

**THE WORLD BANK PROGRAM FOR RESULTS FOR THE LEBANESE
REPUBLIC**

FOR SUPPORT TO RACE II PROJECT

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT (ESSA)

Executive Summary

A. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

1. **Roughly 6.8 million school age children have been affected by the refugee crisis in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).** The crisis includes approximately 5.4 million children in Syria and 1.4 million Syrian refugee children, the majority of whom have been denied their right to schooling. In Lebanon, one out of ten people are Syrian refugee children. There are 380,000 children from 5 to 17 years, about 60 percent of whom are out of formal schooling. This has both short-term and long-term consequences. For families coping with the daily struggles of displacement, this presents an added burden today. Based on prior crises and extensive evidence, the lack of schooling today is likely to lead to a life of poverty and struggle tomorrow. For Lebanon, the protracted nature of the crisis and the immense demand for schooling have resulted in strains on service delivery systems including public education quality for both host community and refugee children. Hosting such a large number of refugees represents an economic and social burden requiring international assistance. For the countries of origin, where refugee populations hope to one day return, lack of access to learning now represents a generation missing out on crucial skills acquisition when the reconstruction and peace-building effort will require a skilled and employable workforce. Most urgently, long-term peace in the region requires providing young people productive and rewarding alternatives to joining the ongoing conflict.

2. **In response, the Government of Lebanon, with support from the international community, has launched the Reaching all Children with Education (RACE) initiative.** First launched in 2013, RACE seeks to improve access to formal education for 460,000 Syrian refugee children and underprivileged Lebanese children in the country. Over the next phase of support ('RACE 2', 2016-2021), the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and partners have agreed to prioritize scaling up equitable access to educational opportunities in the formal public system, improve the quality and inclusiveness of the teaching and learning environment, and strengthen the national education system, policies, and monitoring, by redoubling its efforts and providing additional financial support. It is expected that efforts under the RACE2 initiative will therefore significantly contribute to minimizing the short and medium-term costs of displacement for refugee families, while strengthening the long-term capacity of the Lebanese education system to prepare children for life and work once regional stability returns.

3. **Success thus far has been limited to the primary level, with pre-primary and secondary school-age refugee children remaining overwhelmingly out of school.** Much progress has been achieved in the last few months, with 141,722 Syrians in school, 42,843 more than in 2013. Still, almost 87 percent of Syrian refugee children integrated into public schools in the 2014-15 school year belong to the 6-15 age group. Only 2 percent of secondary school age children (15-18 years) were enrolled at the secondary level, depriving most of this age-group from the adequate preparation for an active participation in society and the labor market, and the protective environment against recruitment and radicalization. Just 14 percent of refugee children in the 3-5 age group were enrolled in pre-primary public education, thwarting the many benefits of early childhood education for refugees and the education system, including the reduction of cost of remedial education at later grades.

4. **Even when students are able to attend school, the quality of learning is a serious concern. The immense pressures that the increased demand for schooling have imposed on Lebanon's education system, including overcrowding and shorter school hours for the second shift, has had significant implications for the quality of education.** While teaching and learning materials have been widely financed and distributed, the ability of schools to transform these inputs into learning appears mixed. Monitoring of refugee children's learning has been limited, with no available analysis of learning outcomes. Gains in access risk being undermined by losses due to inadequate quality, which is one of the drivers of high dropout rates among Syrian children.

5. **This new phase of the RACE strategy builds on the momentum established thus far, and broadens success to date to the areas of pre-primary and secondary education.** The World Bank is working closely with UNICEF, UNHCR and others to support MEHE in revising the RACE strategy for the coming five years. 'RACE 2' covers school years 2016/17 through 2020/21, and will require an additional financing to complete. Current investments, including the Emergency Education System Stabilization Project grant are performing well, with 22% disbursed in the first 9 months and results including textbooks for all public school students in KG through 9th grade, and financial support to schools.

B. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

6. **The Project Development Objective would be to support the RACE 2 program to provide quality education services to Lebanese and refugee children.** This will be achieved by expanding equitable access to schooling, improving conditions for learning, and strengthening management of the education system.

C. KEY PROGRAM COMPONENTS AND RESULTS

7. *Aligning supply and demand to meet educational needs* [Access]. The program would support increased enrollment and completion numbers for refugees and host population children. In addition to capitalizing on investments in CCTs and other demand-side interventions by other partners as part of the RACE program, the program would

include supply-side expansion of schools and classrooms. Crucially, this phase of RACE would move beyond monitoring enrollment, to focusing and rewarding attendance and, eventually, completion.

8. *Supporting high-quality learning* [Quality]. Through continuous monitoring, strengthening teacher training and support, and leveraging ICTs, the Project aims to align the incentives for service delivery resulting in more learning for students, by introducing disbursement-linked indicators around service delivery. This would also include the introduction of some method for monitoring student learning in a reliable and comparable fashion, over time.

9. *Policy initiatives to meet RACE 2 objectives* [System Strengthening]. Among the policy initiatives to be explored would be those relating to enhanced child protection, and enhanced community engagement to support enrollment, retention and learning. Other policy initiatives could include recognizing learning attainment of refugees through certification, as a pathway to active participation in society and the labor market in their countries of origin, host countries, and third countries.

10. **Key program results will be measured with the proposed indicators¹:**

- Proportion of school-aged children (3-18) enrolled in formal (KG, Basic Education, Secondary, Vocational) and non-formal education disaggregated by gender, nationality, and region.
- Number of students (03-18 years) enrolled in public formal school that are provided with adequate learning materials
- Number of students benefitting from newly constructed or rehabilitated learning spaces
- Number of students completing grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12 (per year) disaggregated by gender, nationality, and region
- Number of students receiving certification for completion of grades 9 and 12 disaggregated by gender, nationality, and region
- Percentage of primary-school children who transition into secondary or vocational education
- Percentage of children at end of Grade 2 and Grade 6 able to perform at Grade-level in selected subjects
- Percentage of teachers/educators observed meeting national teacher standards

a. _____

¹ This list represents preliminary indicators chosen among existing indicators in the RACE 2 program. These will be further refined with MEHE, CERD and other RACE 2 partners.

- Percentage of second-shift schools with active community liaisons
- An Annual Education Sector Operational Plan with costing produced by MEHE every year
- Disaggregated data on student enrolment available by Feb 1 and on grade completion by Aug 1 of each year for current academic year (all school types: public, private, free-private...)
- Framework for data management developed and implemented
- National curriculum reform strategy approved and curriculum development progress made public by the Curriculum Commission
- Legal and documentation barriers for access to education removed
- National learning assessment framework developed and implemented
- Effective teacher standards endorsed
- Teacher performance and professional development management system developed and operational
- CERD and MEHE capacity strengthened through hiring of highly qualified consultants and appointment of selected civil servants to positions at CERD, MEHE, and the Regional Education Offices

D. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT: AIMS AND APPROACH

11. **Program-for-Results (PforR) is a World Bank lending instrument that provides support to member countries to improve the design and implementation of their development programs** in infrastructure, education, health, and other sectors, in local government and community development, and in cross-sectoral areas such as public sector management and private sector development. PforR places more direct emphasis on development results by linking disbursements to results or performance indicators that are tangible, transparent, and verifiable. PforR works directly with the Program's institutions and systems and, when appropriate, seeks to strengthen those institutions' governance and their capacities and systems over time.

12. **The key features of P4Rs are as follows:**

- financing the expenditures of specific borrower development programs;
- disbursing on the basis of the achievement of key results (including prior results) under such programs;

- using and, as appropriate, strengthening the Program systems to provide assurance that Program funds are used appropriately and that environmental and social impacts are adequately addressed by such programs; and
- strengthening, where appropriate, the institutional capacity necessary for such programs to achieve their intended results.

13. **The Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) is crucial to ensure that PforR operations are designed and implemented in a manner that maximizes potential environmental and social benefits.** ESSA assesses the borrower's authority and organizational capacity and performance to date, to achieve the social and environmental objectives associated with the Program and stipulates supplementary actions as necessary.

14. **The objectives of this Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) are:**

- to document the environmental and social management procedures, standards and institutional responsibilities that will apply to the proposed Program;
- to evaluate the institutional capacity to manage the likely environmental and social effects in accordance with the country's own requirements under the proposed Program;
- to assess the consistency of the borrower's systems with core principles and attributes defined in the PfoR Guidance Note on Environmental and Social Assessment;
- to establish the risks and potential negative environmental impacts of the Program and ensure that these will be subjected to an adequate initial screening so that relevant mitigation measures can be identified prepared and implemented;
- to recommend specific actions for improving counterpart capacity during implementation to ensure they are able to adequately perform their mandate. These measures will be agreed on between the Client/Borrower and the World Bank and will be included in the activities to be supported by the World Bank and the borrower during the life of the Program.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL EFFECTS

15. **The main environmental risks of RACE 2 investments fall under *Component I Access*.** Communities are likely to endure: no environmental pressure during the needs assessment; little environmental pressure during school construction as mitigation measures will be considered during construction; and minimal environmental pressure after the operations and maintenance of newly built premises. Under the construction phase, potential adverse environmental effects include air pollution from dust and exhaust; nuisances such as noise; solid and liquid wastes from construction sites and worker

campsites; soil erosion and possible traffic interruptions. The risks of airborne, water-related diseases and solid waste infestation during and after construction affecting both teachers and students alike will be reduced.

16. Based on the scope and scale of projects to be financed under RACE 2 Program (that is, classroom rehabilitation or expansion of the number of classrooms), environmental and social impacts are expected to be minimal to moderate in scale, with most adverse impacts limited to the construction phase and being site-specific and temporary. All investments will undergo an environmental and social impact assessment process per national environmental laws, regulations and systems. These procedures are outlined in the ESSA. Most adverse effects associated with the types of works funded under RACE 2 are associated with the construction phase: potential adverse environmental effects include air pollution from dust and exhaust; nuisances such as noise; solid and liquid wastes from construction sites and worker campsites; soil erosion and possible traffic interruptions. These types of impacts, however, are generally site-specific and temporary. Experience from implementation of similar types of works in Lebanon indicates that short-term construction impacts for the most part can be prevented or mitigated with standard operational procedures and good construction management practices. These procedures will be included in the updated technical manual, and be a standard part of the updated environmental management plans included in bidding documents for contractors that were prepared under the World Bank Education Development Project II in 2010 (Environmental Management Plan and Guidelines for the Education Development Project II (EDP II)).

17. Several of the key social risks and opportunities of this program are related to the broad conflict, poverty, exclusion, and governance issues as they interact closely with the education sector [Access]. Some of the key social risks identified include:

- *Lack of non-formal education may contribute to greater social exclusion.* About 60 percent of refugee children are not enrolled in formal schooling, some cases due to cultural norms preventing girls (and especially adolescent girls) from attending school. In other cases, youth drop out of school to work in the informal sector and support their families.
- *Vulnerability and psychological distress is highest amongst refugee women and children.* These are often reflected in negative coping strategies such as; mobility, debt, asset selling, child labor, early marriage, begging, etc.
- *Frustration is heightened due to unequal access to jobs* and inability for educated youth to enter the job market given that education levels are correlated with having better jobs which remain low (42 percent have primary or less education).
- *Lack of 'connections' are a significant constraint and inhibit labor mobility and job access.* The overwhelming majority of self-employed work in low-productivity/low-paying jobs.
- *Targeting is perceived to be discretionary and/or favoring one vulnerable group over another.* A perception of preference over one social group based solely on refugee/non-refugee status may increase social tensions across host and refugee communities.

- *Lack of transparency in the selection criteria*, roles and responsibilities, and accountabilities of the counsellors selected for the new community liaisons activity has the potential to undermine trust in refugee and other vulnerable populations.
- *Weak grievance redress system in place* to respond to complaints associated with discrimination and bullying in schools discourages families to send their children to school.
- *Gender-based violence* increases as young people, seeing themselves with free time and lack of opportunities, are more likely to resort to violence, including sexual violence, to criminal activities, or to substance abuse.

18. **In addition to the risks outlined above, social risks may arise from infrastructure support that requires land acquisition or the change in usage of land and property.** The program currently plans on supporting supply-side expansion of schools and classrooms, which may require land that is currently used for other purposes, this may affect people who will lose their productive assets or income sources due to involuntary resettlement. Direct economic and social impacts could include loss of land, assets and income, access to assets or housing resulting in adverse impacts to livelihoods. Unless properly managed, involuntary resettlement may result in long-term hardship and impoverishment for affected persons and communities, as well as social stress in areas to which they have been displaced.

F. ASSESSMENT OF BORROWER SYSTEMS

19. **World Bank projects currently implemented by MEHE are adopting World Bank environmental and social safeguards operational policies and systems for management of environmental and social risks.** The current ESSA relies essentially on the analysis of existing systems for environmental and social management in Lebanon which was conducted by the World Bank in 2011 (World Bank 2011, Lebanon Country Environmental Analysis) for consistency with the core principles of OP/BP 9.00. Lebanon EIA system is aligned with World Bank's requirements except for few gaps that could easily be bridged by updating the TORs for school construction produced under the Environmental Management Plan and Guidelines for the World Bank Education Development Project II and disclosing on the MEHE website the summary of the EIA to the public.

20. **To address social risks in schools, the MEHE employs field coordinators who are responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching, problems faced by students, and the overall situation in each school.** Field coordinators are responsible for approximately 30 schools and visit each school ever 2-3 weeks. This allows the MEHE to have up to date information on each school they support and to address issues in a timely manner. Field coordinators work closely with teachers and school counselors in each school to address issues, and also gather information on school conditions that is then shared with engineers.

21. **Decision 1130 of 2001 Article 41 of Decision no. 1130/m/2001 related to internal regulations of "preschools" and basic education in public schools** stipulates that

employees in the education sector are prohibited to inflict any physical punishment on pupils, nor to address verbal retribution that is humiliating and is against the principle of education and personal dignity. However, the Decision does not provide specifics about student rights nor accountability of teachers and other education staff. The lack of clarity in terms of grievance redress mechanisms at the school level, and a transparent system of reward and sanction for misbehavior poses a challenge to the social dynamics at the school level.

22. **As part of the RACE II Program Management Unit (PMU) composition, a Child Protection Officer will support the implementation of the Child Protection Program** in schools at national and local level in coordination with DOPS, and other relevant stakeholders, including communication with Directorates of Education and Ministry of Social Affairs at the local level. The Officer will help in developing and implementing a program of inclusion (targeting children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties).

23. **Regarding the need for land expropriation, the Lebanese system has several gaps that could impose negative impacts on the affected persons.** In particular, there are gaps between the Expropriation Law Expropriation Law No. 58 dated 29/05/1991 (amended on 8/12/2006) and the World Bank Policy OP 4.12 are presented in the below tab.

G. RECOMMENDATIONS AND PROPOSED ACTIONS

24. Environment Aspects

The ESSA recommends that the following actions be undertaken with respect to improving environmental management capacity as per the following mitigation, monitoring and institutional strengthening plans:

- **Mitigation and monitoring measures plans are considered for:** general conditions that cover notification and worker safety; dismantling of construction debris; general rehabilitation and /or construction activities in terms of air quality, heating and insulation, noise, water quality, sanitation, waste management; individual wastewater treatment system; toxic materials in terms of toxic materials toxic/hazardous waste management; protection of affected forests, wetlands and/or protected areas; traffic and pedestrian safety through direct or indirect hazards to public traffic and pedestrians by construction activities.
- **Monitoring measures plans are considered for the categories considered under mitigation addressing the following:** what parameter is to be monitored, where is the parameter to be monitored, how is the parameter to be monitored, when is the parameter to be monitored and how much is the associated cost for the parameter for each of the considered mitigation categories.
- **Institutional Strengthening plans are considered to:** avoid negative environmental impacts by architects and engineers; architectural/construction

project documentation will be prepared so as to comply with environmental protection laws, regulations, decrees and construction norms concerning building rehabilitation.

25. Social Aspects

The ESSA recommends that the following actions be undertaken with respect to improving social management capacity via:

- Introducing citizen engagement mechanisms that will include transparency and access to information on criteria associated with targeting of vulnerable groups and beneficiaries, selection of community liaisons and teachers will be embedded in the program activities at the levels of PMU, DOPS, RACE Executive Committee (REC), and CERD.
- Introducing objective and measurable criteria for selection of schools and individual beneficiaries (students, teachers, and parents).
- Ensuring that the PMU staff provide clear funding to mitigate against negative social impacts under the supervision of the Child Protection Officer.
- Developing a robust grievance redress system at the MEHE PMU level to address complaints associated with *discrimination, sexual harassment, and bullying* in schools. Integrating a secure, confidential and easily accessible system to report gender-based violence cases and ensure follow up.
- Support community liaisons foster community cohesion between refugee and host communities by creating or empowering parent-teacher associations and having schools organize community service activities within their communities.
- Building the capacity and oversight function of PMU staff responsible for school construction oversight to comply with World Bank principles on resettlement and land acquisition (Operational Policy OP 4.12) to mitigate, avoid or minimize social impacts.
- In collaboration with MOSA, DOPS, and MEHE, strengthening the capacity of community liaisons and teachers to better respond to social tensions, discrimination, bullying and gender-based violence issues.
- Putting in place measures to support some of the more vulnerable young people, including girls and young women, as well as boys facing pressures to enter early into the labor market.