

**PROGRAM-FOR-RESULTS INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.:PIDC0062276

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Program Name	<i>Reaching All Children with Education in Lebanon Support Project</i>
Region	<i>Middle East and North Africa</i>
Country	<i>Lebanon</i>
Sector	<i>Education</i>
Lending Instrument	<i>Program-for-Results</i>
Program ID	<i>P159470</i>
Borrower(s)	<i>Lebanese Republic, Ministry of Finance</i>
Implementing Agency	<i>Ministry of Education and Higher Education</i>
Date PID Prepared	<i>March 20, 2016</i>
Estimated Date of Appraisal Completion	<i>May 4, 2016</i>
Estimated Date of Board Approval	<i>July 14, 2016</i>
Concept Review Decision	<i>{Insert the following}</i> Following the review of the concept, the decision was taken to proceed with the preparation of the operation.
Other Decision <i>{Optional}</i>	<i><u>Teams can add more if they wish or delete this row if no other decisions are added</u></i>

I. Introduction and Context

1. **Roughly 6.5 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 between the ages of 4 and 18, about 60 percent of whom are out of school. 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 represent 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,’ 2016-2020, the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education 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.

B. Sectoral and Institutional Context of the Program

3. **Despite having come under unprecedented stress, Lebanon’s education system has proven to be resilient.** The number of Syrian students in the Lebanese formal education system has dramatically increased in the past 5 years, from 14,986 students aged 6-17 in school year 2011-12 to 149,567 students in school year 2015-16. This tenfold increase in just 5 years has put strains on the formal education system’s ability to maintain both the level of quality of the education system and the same level of access for Lebanese students (see Table 1).

Table 1. Enrollment Trends of Lebanese and Syrian students

School Year	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16
Number of registered refugees aged 6-17					338,868
Number of registered refugees enrolled in public primary school grades 1-9, all shifts	14,190	36,905	79,240	103,780	147,287
Number of registered refugees enrolled in public secondary school grades 10-12, all shifts	796	1,351	1,830		2,280
Number of Lebanese enrolled in public school, aged 6-17	225,468	223,928	213,924		249,436
Refugee students in public schools as percentage of the Lebanese public school population	6%	16%	37%		59%

4. **Success thus far has been limited to the primary level, with pre-primary and secondary school-age refugee children overwhelmingly out of school.** Much progress has been achieved in the last few months, with 149,567 Syrians aged 6-17 in school, an increase of

85% (68,497 students) compared with the start of RACE in 2013. Still, almost 90 percent of Syrian refugee children integrated into public schools in the 2014-15 school year belong to the 6-15 age group. Fewer than 10 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. Fewer than 10 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.

5. **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, in part due to challenges surrounding language of instruction, in the case of Syrians unfamiliar with French or English (official languages for much of the Lebanese curriculum). Monitoring of refugee children's learning to date has been limited, with no currently 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.¹

6. **Supply-side constraints are not the only driver, especially for secondary school-age children.** Demand-side barriers to secondary education are large, including low perceived returns to education, coupled with a high opportunity cost of foregone income, particularly for older children. In some regions, such as the Bekaa, transportation costs also represent a high barrier to accessing education services. In addition, there is anecdotal evidence that fear of violence and challenges of social acceptance, as well as difficulties in providing the required registration and residence permits impede school registration.²

7. **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 DFID, 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 estimated US\$ 350 M in financing per year to complete. Current investments, including the Emergency Education System Stabilization Project grant, are performing well, with 22 percent disbursed in the first 9 months and several early results already achieved, including textbooks for all public school students in KG through 9th grade, and financial support to schools.

C. Relationship to CPF and SCD

¹ *Out of School Children in Lebanon*, UNICEF, UNHCR, Save the Children (forthcoming), *School Attendance in Bekaa*, UNHCR, January 2016.

² *Out of School Update Nov 2015*, UNHCR and Situation Analysis of Youth in Lebanon Affected by the Syrian Crisis, April 2014 (multi-agency)

8. **A Systemic Country Diagnostic (SCD) was completed in January 2016 and provides guidance on key challenges for Lebanon and priority areas for WB engagement.** The existing Country Partnership Framework covers the period FY2011-FY2014, and will be replaced by the new Country Partnership Framework (CPF) to be presented to the Board in July 2016. The new CPF will guide the further development of the Project. In the meantime, the 2016 SCD highlights Lebanon's failure to generate inclusive growth and jobs as stemming in large part from two overarching constraints: elite capture hidden behind confessionalism, and conflict and violence linked to broader dynamics of conflict in the region. Education was identified as a key "nested constraint," which, if addressed, could help Lebanon make meaningful progress toward achieving growth, inclusion, and sustainability. The SCD further notes the need to provide support to the government to address fiscal requirements, while also developing the basis for medium-term improvements in infrastructure and public service delivery related to the Syrian refugee crisis. Finally, the Project aligns with the MENA strategy pillars on social contract (reaching vulnerable Lebanese) and on resilience (strengthening the education system to support the influx of refugees).

9. **The Project goals closely align with the priorities developed in the SCD.** Expanded enrollment can be conceptually linked to a broadening of economic opportunity through increased human capital, a partial mitigation against elite capture, while at the same time fostering social cohesion and mitigating against conflict. Key constraints to the development agenda identified in the SCD include stark inequality in the access to, and quality of, education between public and private education systems, starting from the pre-primary level. This poses a challenge to human capital accumulation for a large share of the population. While Lebanon exhibits relatively strong average human capital particularly in education, the poor quality of public education generates large inequality of opportunities among citizens, depending on the wealth and income status of their parents. This, in turn, widens inequality in the country, both spatially and over time. The recent influx of Syrian refugees has heightened this problem in public schools; some schools are overcrowded, while teachers manage different curricula to accommodate the different needs of Lebanese and Syrian children, impacting the quality of learning for students.

II. Program Development Objective(s)

10. The Project Development Objective would be to support the RACE program in expanding equitable access to schooling, improving conditions for learning, and strengthening management of the education system.

III. Program Description

A. PforR Program Boundary

11. **Thus far, RACE has been aimed at providing education services to Syrian refugee**

and vulnerable Lebanese children and overall system strengthening. This next phase of the program, known as RACE 2, consists of six outcomes³ structured around three pillars: access, quality and systems strengthening. The World Bank Program would therefore be structured as follows:

- (i) *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.
- (ii) *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.
- (iii) *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.

³ Outcome 1: Scale up equitable access to educational opportunities for girls and boys in the formal public school system (ages 3 to 18 years)

Outcome 2: Construction, expansion, rehabilitation and equipment of schools

Outcome 3: Expand access to education opportunities for the most vulnerable through quality, regulated non-formal education initiatives

Outcome 4: Expand access of youth to vocational and technical education and training (ages 15 – 18 years).

Outcome 5: Improve the quality and inclusiveness of the teaching and learning environment, including curricular reform

Outcome 6: Strengthening national education systems, policy, planning, financing and monitoring capacity

Table 2. Examples of Possible Disbursement-Linked Indicator Areas

Pillar/Outcome	Possible DLI Area
Access	Number of girls and boys enrolled in formal education (KG, Primary Basic, and Secondary) within the Lebanese public system (disaggregated by sex/nationality/education level/special needs/region)
	School aides/community liaisons present in second shift schools.
Quality	Number of public school teachers (supported or trained) observed to be using improved methods and materials.
	Reporting by 85% of schools to MEHE on student performance each semester (December and June).
Systems Strengthening	Enacted and effective child protection policy adhered to by Lebanese public schools.
	Better data monitoring system operating efficiently.
	Approved national assessment strategy for all Lebanese schools.

12. During preparation, each of these areas would be explored in more depth. It is expected that DLIs would be grouped across these areas, working from targets that feature in the overall program, and including both outputs and policy actions as well as at least one outcome indicator. The value of each DLI, along with its verification protocol and the critical pathway required for its achievement, would be developed during preparation.

13. **The RACE program of expenditures totals approximately US\$ 1.75 billion.** Within the RACE2 framework, the World Bank Program would consist of the following expenditures⁴ (*inter alia*):

- (i) Support to the school fund and the parent council fund for both refugees and Lebanese;
- (ii) School grants;
- (iii) Infrastructure activities, including rehabilitation and construction;

⁴ During preparation, the Program of Expenditures would be completed, working from costing exercises of the RACE program sponsored by DFID and other partners.

(iv) Equipment, including ICT for classroom instruction targeting both newly constructed schools and sports and arts instruction for the second shift; and

(v) Transportation.

IV. Initial Environmental and Social Screening

1. Given the stated boundaries of the Program, no major environmental impacts and risks are anticipated. It is envisaged that the Program will not be including any of Category-A type investments, nor will be posing any risk on natural habitats or on physical cultural resources. Furthermore, the Program will not include activities that could potentially generate considerable pollution to any environmental media or that would pose any risks to land use or to natural resources. However, some of the social identified risks thus far, particularly affecting refugees include bullying in schools, safety and security related issues as they affect Syrian youth, men, women, and other vulnerable groups, and impediments to registration in schools, among others. The ESSA will develop actionable recommendations to address these to be implemented with throughout Program implementation.

14. The Program safeguards team will be conducting an Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA). The ESSA essentially aims at reviewing the capacity of the existing government systems to plan and implement effective measures for environmental and social impact management and at determining if any measures would be required to strengthen them. It is expected that the first draft of the ESSA will be ready by April 11, 2016 upon which consultations with a wide range of stakeholders will take place. The consultations aim at presenting the Program description and the scope of the ESSA to the stakeholders as means of receiving their comments and feedback which could be incorporated in the Program design as deemed relevant and feasible.

V. Tentative financing

Source:	(\$m.)
Borrower/Recipient	
IBRD	
IDA	100.00
Others (specify) (Grant)	100.00
Total	200.00

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