

## LRP Sector Strategy

### 1. Situation Analysis

Lebanon's education system has been severely affected by a series of overlapping crises, including the ongoing economic crisis and the armed conflict that erupted a year ago. Initially concentrated in the South, the conflict has spread across the country, worsening conditions for students and teachers. Although a cessation of hostilities has led to some return, ongoing insecurity, safety concerns damage to schools, and back-to-school challenges have hindered children's and youth's ability to access education. These disruptions have severely impacted the continuity and quality of educational services, further straining Lebanon's already fragile education infrastructure.

The compounded crises have intensified academic and emotional challenges for children and youth, hindering their full engagement in education for the 2024-25 scholastic year. Gender norms, exacerbated in emergencies, have led to harmful coping mechanisms such as school dropouts, child labour, and child marriage, especially affecting vulnerable girls and boys. The crisis has deepened inequities in education access, driven by socio-economic barriers. Vulnerable Lebanese children in public schools, TVET institutions, and non-formal education, particularly in crisis-affected areas, face major challenges in accessing quality learning opportunities.

Access to education has been severely impacted by the damage to schools and their use as shelters for displaced families. Over 300 schools were partially or fully damaged, with 33 completely destroyed, and 60 per cent of public schools were repurposed during the conflict. This has delayed the start of the 2024-25 school year and further strained the educational infrastructure. More than 600 educational establishments, including 12 UNRWA schools and 72 TVET schools, were converted into shelters, disrupting the delivery of quality education. Urgent rehabilitation is needed to ensure that schools, including Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, can reopen safely, particularly for practical courses. It is essential to provide safe, gender-responsive learning environments that support the well-being of all students and youth.

Approximately 1.3 million children and youth (49% boys, 51% girls) aged 3 to 18 in Lebanon need support to access quality education. Around a third of school-aged children and youth face barriers to enrolment or regular attendance, exacerbated by the conflict and financial constraints, such as the cost of transportation, school lunch, school supplies, and a lack of required documentation for non-Lebanese children and youth. Enrolment figures for the 2023-2024 scholastic year show a decline across all population cohorts: from approximately 960,000 to 900,000 students for Lebanese, from 290,000 to 280,000 for displaced Syrians, and from 52,000 to 49,000 for Palestinian refugees. A further decrease is expected for the 2024-2025 scholastic year. However, due to the delayed start of the year, these numbers remain uncertain.

The crisis has created significant obstacles to education, particularly for children and youth from economically vulnerable backgrounds. Approximately 27 per cent of children and youth are out of school, with the highest rates among Syrian displaced individuals (58%) and Palestinian refugee children (19%). Gender inequality and disability further amplify these challenges, as girls—particularly those from displaced communities—face issues such as early marriage and safety concerns.

The ongoing conflict has severely disrupted education for around 38,000 Palestinian refugee students and youth (4,378 Palestinian Refugees from Syria and 33,672 Palestine Refugees in Lebanon), increasing the risk of disengagement and vulnerability. However, the need for support to prevent dropout and negative coping strategies, such as substance abuse, child labour, and early marriage, extends beyond Palestinian refugees. Special support is needed for the 1,410 children and youth with special needs, including 940 with disabilities, to support their social and emotional learning.

Across all population groups of children, Psychological First Aid (PFA), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programmes to build resilience, and a referral system for specialised care have never been more pressing. Teachers also require MHPSS (mental health and psychosocial support) foundational capacity building, such as Psychosocial Support (PSS and/or SEL), to address their own well-being, allowing them to create and maintain an inclusive and caring learning environment.

Lebanon is home to an estimated 300,000 children and youth with disabilities, who face significant barriers to inclusive education, including social stigma, a lack of resources, and limited opportunities. While Lebanon has ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education's (MEHE) goal is to make all schools inclusive by 2030, more support and resources are urgently needed. Additionally, the shift to remote learning has presented challenges such as limited access to digital devices, internet connectivity, and unequal digital skills, disproportionately affecting girls and further hindering education for children and youth with disabilities.

Approximately 45,000 children and youth, primarily displaced Syrians, are engaged in non-formal education programmes. Around 5 per cent of these participants are children and youth with disabilities who do not meet the criteria for formal school enrolment, with a significant number of migrants and non-Lebanese children and youth are unable to register in public schools. However, the demand for these programmes far exceeds the available resources. The upcoming MEHE non-formal education reform aims to address this gap and ensure more effective transitions through quality implementation. Furthermore, migrant children and youth face issues such as documentation, discriminatory practices, and bullying in schools, and the high costs of education-related materials, transportation, and school fees.

The most common barriers to education include the inaccessibility of schools, especially in the South, compounded by the impact of the escalating hostilities, poverty, and displacement. For girls, societal gender norms often lead families to prioritise boys' education during times of scarcity, further deepening gender disparities. Girls at risk of dropping out, such as those who are engaged or married, face stigma and discrimination from teachers and school personnel, which further minimise their chances of continuing their education. The National Action Plan to prevent and mitigate child marriage, adopted in October 2023, outlines interventions to address these risks within the Education sector.

Even for those attending school, ongoing challenges persist, as Lebanon's education system was already struggling with learning outcomes before the hostilities escalating. For instance, reading proficiency among Grade 2 and 3 students in public schools was critically low, with only 2.9 per cent reading at grade level in Arabic. Providing catch-up classes and retention support remains a key priority to ensure that children are learning at their grade level. Additionally, there is a clear need for training school personnel in the safe identification and referral of protection and gender-based violence (GBV) cases, which is essential for improving academic and emotional outcomes for children and youth while ensuring their right to a safe environment.

Furthermore, the impact of the escalating hostilities and subsequent displacement has highlighted the urgent need to enhance digital infrastructure and improve connectivity. It is also crucial to support teachers and students in navigating remote learning. These efforts are essential to bridge the educational gaps caused by the disruption and to ensure that all students can benefit from continuous, quality education, regardless of their circumstances.

In light of these complex and ongoing challenges, urgent programming is needed to ensure that all children and youth in Lebanon—regardless of gender, disability, or displacement status—can access and benefit from quality, inclusive, and protected education. Immediate interventions should focus on rehabilitating schools, providing educational materials, and integrating mental health and psychosocial support, all while addressing the critical need for continuity in learning and retention.

## 2. Overall Sector Strategy

### Theory of Change

The Education Sector strategy in Lebanon aims to ensure that all school-aged children and youth, including those displaced, returning IDPs, and individuals from marginalised groups, fully realise their right to quality education in a safe and protective environment. This will be achieved through three key outcomes: increasing access, enhancing quality, and strengthening the education system. The strategy will focus particularly on those most affected by inequality, including the challenges created by conflict and crises.

Children and youth, in all their diversity, will gain improved access to education and remain in schools, learning centres, TVET training centres, and other educational settings that are well-equipped, while receiving the necessary support to overcome barriers to access and completion. This will increase equitable access to and participation in safe, protective education. The effort will prioritise the most vulnerable children and their caregivers. As a result, youth will be supported with second-chance education, skill development, access to decent income-generating opportunities, and civic engagement initiatives.

Teachers, education personnel, parents, and community members will receive gender-sensitive and inclusive support to strengthen their ability to support and deliver high-quality, learner-centred education. Children will benefit from enhanced learning environments that promote better educational outcomes, protection, and well-being. These efforts will result in improved learning outcomes for all children and youth.

Education governance and preparedness will be strengthened at central and regional levels, as well as within schools and learning centres. Education sector partners will be equipped to implement and monitor education programmes effectively, including non-formal education. This will enable the education system and key stakeholders to achieve meaningful, high-quality results through evidence-based, gender-sensitive, and inclusive decision-making.

### Assumptions and Risks

The Education sector in Lebanon anticipates that schools will remain open or re-open, either in-person or online, to ensure continuous learning for all children. Support will be provided to keep boys and girls enrolled in formal schools, along with additional programmes to help them access and complete their education. High-quality non-formal education programmes will be available for children who have been out of school. Public schools, including TVET, are expected to have the capacity to enrol students and continue education within the national system. Schools will remain operational, with teachers receiving financial incentives to continue teaching.

However, a high-probability, high-impact risk is the inaccessibility of schools due to the required documentation for displaced Syrian individuals and migrants concerning formal education. Most second-shift children lack the necessary documentation, which severely limits their ability to attend school. This exclusion not only affects many children's access to formal education but also exacerbates existing inequalities and educational gaps. It further hinders efforts to provide equitable access to quality education for all. Consequently, if this decision remains in place, it may lead to an increased demand for non-formal and informal education, as families seek alternative pathways for their children's education, further straining resources and support systems.

High-probability, high-impact risks also include the potential for a partial or full breakdown of the cessation of hostilities, which could lead to escalating hostilities, especially in the South, causing another phase of school closures at the national or regional level. Such disruptions could result in recurrent displacement of families

and children, increasing the likelihood of learning disruptions and dropouts, particularly for girls, due to safety concerns and resource limitations in accessing and providing education.

To address these risks, the MEHE and its partners continue to work on hybrid learning modalities to ensure that vulnerable children can continue their education in a safe, protective, and inclusive environment. Currently, displaced individuals and returnee IDPs need access to both formal and non-formal education. The sector's priority is to ensure that children can continue their education within formal systems, including TVET. This involves rehabilitating public schools and learning spaces—covering both major and minor rehabilitation, solarisation, and WASH facilities—to provide physical and psychological protection during emergencies. These spaces will support children's well-being while ensuring the continuity of learning in a safe and secure environment.

A medium-probability, high-impact risk is the potential for further economic decline, which could significantly disrupt the academic year at various stages. The rising cost of living imposes considerable strain on families, heightening the risk of children, both girls and boys, dropping out of school, even in public institutions where education is nominally free. Additionally, schools are increasingly struggling to meet financial requirements, such as operational costs and teacher salaries, which could result in partial or full closures. To mitigate these risks, the Education sector will advocate for sustained financial support for schools by maintaining school funds and prioritising cash-for-education programmes, ensuring uninterrupted access to quality education for all children during these challenging times.

A high-probability, medium-impact risk is the persistent gap in access to reliable digital infrastructure and resources across Lebanon's education system. While efforts to digitise learning have been prioritised, many schools, including TVET schools, face challenges such as insufficient access to high-speed internet, outdated or inadequate digital devices, and frequent power outages. These barriers hinder the full implementation of digital learning initiatives and disproportionately affect children in underserved or rural areas. As a result, many children are kept out of learning, exacerbating existing inequalities in education. To address these issues, the Education sector will focus on scaling up investments in digital infrastructure, such as providing schools with renewable energy solutions like solar panels, to ensure continuous access to power and expanding internet connectivity to all regions.

### **Sector Results: Lebanon Response Plan (LRP) Impacts, Sector Outcomes, and Outputs**

The LRP Education Sector strategy aligns with MEHE's five-year plan (2021-2025) and supports the achievement of SDG 4. It focuses on building a resilient education system in Lebanon through interventions that improve access, quality, and governance. The strategy prioritises an inclusive, gender-equitable, and safe education system that empowers vulnerable children and youth. It emphasises community participation to ensure the relevance and alignment of programmes, aiming to increase equitable access, retention, and completion of education, with particular emphasis on vulnerable children and their caregivers.

The sector's outcomes and outputs closely align with the objectives of the Lebanon Response Plan (LRP), ensuring that the education system in Lebanon effectively responds to the multifaceted crises affecting children and their caregivers.

**Outcome 1** focuses on enhancing equitable and inclusive access to safe, protective education for all learners. It directly relates to **LRP Objective 1** by prioritising the protection of vulnerable populations, especially children in underserved areas, girls, and children with disabilities. The rehabilitation and operationalisation of public schools and learning spaces (Output 1.1) supports **LRP Objective 3**, as this effort strengthens service provision through national systems, ensuring sustainability and alignment with MEHE standards. Furthermore, Output 1.2 addresses **LRP Objective 2** by reducing barriers to education through community outreach, cash-for-

education programmes, and referrals to child protection and GBV services, thereby meeting the critical needs of marginalised families and children.

**Outcome 2** seeks to improve learning outcomes through quality education services and aligns with both **LRP Objective 1** and **LRP Objective 4**. The targeted support for learning recovery, inclusive education, and teacher capacity-building (Outputs 2.1 and 2.2) not only protects vulnerable learners by addressing the academic and psychosocial effects of interrupted education but also contributes to Lebanon's social stability. This is achieved by strengthening the overall quality and inclusiveness of the education system. These initiatives ensure that education services are resilient in multi-crisis situations, advancing equity and well-being. By preventing dropouts and improving the quality of learning, the sector addresses immediate humanitarian needs while fostering long-term socio-economic stability, as envisioned in **LRP Objective 4**.

Finally, **Outcome 3** focuses on governance and knowledge management, strongly supports **LRP Objective 3** by enhancing MEHE's capacity to lead and manage education during crises. Efforts to strengthen data collection, Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) systems, and policy development under Output 3.1 improve equity, efficiency, and preparedness in education, thereby reinforcing service delivery through national systems. Furthermore, the focus on building the capacity of Education sector partners (Output 3.2) ensures the effective implementation and monitoring of education programmes in alignment with **LRP Objectives 1, 2, and 4**, fostering a coordinated, sustainable, and inclusive response that addresses Lebanon's immediate needs and long-term recovery goals.

### Expected Results

By the end of 2025, the Education Sector aims to ensure that all vulnerable children and youth, including newly displaced populations and returnees, have access to safe, protective, and inclusive education through both formal and non-formal learning programmes. Interventions will focus on implementing various learning modalities that are gender-responsive and inclusive, ensuring access to a secure and supportive environment while maintaining the quality of services.

The education system will be strengthened by enhancing governance, managerial, and knowledge management capacities at the central, regional, and local levels. These anticipated outcomes directly contribute to the LRP objectives by addressing the needs of newly displaced populations and returnees, who are especially vulnerable due to the ongoing crisis.

The sector's outputs, such as improved learning spaces and improved access to education, will contribute to outcomes like increased enrolment, retention, and better learning outcomes, ultimately strengthening long-term resilience. Targeted interventions will specifically support vulnerable groups, including women, children, persons with disabilities, vulnerable young people, displaced Syrians, Palestinian Refugees from Syria/Palestine Refugees in Lebanon, returning IDPs, and newly displaced individuals. These interventions will not only address immediate humanitarian needs but also promote long-term recovery and resilience in line with the LRP's strategic objectives.

The Education sector will prioritise **multi-sectoral collaborations**, particularly through enhanced coordination within the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus to achieve shared outcomes. In an unstable political and economic landscape, education partners will continue to strengthen market-aligned TVET education, as well as non-formal education and skilling programmes, to meet the needs and aspirations of youth. Whilst promoting lifelong learning, these initiatives will enhance employability and entrepreneurial

skills. The sector will work with the Site Management, Shelter, and WASH sectors to ensure the coordinated decommissioning, commissioning, and rehabilitation of schools and educational institutions, along with access to shelters. Additionally, the sector will work closely with the Child Protection sub-sector to ensure the safety and well-being of children in emergencies, while partnerships with the Social Protection and Livelihoods, and Nutrition sectors will help address barriers such as economic constraints, documentation issues, and child labour risks.

Additionally, the strategy **will incorporate gender-responsive actions**, such as creating safe learning spaces that meet the specific needs of girls, boys, and other vulnerable groups. The Education sector will aim to ensure that all children are protected from violence, exploitation, and abuse in both formal and non-formal education settings by enhancing existing referral systems and their implementation by partners.

Flash Appeal activities will address the immediate needs of children to return to safe schools. These activities will focus on reopening schools, providing Mine Risk education (activity under the Mine Action sub-sector and Social Stability sector), offering psychological support for teachers and students, and ensuring that the most affected and vulnerable children and youth, particularly returnees, can access both formal and non-formal education programmes.

The Flash Appeal focuses on addressing immediate needs directly triggered by the hostilities. Other activities will tackle medium- to longer-term objectives, such as improving the quality of education, removing barriers to education, and supporting MEHE in building a more resilient education system under the broader LRP umbrella.

### **Sector Outcomes and Outputs:**

**OUTCOME 1: Enhanced equitable and inclusive access to, and completion of, safe, protective education for all learners in Lebanon, prioritising the most vulnerable children and their caregivers.**

**Output 1.1:** Improved access to properly equipped, inclusive formal schools, learning centres, and other educational opportunities, especially in underserved and affected areas.

All children and youth in Lebanon have the right to safe, inclusive, and well-equipped public schools and learning environments that nurture their well-being and enable them to complete their education. The sector works closely with MEHE, the TVET Directorate, and other sectors, education and youth partners to ensure that schools—ranging from primary to secondary, including TVET and UNRWA schools—are rehabilitated, constructed, and operational.

Partners support the costs of public education, provide multiple flexible pathways, and offer certified or non-certified vocational training programmes in line with MEHE's transition pathways. Support also includes the physical environment of schools, ensuring infrastructure that includes inclusive classrooms, laboratories for practical courses in TVET schools, play areas, gender-responsive WASH facilities, solarisation, and health and hygiene kits, all in accordance with MEHE standards.

**Output 1.2: Providing necessary support to children, youth, and caregivers to reduce barriers to accessing and completing education.**

Sector partners are dedicated to conducting community outreach to understand and address the unique educational needs of marginalised and vulnerable populations, including girls, migrants, stateless individuals, and children with irregular status, out-of-school children, those with disabilities, and students facing challenges in continuing their education due to legal issues (required documentation), or financial issues. As part of this commitment, referrals to formal education, non-formal education, training opportunities, and external services will be ensured.

Education sector partners are committed to alleviating financial burdens on families, including those with female heads of households, through Cash for Education programmes. These programmes cover costs such as transportation (while also seeking alternative, more durable options for transportation), learning materials, and educational supplies (including stationery and textbooks), as well as gender-sensitive school supplies for public schools and learning facilities. In-kind support for education-related expenses, including transportation, provides an alternative to cash assistance for education.

Partners also plan to provide nutritional support and healthy snacks in both formal and informal educational settings through school feeding programmes, particularly for adolescent girls at risk of anaemia. Additionally, partners aim to refer children to other sectors, such as the GBV and Child Protection, to assess the protection situation of vulnerable children and to provide safe and confidential GBV responses. Referrals to and integration with other sectors (e.g. WASH, Food Security, CP) will also enhance access to education. For example, addressing period poverty will ensure equal access and retention opportunities for girls and boys through the provision of hygiene kits and menstrual hygiene kits.

Moreover, sector partners will continue to prioritise parental engagement as part of their targeted, integrated, and inclusive outreach efforts. They will consistently raise awareness among fathers, mothers, and caregivers about the available resources that support all children and youth in enrolling in school, continuing their education, and avoiding learning interruptions or negative coping mechanisms, including for those affected by the national conflict.

## **OUTCOME 2: Improved learning outcomes for children and youth through improved quality of education services, ensuring safety, protection, and adaptation to multi-crisis situations.**

### **Output 2.1: Strengthened capacity and well-being of teachers, education personnel, parents, and communities to ensure learner-centred education in public schools or learning spaces.**

The sector prioritises ensuring that children and youth achieve quality learning outcomes while continuing efforts to enhance access to education, particularly to address learning loss resulting from disrupted education. Teachers will benefit from training and professional development opportunities in collaboration with CERD, focusing on inclusive education and leadership through CERD-certified modules. Partners will support schools in strengthening protection mechanisms and providing mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) services, along with social-emotional learning programmes, in line with the Lebanon National Framework. Gender-responsive pedagogy will also be promoted to support both teachers and students. Non-formal education programmes will continue to receive support to ensure an integrated package of services, including the provision of assistive devices, MHPSS, and SEL packages. Teachers, instructors, parents, and children will receive life-saving education on the risks of explosive ordnance to enhance their safety and mitigate harm.

Education sector partners, supported by School Community Liaison Volunteers (ECLs), will facilitate enrolment in second shift (PM shift) schools. They will raise awareness about the importance of education, promote parental engagement, and ensure appropriate referrals to educational and other essential services. Efforts will also focus on engaging parents, caregivers, and communities to address the specific challenges faced by vulnerable children, including those with disabilities, displaced Syrians, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, migrants, and stateless children.

ECLs will play a critical role in removing barriers to school attendance, raising awareness about the significance of education, and strengthening parental involvement. Partners will organise awareness-raising and engagement sessions covering key topics such as child development, the psychological impact of conflict, and strategies for providing effective support to conflict-affected children. These sessions will also address cross-cutting issues, including post-conflict disabilities, child labour, cyber safety, and mental health.

**Output 2.2: Enhanced inclusive learning opportunities for girls and boys in schools and learning spaces to improve learning outcomes, social-emotional development, protection, and well-being.**

To address the challenges faced by students at risk of dropping out or experiencing low learning outcomes, education partners will expand targeted retention support programmes. These efforts include providing homework support, foundational literacy and numeracy programmes, catch-up classes, summer learning programmes, and other learning support measures tailored to the needs of both boys and girls, including those with special needs. In response to prolonged learning losses, education partners will also continue their support for Lebanon's National Learning Recovery Initiative. This initiative aims to mitigate the impact of interrupted education and ensure the continuity of learning in public and semi-private schools. These programmes reflect a comprehensive commitment to fostering an inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environment for all children and youth, regardless of legal status, gender, or disability.

In the non-formal Education sector, programmes integrating social-emotional learning and child protection measures, including psychosocial support activities, will be implemented to enhance learning outcomes. These programmes will also explore pathways to formal education and technical and vocational education and training (TVET) opportunities.

Support for UNRWA students with special needs, including those with disabilities and/or learning difficulties, will focus on earlier and improved identification using international standards. Referral pathways to therapeutic services will be established to enhance their learning development and overall well-being within UNRWA schools.

The Education sector is committed to continuing support for inclusive schools as part of the implementation of the MEHE's Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs policy, adopted in 2023. Partners will continue to provide technical support to all-inclusive schools and to school leaders trained in differentiated instruction, inclusive education, and leadership through CERD-certified modules. Non-formal education programmes will also receive support to ensure an integrated package of services, including education, rehabilitation, parental engagement activities, and the provision of assistive devices, MHPSS, and SEL

packages. MEHE's child protection policy, adopted in 2023, will continue to be implemented in schools, with teachers and education personnel will receive the necessary orientation to implement this policy effectively, further reinforcing safe and protective educational environments.



Efforts are simultaneously underway to enhance school connectivity and digital resources. Partners will continue to support necessary digital solutions, procure and distribute digital equipment, and establish the necessary ICT infrastructure for hybrid learning approaches. Capacity-building initiatives for education staff and caregivers will ensure effective engagement with virtual learning platforms.

For vulnerable adolescents and youth, partners will focus on equipping both Lebanese and non-Lebanese children and youth with the knowledge and skills necessary for professional readiness and resilience. By fostering economic empowerment, skill development, and protection, partners aim to support youth in securing decent income-generating opportunities and providing a second chance at education.

### **OUTCOME 3: Strengthened governance, managerial, and knowledge management capacities within the education system at all levels, utilising evidence-based decision-making.**

#### **Output 3.1: Data collection, management, and analysis systems are strengthened to support evidence-based decision-making in education.**

To inform sector-wide decision-making, including emergency response and preparedness, partners under MEHE's leadership will support the system at national, regional, and school levels. This support aims to ensure the achievements of the response can be continued in the future. Partners will continue to enhance the unified data collection protocols and compliant systems under the Student Information Management System (SIMS) in preparation for a transition to an Education Management Information System (EMIS). The SIMS, linked with the education identification number (ID), enables MEHE to manage information about students and teachers effectively.

In addition to enrolment and attendance disaggregated by gender, age, and disability, the key data will also include information on teacher qualifications, attendance, retention, and professional development. It will cover school infrastructure, resources, and accommodations for students with disabilities. Additionally, data on dropout rates and their reasons, along with strategies for improving retention, will be collected. This comprehensive data set will support MEHE in making informed decisions and managing education programmes more effectively. SIMS data will also support inclusive education programming by identifying and facilitating the participation of children with disabilities, including recognising their barriers to education. Similar efforts will be made to generate unified data on non-formal education to inform its coordinated implementation.

Furthermore, the capacity of key staff at MEHE and CERD will be enhanced in educational financial planning and crisis-sensitive educational planning. Additionally, data management and analysis will be strengthened to improve MEHE's reporting on SDG 4 indicators.

#### **Output 3.2: Hybrid learning modalities are expanded and strengthened in collaboration with MEHE to enhance the education system's capacity to deliver equitable, gender-responsive, and effective learning opportunities.**

The Education sector will enhance its digital learning platforms through the development and implementation of the National Digital Learning Strategy, aimed at providing equitable access to gender-responsive, quality educational content. The platform will be supported by integrated user support systems to improve the learning experience and ensure inclusivity. In addition, there will be a focus on training teachers in digital learning, equipping them with the skills necessary to effectively engage students effectively in both online and offline environments. The goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of their vulnerabilities or geographic

location, can fully engage with both online and offline learning materials, thereby promoting flexible and accessible education for all.

### **Output 3.3: Support to MEHE is provided to develop, revise, and implement education policies and sector assessments based on comprehensive data and evidence.**

Sector partners will support the MEHE's governance by providing technical support. This includes developing, revising, endorsing, and implementing policies aimed at improving the equity, efficiency, and effectiveness of Lebanon's education system. Examples of governance support include the development of the National Digital Policy, the implementation of Lebanon's Inclusive Education Policy (June 2023), and education reform.

The sector will continue to prioritise support for the implementation and governance requirements of the Transitional Resilience of Education Fund. This will involve further executing the work plan and strengthening of the MEHE's education expertise and leadership capacity, particularly during times of crisis. Technical assistance will be provided in areas such as data management, education financing, and school improvement plans.

As for non-formal education, the ongoing reforms will ensure more effective, high-quality programming by partners, including possible solutions for pathways to formal education. The new implementation methods will be linked to the mainstreaming of child protection efforts overseen by the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) through the adoption of the National Child Protection Policy, which aims to create protective and inclusive spaces for child-centred learning. The goal is to prevent violence and provide a safe learning environment for all girls and boys.

#### **Identification of Sector Needs and Targets at Various Levels**

The Education Sector determines the number of individuals, communities, and institutions in need by analysing data from MEHE, the TVET Directorate, UN agencies, and partner organisations. This process includes situational assessments, geo-prioritisation exercises, and needs assessments conducted in 2023 and 2024. Special emphasis is placed on internally displaced persons (IDPs), Syrians, and returnees, particularly in the South, Nabatieh, Baalbek, Bekaa, Hermel, and Beirut. Displacement tracking systems and available population data are used to identify those in need of education services.

In areas with limited access or where data collection is challenging, the sector uses estimations and collaborates with other sectors to address data gaps. It targets the most vulnerable populations by focusing on educational needs, particularly for children who have missed out on education due to displacement and their specific vulnerabilities. Targets are set to ensure that displaced and vulnerable communities receive equitable access to safe and protective learning environments while also addressing barriers such as economic constraints and lack of protection. Data and targets are continuously updated to respond effectively as new information becomes available.

**Total Target: 220,000 (inc.20.000 teachers)**

**Amount required: 13.9M**

**Sectoral impact:**

- The conflict in Lebanon has severely disrupted the education system, affecting children's and youth's access to consistent learning. Over 300 schools and university branches were damaged, with 33 destroyed, and more than 600 educational establishments repurposed as shelters.
- This had strained the education infrastructure, leading to increased learning losses, particularly among vulnerable groups, especially displaced students across various populations and governorates.
- Children and youth are at risk of long-term psychological harm due to the consequences of the conflict and displacement affecting their overall learning, well-being, and development. While over 40,000 teachers have also been affected, as many were displaced and continue to face barriers to perform their teaching duties.

#### **Immediate Needs:**

- Schools including TVET damaged during the conflict or used as shelters require urgent rehabilitation to reopen safely for teaching and learning.
- The presence of unexploded ordnance poses a serious threat to children, and life-Saving Explosive Ordnance Risk Education is critical.
- There is a critical need to support children and youth in re-enrolling and staying in school, particularly at-risk students, including marginalized girls, children and youth with disabilities, and those who have been displaced.
- Displaced children and youth returning to school lack basic educational materials. Financial support is also needed to remove barriers to education while ensuring that adolescent girls have access to menstrual hygiene kits. Digital learning is also a vital tool for ensuring continuity.
- The need for immediate support through Psychological First Aid (PFA), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs to build resilience, and a referral system for specialized care.

#### **Priority activities**

- Support the decommissioning of schools that were previously used as shelters and carry out repairs of damaged schools to transform them into safe, gender-responsive learning space.
- Integrate inclusive learning continuity activities, retention support, and other education activities such as SEL, online and in-person and adapted to age, for displaced and affected children, including those residing in collective shelters.
- Distribute learning kits to displaced or returning IDPs, menstrual hygiene kits to adolescent girls, and provide cash support for education or transportation.
- Rehabilitation of damaged TVET labs to ensure young people have access to practical courses.
- Deliver Mental Health and PFA services and SEL programs and identify students and teachers in need of specialized support based on the MHPSS Minimum Service Package.
- Provide lifesaving information on Explosive Ordnance Risk Education to ensure the safety of children and families in schools and learning centres in conflict-affected areas.
- Train teachers on digital learning to enhance their digital skills. Provide teachers and counselors with training on crisis-sensitive instruction to better address the complex needs of students affected by the crisis.

### **3. Mainstreaming of Gender and GBV, Protection, Conflict Sensitivity, Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), Environment**

#### **Mainstreaming Gender, GBV Protection, PSEA, and Conflict Sensitivity Programming**

To inform the sector workplan and priorities for protection mainstreaming, regular protection risk analysis will be conducted, including a comprehensive assessment at the onset of 2025. This will ensure an inclusive approach, particularly for children with disabilities, as this group has remained a major concern throughout 2024 and during the ongoing crisis. Findings from the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) in schools highlighted limited accessibility for children with disabilities to educational facilities. To address this gap, the sector aims to enhance infrastructure and adopt inclusive educational practices.

Building on past efforts, all collected data will be disaggregated by age, sex, and disability across populations. The sector will continue to prioritise Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) through strengthened child safeguarding measures and efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. Mandatory PSEA training will be reinforced for education staff, along with targeted awareness campaigns to engage caregivers and the wider community.

Education partners will also conduct detailed assessments, such as energy audits of schools, to inform efforts in rehabilitation, construction, and solarisation. These initiatives aim to create safer, more inclusive, and sustainable educational environments that meet the needs of vulnerable children.

Partners will standardise approaches to strengthen accountability to affected populations by building trust and improving communication regarding programmes, referral pathways, and feedback mechanisms. The implementation of child-friendly reporting and feedback mechanisms will ensure that children can safely express concerns and provide input on the programmes that impact their lives.

Policies and practices related to child protection will be further enhanced to ensure that all educational spaces are safe and secure. Psychosocial support (PSS) and multi-sector referrals will remain a priority, focusing on delivering gender-informed and inclusive services tailored to the needs of both children and caregivers.

Efforts will also include the timely identification and referral of school dropouts, particularly children at risk of child labour or early marriage, ensuring that tailored programmes address these challenges. The sector will promote disability-inclusive, gender-responsive educational environments in public schools, supporting the MEHE in strengthening planning, monitoring, and addressing issues such as child marriage, school violence, and harmful social norms.

In collaboration with livelihood and youth partners, the sector will work towards gender-neutral employment opportunities for girls and young women. It will provide life skills education on girls' rights, GBV prevention, and positive gender socialisation. Engaging both male and female caregivers in a gender-transformative approach to education will remain a focus, while advocating for inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Finally, by using conflict-sensitive programming, the sector will address community tensions by designing inclusive activities and supporting partners with training in conflict sensitivity and "Do No Harm" approaches. The sector will work closely with the Conflict Sensitivity mainstreaming focal point to customise training packages and guidance material, where possible, to meet the needs of Education sector members. Collaboration with the Social Stability sector will further enhance coordination and inclusion, particularly in relation to competition for services and biases in aid distribution.

#### 4. Logframe