

# Education Programme - Lebanon

December 2021

Lebanon remains the country hosting **the largest number of refugees per capita**, with the government estimation of **1.5 m Syrian refugees** + some 14,815 refugees of other nationalities.

The socio-economic downturn coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic and Beirut blast have all contributed to **nine out of ten Syrian refugees living in extreme poverty**.

The 2021 VASyR\* results show that **30% of school-aged refugee children** (ages 6-17) **have never been to school**, while **only 11% of youth** (aged 15 to 24 years) **were enrolled in education**.

## Working with Partners

- UNHCR partners with several local and international NGOs in the implementation of community-based education programmes and plays a pivotal role in inter-agency, inter-sector, and education sector coordination in Lebanon.
- UNHCR liaises with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) at the central and regional levels to advocate for the inclusion of refugees in the national system. In partnership with UNICEF through the Blueprint Joint Action for Refugee Children, UNHCR aims at enhancing access for refugee children and youth to essential services in the key areas of education. UNHCR is also co-chairing the Higher Education in Emergencies round table with EU-HOPES Lebanon to ensure additional scholarship opportunities for refugees.
- In 2021, UNHCR has partnership agreements with four implementing partners: Caritas, IRC/Nabad, Rene Mouawad Foundation, and Semeur D'avenir (SDA).

## Main Activities

For the past two years, Lebanon's education systems had to respond to multiple crises, including the economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Beirut blast, which have put a severe strain on the already struggling public education system. Lebanon hosts close to 522,000 registered school-aged Syrian refugee children and youth between 3 – 24-years-old who have faced many challenges in accessing distance and in-school learning, both formal and non-formal education.

In 2021, UNHCR has supported refugee children in different ways, including:

### Support to Out-Of-School Children and Youth

- UNHCR is addressing the challenges of out-of-school refugee children, youth without prior learning, and school drop-outs through multiple means, including a standardized Basic Literacy and Numeracy Programme (BNL). In 2021, the programme supported 2,932 refugee children and 248 youth with foundational skills in literacy and numeracy.
- UNHCR supported the enrolment of 274 out-of-learning youth (107 female and 167 male) in certified vocational training programmes with 17 training sessions delivered in the Bekaa and Mount Lebanon. As a result of the support provided, 59% of graduates found work in their field of training in 2021.

\*2021 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASyR)

## Retention Support and Safe Learning Programme

UNHCR supports refugee children's access to safer learning environments and enhances community-based educational support that improves retention in formal and non-formal education programmes.

- In collaboration with partners, UNHCR created a safe learning environment for 3,713 refugee children and youth to learn and benefit from retention programs, including homework support and other catchup classes for children at primary and lower secondary age. The latter supports refugee children and youth to recover learning losses and acquire numeracy, literacy, and life skills to either transition back to formal education or enter the labor market.
- In addition, UNHCR supported 347 Education Community Liaisons (ECL) in 320 schools. The ECLs follow up on refugee absenteeism in formal education, help mediate between children, parents and school management, and identify violence, bullying, and those with learning difficulties. All child protection (CP) incidents are referred via MEHE Child Protection National Policy Pathways for follow-up inside schools and to CP case management agencies for follow-up at the community level.
- In 2021, UNHCR supported and capacitated 488 parents of refugee children in second shift schools to help their children to remain in school. Through 76 Parent Community Groups (PCGs), UNHCR increased the engagement of refugee parents in their children's education through promoting dialogue with schools and sensitizing parents to commit to their children's education.



*Homework support class in an informal settlement runs by an ECL Akkar, northern Lebanon. © UNHCR, Shadi Sheikhsaraf*

## Awareness-raising, Capacity-building and Advocacy

UNHCR builds on the knowledge, skills, and capacities of refugee communities for children to learn through community-based education programs.

- In 2021, UNHCR supported 28 specialized Education Refugee Outreach Volunteers to raise awareness on the importance of education, including distance learning. The volunteers also referred out-of-school children to education programmes available in their respective locations.
- UNHCR reached 63,000 refugee parents and children with awareness-raising sessions on the importance of certified formal education, COVID, distance learning, and cyber security safety among other topics.

## Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative (DAFI) Scholarship and Higher Education Support

The VASyR 2021 preliminary results indicate that 65% of university-age refugees (ages 19-24) are neither in education, training nor employed. UNHCR is supporting refugees through:

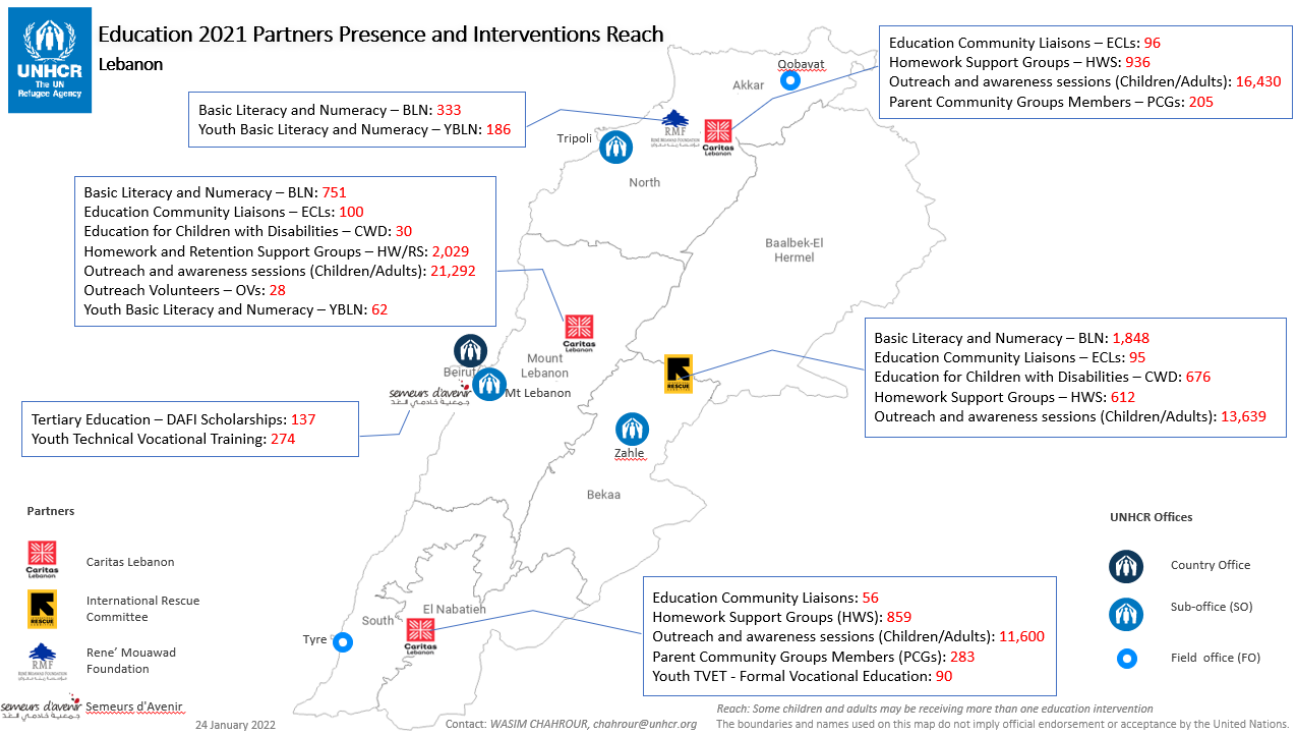
- The DAFI Scholarship Programme which offers scholarships and connected learning support. In 2021, DAFI scholarships and connected learning support were provided to 87 students (58 female and 29 male) to access and enroll in the Lebanese Public University (LU), among them 34 students who graduated in 2021. In addition, 50 new students were selected in October increasing the overall number of DAFI students to 750 in Lebanon since 2014. DAFI alumni are active participants in the Refugee Alumni Network led by EU-HOPES Lebanon.
- UNHCR facilitated the implementation of different complementary pathway opportunities in Lebanon, such as the Japanese Initiative for the future of Syrian Refugees (JISR) programme to study in Japan, the Student Refugee Program (SRP) to study in Canada and the Elysee programme to study in France.

The UNHCR Lebanon Education Unit is also an active member of the MENA Contact Group for Complementary Pathways.

### Institutional Support

- UNHCR has supported the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and finalized the rehabilitation of 15 public schools, a project which began in 2018, thus increasing the capacity of schools to accommodate an additional 2,000 refugee children and improving the quality of education for 1,900 children in the rehabilitated schools, including those with specific needs.

## Mapping of UNHCR Education Activities in Lebanon



## Financial Information

UNHCR is grateful for the support provided by donors who have contributed to the education programme as well as major donors of flexible and unearmarked funds in 2021:

Belgium | Canada | Croatia | Czech | Denmark | European Union | Finland | France | Germany | Ireland | Italy | Japan | Luxembourg | Monaco | Netherlands | Norway | Qatar Charity | Spain | Sweden | Switzerland | United Kingdom | United States of America

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