge as well as the availability of programs are not the only barriers to education, and that the current increased level of poverty and unemployment rate are pushing more children to remain out of education, the current sector strategy will look into more creative alternative methods to increase demand on NFE and regulated systems.

Such methods will include more integrated and effective outreach approaches, which relies on the assumption that other sectors will also be focusing on the same level of outreach. It will also aim to increase the engagement of parents in education, in order to change their thinking towards education and send their children to school and NFE. The sector aims to work closely with the Child Protection and Health sectors as well as different Youth programs to ensure that the outreach and referral reaches all those who are in need.

The sector will continue to provide basic assistance and transportation but will also focus on exploring different modalities and will revisit the various transportation modalities that have been used, to ensure that they contribute to retention of children in schools. One of the main things that the sector will also focus is how better support the dropouts, which has been sufficiently addressed so far. Close coordination with the Basic Assistance and Livelihoods sectors will be necessary to ensure that the needs and ways forward are identified for the best interest of the children.

This will all start by exploring new incentives to encourage children to stay in schools and learning spaces and parents to send their children and keep them there. For this to happen the sector will focus on strengthening the work on parent engagement. It will also maintain a proper coordination mechanism

inside the sector as well as joint quarterly sector meetings at the field level where proper engagement is done with other relevant sectors like Livelihoods, Health, CP, WASH.

Output 1.2 - Children and youth have improved access to appropriately equipped public schools and learning centers especially in underserved areas.

According to the MEHE, *more than one* third of public schools' premises are in bad conditions and are in need of major rehabilitation. In addition, 42% of MEHE public school premises are rented, and some are located rental of residential buildings not school buildings.

Rehabilitation and construction of schools, thus, will remain a priority, particularly in underserved areas and areas with a high concentration of displaced Syrians. The MEHE will adopt a comprehensive approach to school rehabilitation, building on best practices and lessons learned through various donors, Government and partner-led interventions to increase educational access, with a particular focus on girls and children with special needs. Selected schools will be equipped with gender-sensitive latrines and other facilities such as arts, music, sports, sciences and Information Technology laboratories, based on the MEHE's standards.

In addition, the LCRP Education sector strategy focuses on adding physical improvements to NFE structures to ensure a safer learning environment that complies with international Child Protection Standards, including proper accessibility and equipment for children with special needs. The sector will seek the support of the Child Protection sector as well as the WASH sector to ensure the appropriate standards of water safety and hygiene in both schools and learning spaces.

Outcome 2 - Improved quality of education services

The second outcome of the LCRP Education Sector Strategy addresses enhancing the quality of education services and learning environments to ensure grade-appropriate learning outcomes for children and youth

Outcome 2 focuses on delivering quality education services and learning environments throughout the continuum of formal and non-formal schooling pathways, to ensure meaningful and grade-appropriate learning for children and youth. In the RACE II, MEHE has been able to improve access to, and quality of, and a range of complementary educational services, including non-formal education.

In spite of all the effort put into improving the quality of education services and learning environment, there remain several challenges that delay the full achievement of the outcome. However, the sector will continue to aim for improved results through providing professional development to education personnel as well as through ensuring a child friendly environment in schools and learning centers.

Output 2.1 - Teachers, education personnel, and educators have enhanced capacities to provide learner-centered pedagogy in public schools or learning spaces

The key role of teachers and educators, the importance of school governance, and the potential of community engagement in learning are prioritized. The RACE Project Management Unit (PMU) will ensure that standards set by MEHE are followed as relevant.

Additional effort is required to improve the quality of Formal Education and Non-Formal Education in 2020. Despite the several learning packages and system support policies and plans that have been developed throughout the last couple of years, more training is required for teachers and educators on rolling out these policies and on implementing learner-centered approaches.

All categories of personnel in the LCRP Education sector will be provided with support to enhance their capacities:

- Teachers (tenured and contracted teachers working in Lebanese public schools, including in second shift);
- Education personnel (school directors and supervisors working in Lebanese public schools); and
- Educators personnel recruited to provide NFE content in learning spaces.

For education personnel, a combination of management and financial training packages are being developed to support the development of competencies required for the implementation of School Improvement Plans (SIPs). The aim is to strengthen the educational role of the school directors. Educators in learning spaces will be advised on the minimum criteria for competencies required by an NFE educator for regulated programs, in partnership with CERS and PMU. CERD will also assist in improving the quality of NFE by training educators on regulated NFE packages.

The capacity of the Palestinian teaching workforce will also be enhanced through in-service trainings and trainings on Individual Education (IE) and Individual Education Plans (IEP) to be delivered to newly appointed education staff, therefore strengthening the identification and response process to student's needs. Trainings on PSS will continue to be delivered with a view to enhance the cohesion between PRS and PRL students and to improve retention.

Output 2.2 - Teachers and education personnel at the school level and educators in learning spaces are capacitated to contribute to inclusive, safe, healthy, and protective environments

Accountability and governance at the school-level is an area that requires support from school personnel in the administration of schools and the involvement of communities in the education of their children. Activities with school directors, teachers, and parents will focus on greater engagement, meaningful classroom instruction, and inclusive leadership in schools, in order to be more child-friendly.

The sector will focus on school improvement plans to provide inclusive, safe, healthy and protective environments (in second shift schools and regulated NFE learning spaces), the following interventions will be **supervised by PMU**:

- A minimum of two health checks per year will be guaranteed for each student enrolled in second-shift schools. **Health counsellors** will follow students' medical files and monitor the quality of health checks performed by school doctors. The health counsellors will continue to follow up and conduct hygiene awareness sessions and observations to improve the health of students;
- In line with the Child Protection Policy developed by the MEHE, GDE/ DOPS Central has rolled out the CP policy to teachers, education personnel, **psycho-social support counsellors**, on national protocols for the identification and referral of any student impacted by violence at school, at

home, or in their community. During the school year 2019/2020, MEHE, in collaboration with UNICEF is developing an Operational Framework for the Policy which should outline the main actions and activities that MEHE would take to ensure schools are safe and protective of children. A hotline and email address exist in MEHE for reporting cases of violence. The Child Protection Unit (DOPS) at MEHE is receiving and processing these cases as per the referral process.

- Referral pathways and processes, to be used by school personnel and NFE educators, for children and youth with specific needs (whether they be physical or cognitive) will be developed. School personnel and NFE educators will be trained by CERD and relevant partners on developed pathways to ensure active involvement in the appropriate referral.
- The Sector will work with the CP sector on ensuring minimum protection safeguards are available in NFE classrooms, the same for the needed referral and follow up with Caregivers.
- The Sector will work with the Health Sector to ensure children in NFE spaces are enjoying access to proper health-care and follow up.

Students identified as “at risk of dropping out” will continue to be assisted with retention support activities under the supervision of PMU₂, such as homework- or language-support programmes. Remedial support is also provided during summer vacations. Homework support programmes are implemented either inside the school or in community centers/tents and are implemented through eligible NGO partners.

Links between schools and refugee communities are strengthened through Education Community Liaisons (ECL) and Community Liaison Volunteers, who will continue to take on the responsibility of providing personalized follow up to Syrian students and assist communities in addressing or finding solutions to issues, such as bullying, violence, or discrimination, that often lead to children dropping out. These liaisons will follow up on absenteeism, identify and prevent cases of violence in school as well as out of school and in the community, promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence. UNRWA’s School Counsellors will work alongside the school administration, children, caregivers, student parliaments and PTAs to create an enabling environment for children to be safe and protected and will serve as frontline focal persons for all psychosocial support and protection matters in schools.

The sector will continue to work towards providing inclusive education in public schools through the 30 Pilot Inclusive Schools where special educators and paraprofessionals have been deployed and children have access to inclusion kits which consist of games and activities directed at developing different cognitive and psychomotor skills of the child., . The objective of the programme is to operationalize and test a model of inclusive education in Lebanon and inform scale-up and inform inclusive education policy development. The sector will continue to support MEHE and CERD with the training and sensitization of teachers and school principals on inclusive education in the pilot schools, in addition to trainings to teachers in all public schools on differentiated instruction and formative assessment.

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Palestine refugee students will continue to benefit from learning support through summer learning activities organized during the summer vacations. UNRWA will continue also to support students with disabilities to access special education through subsidies to cover respective tuition fees, where mainstream schooling appears not to be the best development option for them. The Agency’s efforts to respond to children’s special needs are complemented through the referral to therapeutic consultations where required.

As part of the strategy, there will be capacity strengthening to ensure that all sector partners have the same level of knowledge concerning international standards and current implementation measures of CP (identification and referral); GBV; inclusion, basic WASH & hygiene, in order to ensure that the child well-being is met in all NFE centers and activities to the highest standards. Partners, especially at the field level, will also benefit from additional support in contingency planning and preparedness on scenarios that have not been previously accounted for in contingency plans.

Output 2.3 - Children in public schools and learning spaces have enhanced capabilities & life skills through additional operational subjects and extra-curricular activities.

Non-Lebanese children in public schools and learning spaces will benefit from additional support to develop their technical and life skills. Education and learning for the children will include recreational activities as well as an addition of operational/practical subjects that will help develop their life skills as well as non-academic skills, based on their preferences and on market needs, especially for the youth.

MEHE through the support and implementation of Education partners will also continue to engage in the provision of recreational activities for boys and girls and the distribution of recreational kits to mitigate the psychosocial impact of violence and displacement, foster inclusion and human rights awareness, and maintain and improve the well-being of children.

Outcome 3 - Strengthened Capacity of the Education System

The third sector outcome addresses interventions that enhance governance and managerial capacities of RACE II implementing partners to plan, budget, and monitor the delivery of public education services.

There are several instances of key successes under this Outcome Area this past year. For example, the Child Protection in Schools Policy, launched by the MEHE in 2018 – continues to be iteratively rolled out across hundreds more public schools across Lebanon. Institutionally, a central Child Protection Hotline was established directly with schools and school communities and is currently being used – to support the safe and confidential reporting of instances of protection violations to the MEHE.

Another key systems' success was the continued roll-out of MEHE's Inclusive Schools Pilot in 30 public schools, in partnership with the UN. A "rolling lessons-learned" exercise from each of these public schools is systematically feeding back into MEHE's strategic vision about the future of Lebanese schools mainstreaming children with special needs into all public-school premises. Several learning initiatives were also undertaken by the MEHE in partnership with UN; and other governments. These significant strides are moving the MEHE towards the initial broad designs for an Inclusive Education Policy for Lebanon. The accessibility of schools remains a barrier, as not all schools are adjusted for motor disability due to the decrease in funding for rehabilitation.

Also, the Secondary Accelerated Learning Programme (SALP) are still under design. Building on the NFE National Policy released by MEHE in 2019, the LCRP Education Sector partners will support MEHE in improving the quality of NFE delivery by jointly agreeing on minimum standards for protection services, psycho-social support services, and life-skills education in the content of all the regulated NFE programmes.

To strengthen these already important initiatives into the public education system, more efforts must be directed toward collecting and analyzing national education data, improving the quality of teaching, and developing curricula. One of the major sector gaps is timely national education data that can be meaningful and used for programming or policy interventions.

The sector does not have a proper contingency plan to respond to potential emergency scenarios that might disrupt schools and NFE activities, thus affecting the quality of learning for the children.

Despite all the challenges, the MEHE is progressing on policy formation and implementation to properly address barriers and strengthen education delivery; and has indicated that the following main axes will form its strategic plan under Outcome Three:

Output 3.1 - CERD is capacitated to administer an effective education-management information system

CERD as the statistical and research institution will lead the design, training, and rollout of a national education-management information system that will enable the timely and accurate collection and analysis of education-related data. For enrolment data on Syrians, the RACE/ PMU will ensure data credibility, within the same timelines for second shift public schools as well as regulated NFE progress. CERD will ensure the timely analysis and dissemination of disaggregated education data with partners to identify gaps and inform programmatic decision-making.

Output 3.2 - Revised curricula for schools and non-formal education programmes are developed and endorsed to improve quality learning, life skills, and employability for children and youth

The curriculum revision process, led by a National Higher Committee and conducted by CERD, will be guided by the conceptualization of a learner-centered pedagogy, and will include key competencies that cover the cognitive, individual, instrumental, and social dimensions of learning. The revised curriculum will address life skills, personal empowerment, employability, and social cohesion (such as analytical thinking, problem solving, creativity, teamwork, tolerance, respect for diversity, etc.). CERD envisions a consultative revision process, and will be soliciting inputs from technical experts, education partners, teachers, and parents on an e-platform. On approval from the National Higher Committee, the curriculum will be piloted in selected schools. The feedback from this process will be incorporated into the final curriculum before national textbooks are designed.

The sector will aim to have minimum quality criteria in place in NFE classrooms in terms of ensuring child-wellbeing, with inclusive environment respectful of protection sector as a whole is delivering the same level of quality learning to all children in NFE.

Output 3.3 - Appropriate policy frameworks are endorsed and implemented to regulate education programmes and services, strengthen school management, and professionalize teaching services

To better support the various systems interventions planned in RACE II, the following frameworks, standards, and strategies that are being developed for operationalization will be further supported:

- **Policy framework for special needs education.** A national study, led by the MoSA and supported by MEHE, is currently assessing existing national safety nets and social discourse surrounding children with specific needs. The study will assess the extent to which rights (legal, welfare, and

social) are afforded to children and youth in Lebanon with cognitive, physical, and sensory difficulties. The study aims to serve as a reference for relevant ministries and to support them to better address existing policy gaps.

Based on the lessons learned from the inclusive education pilot programme and consultations with organizations, parents, schools and relevant ministries, MEHE will develop inclusive education policy to ensure access for every learner to quality education in safe inclusive settings. Standards for learning spaces and for educator profiles. The MEHE's Education in Emergencies Committee will, in collaboration with the PMU, define standards for the physical spaces proposed for implementation of regulated NFE programmes. This will be linked to the further roll out of its child protection policy, launched in 2018, aiming to increase the credibility of public schools as protective, inclusive spaces for child-centered learning and able to prevent violence, and provide a safe learning environment to all children. Upon endorsement, such spaces will be formally referred to as "learning spaces." Likewise, minimum professional standards will be proposed for any personnel recruited for the implementation of NFE programmes in learning spaces.

- **Risk Screening of Public Schools, Vocational Schools, and Teaching Training Centres under the National School Safety Plan (NSSP) including rollout of the Disaster Risk Management (DRM).** The DRM concepts and DRR principles, developed under the National School Safety Programme (NSSP), are in need of updating and integration into the curriculum. Future planned steps include refinement of the qualitative risk assessment and categorization of school buildings into different structural categories. The feasibility of the different retrofitting options for each structural type will then be assessed. The results will further strengthen the evidence-based approach of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) policy for school construction and rehabilitation. Finally, a scaled-up awareness campaign to cover all public school on DRM concepts and DRR principals is needed.

Output 3.4 - The PMU, in collaboration with CERD and GDE, is capacitated to lead RACE II with MEHE departments and relevant education stakeholders

The PMU will continue to coordinate with several entities including UN agencies, donors, the NGO sub-committee, and academic institutions, in addition to the high-level engagement at the RACE Executive Committee (REC) and the LCRP Education sector. The PMU will ensure inter-departmental coordination within the MEHE so that RACE II implementation is guided by coherent decisions from the relevant MEHE institutions.

As the main institutional implementers of RACE II, the PMU, GDE /CERD all require capacity support in the areas of project administration, procurement, monitoring, and financial management. Existing technical capacities and staffing structures will be assessed by an external consulting firm to better understand current functionality as compared to projected needs. A detailed technical assistance plan will be drawn up, proposing solutions for current capacity issues. Implementation of this plan will occur iteratively over the five years of implementation, with standards and performance milestones set for planning, human resource management, financial frameworks, and procurement processes. Assurance functions will be built-in in the form of external and (eventually) internal audits.

Mainstreaming of Accountability to affected populations, Protection, Conflict sensitivity, Age and Gender, Youth, Persons with Specific Needs and Environment

Accountability to Affected Populations

Information sharing and clear communication channels between the affected communities and the service providers are a priority in Education. It is most important for the sector to ensure that the people

receiving support are heard well and taking part in identifying their needs and that they are aware of all information related to the services being provided to them, the referral pathways that are available and that they have effective feedback channels and complaints and response mechanisms. In order to have a more effective AAP, the sector will work closely with other sectors to identify the collective barriers and opportunities, building on it to ensure an integrated approach to be used with the affected communities. The sector worked with CP Sector to ensure that Child Protection cases in schools are reported and followed up, through a clear system based on a CP policy. More work will be done this year with both CP and Youth to make sure that children in learning spaces have similar Child Protection safeguards and feedback/complaint mechanisms that are available in Formal Education.

Protection

Education provides children with safe learning spaces, brings normalcy to their lives, provide psychosocial support, and helps identify children who are at risk or are victims of violence, abuse, and exploitation. Violence, abuse, and exploitation negatively affect children's educational achievements and consequently their short- and long-term wellbeing and ability to achieve their full potential. To ensure complementarity, both sectors work strongly together and meet on a regular basis. Activities where the sectors collaborate include the psychosocial support and teacher training on CP by CERD, and joint information initiatives to ensure children – including adolescent boys and girls – have access to formal and non-formal education and community-based Psychosocial Support that support children and youth immediately deal with shocks (e.g. community-wide demolitions and evictions) and develop resilience. Psychosocial support/School counsellors will play a key role in ensuring the continuum of services for children, from detection and evaluation to referral.

Conflict sensitivity

Education is a concern for all parents and can therefore bring communities closer together. Stronger interaction between host and displaced communities is encouraged, with a focus on the academic wellbeing of children. This provides a key opportunity to positively engage community members and pave the way to mitigating social tensions and enhancing conflict-sensitivity between displaced Syrians and host communities. Education builds bridges between children and parents from different groups and can have a strong mitigating impact on potential conflicts and sources of tension. Peace Education Initiatives and Prevention of Violence and Extremism (PVE) messages will therefore play a stronger role in the sector in the coming years, particularly in building capacity on how to address differences/tensions between children and youth from different backgrounds in the same school, in order to strengthen social cohesion inside the classroom, school premises, and beyond. The current strategy aims to collaborate with the social stability sector to have a unified content/approach to all the above. CERD will be approached to support in the development. Trainings on conflict-transformation, mediation skills, citizenship, civic participation and intercultural dialogue will also be implemented to promote social cohesion among Lebanese youth and between Lebanese and non-Lebanese youth.

Gender

Gender parity is achieved at primary level, while at secondary level there is a gender parity index of 1.1., with 51 percent male. While gender equity is slightly in favor of girls, disparities at the district level and socio-economic status are more pronounced. The number of girls and boys not enrolling in school, or dropping out, is similar, however it is triggered by different reasons. An alarming, and growing,² number of girls are exposed to child marriage. Adolescent girls face gender-based violence. On the other hand,

² Lebanon, Ministry of Social Affairs, UNICEF (2016), *Baseline Survey*.

some of the most vulnerable boys and youth are being recruited as workers. Gender parity in outreach to children seeks to provide both girls and boys with equal opportunities for enrolment in public schools.

Moreover, initiatives are planned by partners to enhance the gender sensitivity of the overall school environment, including training teachers on SGBV, human rights, and safe referral mechanisms, promoting gender diversity among teachers and school administrative staff, developing and advocating for policies that promote gender equality, revising the curriculum and textbooks, and conducting training and awareness sessions for community workers, parents, and school principals on gender equality.

The LCRP Education sector is also looking into strengthening collaboration with other sectors, to jointly achieve goals on SGBV risk reduction, including training on CP for school staff; training on safe identification and referrals for child survivors; advocacy on child marriage; protection interventions (safety monitoring of routes/transportation options to/from schools); and WASH and shelter interventions (safe school/latrine rehabilitation and maintenance; distribution of hygiene kits/menstrual hygiene management (MHM) materials to adolescent girl students).

Youth

More targeted outreach for youth is required, to refer those who are out of learning to appropriate opportunities, and to raise awareness on the value of education for the future of young girls and boys. Therefore, Programmes are needed to support school-readiness, retention, and transition to higher grades – specifically for youth. This include language support programmes offered at secondary schools to ensure retention in education. Empowering the youth led initiatives and engaging youth in educational and meaningful activities will not only empower them, but also increase social stability. So far, most programmes for youth have focused on access to formal secondary Education and life-skills education. In 2020, stronger focus will be placed on enrolling adolescents and youth in Technical Vocational Education (TVE) including short technical courses implemented in MEHE TVE schools under guidance of DGTVE and collaboration with PMU, as well through NFE and remedial support.

Persons with disabilities

As indicated in the strategy above, the sector will continue to work towards improved inclusivity and non-discrimination, with a focus on improved physical accessibility as well as inclusive programming, curricula and professional development of teachers, staff and educators on inclusive education models. The sector has included inclusion as a main component in all the outcomes and outputs of the strategy.

Environment

Environmental education is part of the hygiene-promotion curriculum and will be implemented through teacher training and the provision of teacher tools, including awareness on home waste, rationalization of water and electricity use, recycling, etc. In addition, Health Counselors will be requested to include the above mentioned topics in the their interventions inside and outside class hours.