



## THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN PEACEBUILDING

Case Study – Lebanon

November 2011



## **The Role of Education in Peacebuilding: Case Study – Lebanon**

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## ACRONYMS

CCA	Common Country Assessment
CERD	Centre for Educational Research and Development
CSO	civil society organization
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
D-RASATI	Developing Rehabilitation Assistance to Schools and Teacher Improvement
DOPS	Direction de l'Orientation Pédagogique et Scolaire
EC	European Commission
ECD	early childhood development
EDP	Education Development Project
EMIS	Educational Management Information Systems
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GoL	Government of Lebanon
GRP	Government Reform Programme
ICT	information and communications technology
IDMC	Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organization
LAES	Lebanese Association for Educational Studies
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MLA	Monitoring Learning Achievement
MoSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MRE	mine-risk education
NGO	non-governmental organization
NES	National Education Strategy
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PLO	Palestine Liberation Organization
PBF	UN Peacebuilding Fund
STL	Special Tribunal for Lebanon
UNCT	United Nations Country Team

UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency
UNSCOL	United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UXO	unexploded ordnance

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study explores the linkages that have been forged between education and peacebuilding during and after violent political conflict in Lebanon since the end of the civil war in 1990. Throughout the past 20 years, international, national and various civil-society actors have been actively engaged in education and peacebuilding activities, whether explicitly in name, or by design. Their efforts have been varied, multimodal and fragmented.

Lebanon's long history of formal and non-formal education offers a rich context for the study of education, conflict and peacebuilding. As a country categorized among the 'middle income' group and one of the first to become eligible for the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), Lebanon also provides an important case for understanding the emerging role of the fund, to which it was incorporated in 2010.

This case study is part of a larger multi-country research project on education and peacebuilding commissioned by the UNICEF Evaluation Office at headquarters. The primary aim is to build on the current evidence base about the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes, with particular attention to the work of UNICEF, in order to inform future programming.

Based on consultations with a range of actors representing international and national, governmental and civil-society organizations, and schools engaged in peacebuilding, this project seeks to understand how education – in the formal and non-formal sector – has been employed as a peacebuilding mechanism in Lebanon. Data collection took place from 1 July to 30 July 2011 and involved interviews, stakeholder consultation meetings, document analysis, site visits and participant observation.

From the theoretical literature, an important distinction is drawn between negative peace, or the absence of direct violence, and positive peace, or the structural changes that serve to address institutionalized forms of social injustice (structural violence). Peacebuilding theory emphasizes the need for both positive and negative peace for a comprehensive or sustainable peace. It also highlights the need for transformational processes in the areas of security, political institutions, economic structures and social development in societies emerging from conflict.

The literature review (Smith, et al. 2011) suggests that conceptual differences exist across the different literatures about the role of education in post-conflict peacebuilding. While programme literature places greater emphasis on 'protection' and 'reconstruction', academic literature addresses 'transformation' processes, which require a longer-term commitment to political, economic and social change. Thus, from a peacebuilding perspective, a distinction can be drawn between shorter-term humanitarian and security approaches to protecting children and ensuring access to schooling, and longer-term strategies and programmes to support peacebuilding through education in ways that address social transformation. Further, it is argued that social transformation should be addressed alongside education sector reform, aligning shorter-term programming with longer-term development, in order to attend to structural violence.

The notion of peacebuilding in Lebanon is fraught with tension. Stakeholders expressed wariness of the concept as being 'politically loaded', and as a result, either (1) did not see a connection between their work and peacebuilding; or (2) wished to distance their work from the notion of peacebuilding, or what they perceived as political agendas that did not reflect their personal positioning, or their perception of their institution's positioning.

From one perspective, peace implies compromise, or 'giving something up' to those perceived to have greater power. From another, it implies an imposed peace. Commonly, this was framed in terms of making peace with Israel. Beyond suspicion and resistance to use of the term, a tension arose from the perception that actors could not influence the political situation, because the locus of power – or the decision to 'end' the conflict – resides 'elsewhere', often implicating the UN in the process. The perception that 'UN action is politicized' creates tensions for peacebuilding initiatives conducted by UN entities such as UNICEF, or their implementing partners. The sense that peacebuilding could be interpreted as an all-encompassing notion on the one hand, or as a narrow and limiting construct on the other, illustrates the ways in which peacebuilding is contested in post-conflict contexts.

This study set out to locate peacebuilding initiatives in education within broader approaches to peacebuilding in Lebanon. It first described the sectarian foundations of conflict and how historical drivers of conflict have evolved within a matrix of regional, national and localized conflicts, underpinning mobilization for major episodes of violence. Sectarianism has also underpinned the institutionalization of various forms of discrimination. The inadequacies of a confessional-consociational power-sharing formula and the influence of regional actors both in armed conflict and in the peace formula, as outlined by the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, have also served to re-inscribe unresolved political, social and economic grievances, including inequalities in power and resources, among confessional communities and among geographic regions. Furthermore, Lebanon's delicate role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the legacy of this conflict for generations of Palestinians in Lebanon, serves to perpetuate discriminatory laws and regulations. It also serves to fuel insecurity for both Lebanese and Palestinian populations. In addition, more recent Iraqi and Syrian refugees and other migrants face related challenges and social exclusion. Because of historical sensitivities and the complexity of contemporary regional political alignments and internal polarizations, refugees hold at best ambiguous status in Lebanon.

This study argues that ongoing conflict analysis is required in order to capture these age-old considerations alongside their contemporary manifestations, and that such conflict analysis requires consideration of citizens and non-citizens in an interconnected manner that captures the ways in which their histories of conflict and marginalization have been, and continue to be, inextricably linked. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the contours of conflict and post-conflict situations are fluid; and in Lebanon, different phases of conflict coexist, reflecting the limitations of linear conceptualizations of progression from emergency to post-conflict peacebuilding. Armed conflict and localized episodes of political violence have and continue to differentially impact communities across various geographies in Lebanon. These multiple and uneven trajectories of conflict are a significant feature of Lebanon's recent history, warranting a dynamic view of conflict that is sensitive to longer-term, deeply



entrenched and persistent structural grievances, alongside newer forms of political, economic and social factors.

The United Nations Country Team's (UNCT's) influence in peacebuilding has been constrained by these regional dynamics. Also, while a peacekeeping presence has been maintained for most of Lebanon's history, until recently the UNCT has not had an integrated framework for peacebuilding in Lebanon. Currently such frameworks are in their nascency and, where present, are not widely recognized by UN staff. Thus coordination and alignment in peacebuilding is in its initial phases. Further, tensions abound in relation to the perceived meaning of 'peacebuilding' in Lebanon, and any work going forward would need to understand the source of these tensions, and self-reflexively, consider these tensions in relation to the positionality of the UN in Lebanon. The security orientation of the UN has been increasingly felt since 2006, which has contributed to political polarization in Lebanon, and tensions between those who work on the humanitarian-development side versus the political-military side of the UN in Lebanon.

Further, the situation of ongoing political and humanitarian crises has constrained the role of organizations such as UNICEF to emergency response measures and shorter-term programming in education and peacebuilding. Thus, there is a learning period to be engaged, as UNICEF moves towards longer-term planning for systems-level change.

In summary, security has figured largely in UN policy, and has been the priority area of the UN in Lebanon, which has narrowly framed its work in peacebuilding around negative peace, or ensuring the absence of violence, rather than a transformational peace that addresses structural change. Within this security-first approach, education has been on the margins of UN peacebuilding.

Still, much activity has been underway in education, with a burgeoning of civil society organizations (CSOs), particularly since 2005. These educational activities have focused largely on individual and interpersonal transformation as means for transformation within larger society, articulating a positive peace orientation to peacebuilding. Thus, the work of CSOs has reflected a different orientation to peacebuilding than UN and development partners.

Despite this disconnection, this work has done much to create opportunities for children and youth to engage with dialogue and contact groups. However, this work has been fragmented, and it has largely addressed the non-formal sector through short-term trainings and projects whose longer-term impact and sustainability is not clear. In the formal sector, education has served to re-inscribe social divisions through an inequitable system that perpetuates a hierarchy between private and public schools and that exacerbates regional disparities in the quality and accessibility of schooling. In doing so, the formal sector has missed the opportunity to address structural violence, or institutionalized forms of discrimination that contribute to conflict. Furthermore, in narrowly focusing on 'citizenship' and/or 'civil peace', the National Education Strategy (NES) framework and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) run the risk of excluding marginal groups of children and youth from its narrative, and thus its vision of justice for Lebanon's diverse communities.

In short, education, while highly valued and perceived to have a central role in the transformation of society, has not been prioritized by UN peacebuilding. However, UNICEF and other international and national CSOs have been active in delivering a range of programmes. The success of these programmes in addressing the drivers of conflict is dependent upon sound conceptualization and strategy, going forward, towards a peacebuilding agenda in education.

Based on various issues emerging from the study, the following nine recommendations are made with a view to providing guidance on conceptualization and strategy for education and peacebuilding moving forward.

### **Recommendations for UNICEF Lebanon:**

#### **Recommendation 1: Invest in the conceptualization of peacebuilding**

There is a need for the UNCT and agencies in Lebanon to invest in further conceptualization of peacebuilding in relation to the particularities of the Lebanese context and to clarify the positioning of peacebuilding 'between politics and development', which bears implications for education and the location of peacebuilding initiatives in education.

#### **Recommendation 2: Establish a policy framework for education**

Establishing a policy framework for UNICEF's work in education is necessary for coherent programming. Such a framework should include an explicit educational philosophy, overarching theory of change, and pedagogical principles that both reflect current educational theory and conflict sensitivity. For peacebuilding, this means developing or adapting educational materials for the context based on *needs*, in conversation with stakeholders, rather than introducing pre-packaged materials that detract from stakeholders' agency.

#### **Recommendation 3: Invest in creative design processes that engage a dynamic, long-term strategy and ongoing conflict analysis**

The study revealed that education programmes developed by various stakeholders for the purposes of peacebuilding rarely engaged conflict analysis. Ongoing conflict analysis would serve to take into account (1) historical drivers of conflict; (2) new and localized features; and (3) interconnected conflict histories of Lebanese and non-Lebanese populations. This would enable separation of root causes from surface symptoms and address these through different strategies as part of a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding.

#### **Recommendation 4: Develop mechanisms for coordination and alignment in education and peacebuilding**

Until very recently, coordination and alignment of activities has been a challenge for UNICEF and partners due to the complex conflict environment and the absence of UN peacebuilding and MEHE National Education Strategy frameworks. Addressing coordination and alignment with other UN and MEHE frameworks is an essential aspect of conflict sensitivity and comprehensive approaches that target the drivers of conflict. It is also essential to developing a common vision of peacebuilding and influencing the policies therein on the role of education. Coordination and alignment also implies working with localized communities as equal partners.

**Recommendation 5: Document the implications for UNICEF's shift towards upstream engagement and peacebuilding**

It is important to consider the implications of a shift towards upstream work for education and peacebuilding, and to develop an appropriate strategy. For example, this might entail moving away from current types of programming towards facilitating processes and related advocacy in the government and elsewhere. Similarly, a shift towards framing education in terms of peacebuilding requires consideration regarding what might be gained or lost in the process and the ways in which this repositioning will redefine UNICEF's role and its programming; the relationship with youth and their communities; and theories and timelines of action.

**Recommendation 6: Develop high-quality research and evaluation programmes for education and peacebuilding, and for the purposes of institutional learning**

UNICEF is engaged in a number of 'pilot' projects with a view to up-scaling those that are successful. However, these programmes have often lacked baseline data and assessment tools in order to determine which are more effective. Furthermore, peacebuilding objectives in education may require different approaches to evaluation, particularly since transformational processes often take years – beyond the scope of project cycles.

**Recommendations for UNICEF headquarters:**

**Recommendation 7: Clarify the relationship between UNICEF's equity approach and peacebuilding as they pertain to education**

In order to support UNICEF country offices with conceptualization issues, there is a need to clarify and develop the relationship between UNICEF's equity approach and peacebuilding strategy in post-conflict situations, particularly as they pertain to education.

**Recommendation 8: Find ways to influence peacebuilding strategies in order to better locate education within peacebuilding processes and to consider the implications of engaging a peacebuilding approach to education**

There is a need to advocate for a more central role for education in peacebuilding at the highest level, along with the development of frameworks for what this entails. This requires participating in decision-making at the policy level. Concurrently, there is a need to assess the implications of such an engagement, as well as the benefits and limitations of such an approach for UNICEF's mandate.

**Recommendation 9: Develop tools for ongoing conflict analysis on the local level and related capacity development**

In order to support UNICEF country offices with conflict analysis, there is a need to develop tools that engage the UN's macro analysis of conflict with changing conflict dynamics at the localized level and common understandings of events. Once such a tool has been developed, it needs to be followed up with related training in order to establish UNICEF's internal capacity for assessment and application to programme design processes.

UNICEF's positionality in Lebanon is a source of strength for its activities. Perceived among partners as the agency that has expertise based on experience 'on the ground'

and by stakeholders as being 'a-political', UNICEF is uniquely positioned to work with a range of actors and to broker an integrated approach to peacebuilding in education that is multimodal, long-term, and addresses the drivers of conflict through systemic change.

If peacebuilding entails supporting the transformative processes of society towards sustainable peace, then it needs to be recognized that this process takes generations and must be a product of locally driven efforts. The education sector is a significant entry point for this transformative process. However, education is also a reflection of broader issues in society and the everyday challenges of transformative change.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The education literature suggests that education is inextricably linked to peacebuilding, yet in an extensive review of literature on international peacebuilding projects in post-conflict contexts, Smith et al. (2011) found that education did not feature strongly on peacebuilding agendas.<sup>1</sup> This study explores the linkages that have been forged between education and peacebuilding during and after violent political conflict in Lebanon since the end of the civil war in 1990. Throughout the past 20 years, international, national and various civil-society actors have been actively engaged in education and peacebuilding activities, whether explicitly in name, or by design. Their efforts have been varied, multimodal and fragmented.

### 1.1. Research Purpose and Methods

This case study is part of a larger multi-country research project on education and peacebuilding commissioned by the Evaluation Office at UNICEF headquarters.<sup>2</sup> The primary aim is to build on the current evidence base about the role and potential of education in peacebuilding processes, with particular attention to the work of UNICEF, in order to inform future programming. Thus, the objectives of the case studies are to:

- Locate peacebuilding initiatives supported through education programming in the case study countries;
- Document country-specific education interventions where education has played an important role in contributing to peace or where it has missed the opportunity to do so;
- Provide guidance on education interventions contributing to peacebuilding based on models and approaches used by UNICEF and its partners to initiate, promote and implement education initiatives in support of peacebuilding;
- Identify strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for UNICEF-supported education programming as it relates to peacebuilding.

Deriving from those broad objectives, the guiding research questions for the case study research are:

1. What are the strengths, weaknesses and gaps of the education system's contribution to peacebuilding in Lebanon, given the changing and volatile political context?
2. How does the post-conflict political environment of a country affect the 'success' or 'failure' of education programmes for peacebuilding?
3. What is the practical and pragmatic recommendation for UNICEF's niche – within both the UN and broader context – in education programming that contributes to peacebuilding?

Based on consultations with a range of actors representing international and national, governmental organizations and CSOs, and schools engaged in peacebuilding, this

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<sup>1</sup> Commissioned by the UNICEF headquarters Evaluation Office, the *Education and Peacebuilding in Post-Conflict Contexts: Literature Review* underpins the research design and analytic framework of the multi-country study on education and peacebuilding, for which this study contributes a case.

<sup>2</sup> The two other country studies commissioned and conducted in 2011 were Sierra Leone and Nepal.

project seeks to understand how education – in the formal and non-formal sector – has been employed as a peacebuilding mechanism in Lebanon.

The study was preceded by an extensive literature review (Smith et al. 2011), which informed the analytic framework and methodological approach of the project. Field research took place from 1 July to 30 July 2011 and benefited from an initial desk review (Akar 2011). Data collection involved:

**Interviews.** Formal semi-structured interviews and formal and informal meetings were held with a range of national and international actors from UNICEF, the UN and other international organizations and government entities, as well as national government officials and representatives of civil society, including national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and activists, Lebanese and/or non-Lebanese populations, and education experts and leaders from religious and secular non-profit and for-profit institutions. Participants included activists, educators and former students who were involved in various capacities with UNICEF's Education for Peace programme during the late 1980s and early 1990s, and later became peace advocates and educators themselves. The one- to two-hour interviews were digitally recorded for accuracy and in some cases were followed up with additional unstructured meetings for clarification. Digital recordings were transcribed, coded (using predetermined and emergent codes) and examined for categories of analysis and related themes. The preliminary findings were discussed at a roundtable of UNICEF staff during the final week of field research.<sup>3</sup>

**Stakeholder consultation meetings.** Two full-day consultation meetings were held on the role of education and peacebuilding in Lebanon. The first consultation was held with representatives from government, the UN and other international organizations. The second was held with CSOs and educational institutions working on education and peacebuilding initiatives in Lebanon. The consultations engaged stakeholders on issues emerging from the field research to elicit new data and to clarify and cross-check emerging analyses. The second consultation also contributed to a mapping of education and peacebuilding initiatives in Lebanon.

**Document analysis.** A wide range of published and unpublished documents were collected and reviewed, including reports, internal memos, work plans and curricula.<sup>4</sup>

**Site visits and participant observation.** Two full-day trips to North Lebanon enabled observation of UNICEF's Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention summer programmes in action, as well as meetings and interviews with government and implementing partners. A third trip to Akkar allowed for observation of UNICEF's Child-Friendly Community pilot project in three municipalities, including participant observation of meetings with the Municipal Education Committees for the UNICEF Facts for Life curriculum field testing. Participant observation through day-to-day interaction with UNICEF staff in Beirut, including observation of a mid-cycle external evaluation

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<sup>3</sup> While the field research engaged a range of actors, these were in no way exhaustive. Scheduling challenges, related to conducting research during the summer, prevented observation of formal school programmes and, importantly, excluded children and youth from the interview schedule.

<sup>4</sup> Limitations were posed by sparse institutional documentation of programmes prior to 2006. Such records were elicited, where possible, from individuals who maintained personal documentation.

meeting for the Joint UN Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention MDG-F Spain funded programme and independent meetings with the evaluator, together enabled a broader understanding and contextualization of the constraints and political environment in which UNICEF staff operate.

## 1.2. Analytical framework

A review of the theoretical and programmatic literature on education and peacebuilding informed the project's methods and approach (see Smith et al. 2011). From the theoretical literature, an important distinction is drawn between negative peace, or the absence of direct violence, and positive peace, or the structural changes that serve to address institutionalized forms of social injustice (structural violence). Peacebuilding theory emphasizes the need for both positive and negative peace for a comprehensive or sustainable peace. It also highlights the need for transformational processes in the areas of security, political institutions, economic structures and social development in societies emerging from conflict.

The literature review suggests that conceptual differences exist across the different literatures about the role of education in post-conflict peacebuilding. While programme literature places greater emphasis on 'protection' and 'reconstruction', academic literature addresses 'transformation' processes, which require a longer-term commitment to political, economic and social change. Thus, from a peacebuilding perspective, a distinction can be drawn between shorter-term humanitarian and security approaches to protecting children and ensuring access to schooling, and longer-term strategies and programmes to support peacebuilding through education in ways that address social transformation. Further, it is argued that social transformation should be addressed alongside education sector reform, aligning shorter-term programming with longer-term development, in order to attend to structural violence. Furthermore, the literature review suggests that much education programming in post-conflict contexts has not been explicitly planned from a peacebuilding perspective, engaging conflict analysis, or stating an explicit theory of change. Thus, programme literature on education, or on peacebuilding, reflects a thin evidence base about the impact or role of education in peacebuilding processes.

Various definitions of peacebuilding emerge from the UN literature itself.<sup>5</sup> In 2007, the UN Secretary-General's Policy Committee described peacebuilding activities as involving:

A range of measures targeted to reduce the risk of lapsing or relapsing into conflict by strengthening national capacities at all levels for conflict management, and to lay the foundations for sustainable peace and development. Peacebuilding strategies must be coherent and tailored to specific needs of the country concerned, based on national ownership, and should comprise a carefully prioritized, sequenced, and therefore relatively narrow set of activities aimed at achieving the above objectives. (as cited in Smith et al. 2011)

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<sup>5</sup> See Lakkis (2011) for an overview of UN peacebuilding terminology and an analysis of its application to the Middle East and North Africa region.

In a similar vein, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) 2008 Guidance Note on Evaluating Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding states that:

Peacebuilding covers a broad range of measures implemented in the context of emerging, current or post-conflict situations and which are explicitly guided and motivated by a primary commitment to the prevention of violent conflict and the promotion of a lasting and sustainable peace. (as cited in Smith et al. 2011)

Although they do not make explicit reference to eliminating structural violence, these definitions incorporate the notions of negative and positive peace as components of a sustainable peace. For the purposes of this project, they also provide a conceptual framework for considering the role and contributions of education towards peacebuilding in Lebanon.

### **1.3. Tensions in meanings**

It is important to note from the outset that the notion of peacebuilding in Lebanon is fraught with tension, an issue that emerged early and repeatedly throughout the field research period. Stakeholders, representing both international and national organizations, at various levels, expressed wariness of the concept as being 'politically loaded', and as a result, either (1) did not see a connection between their work and peacebuilding; or (2) wished to distance their work from the notion of peacebuilding, or what they perceived as political agendas that did not reflect their personal positioning, or their perception of their institution's positioning. The meaning and use of the word peacebuilding also emerged as an issue for some beneficiaries involved in a number of UN peacebuilding programmes.

From one perspective, peace implies compromise, or 'settling for less', or 'giving something up' to those perceived to have greater power. From another, it implies an imposed peace. Commonly, this was framed in terms of making peace with Israel.<sup>6</sup> Where organizations had developed their own understanding of the term, they experienced pushback from the beneficiaries they sought to serve. For example, it was cited that Palestinians "don't want to hear anything about peacebuilding" (interview, UNICEF), noting that the term elicited resistance, and was therefore ill-fitting for people who felt that: "we don't even have our basic rights" (interview, UNICEF). Various examples were given by interviewees to illustrate the ways in which Lebanese and Palestinian participants in programmes and workshops resisted or boycotted sessions that came under the banner of peacebuilding.

Representatives of CSOs and government entities suggested in both consultation meetings that such terminology is "parachuted in" on them, even where it has been repeatedly shown that the terms are "not suitable." They questioned why local terminologies are not utilized instead, offering the more widely accepted notion of "civil

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<sup>6</sup> Interviews and consultation meetings with representatives from government and national NGOs suggest that beneficiaries were more likely to voice a concern that 'peacebuilding' implied making peace with Israel when projects involved international organizations.



peace,” implying inter-communal peace or social solidarity, and encompassing the notion of citizenship.<sup>7</sup>

Interviews and consultation meetings elicited numerous examples where terminology was changed in project titles in order to have them accepted by beneficiaries:

We don't put 'peacebuilding'; we put 'conflict management' [on the programme], because you cannot resolve the conflict ... it's not within your power ... Because it's highly political, because it's on an international level most of the time ... We're influenced by every single situation in the region ... Some of the people laugh at us [when we talk about] peacebuilding. [We are asked]: 'Who are *you* to talk about peacebuilding?' (interview, UN staff)

This illustrative quote from a UN staff member demonstrates some of the tension related to operationalizing the term in Lebanon.<sup>8</sup> Beyond suspicion and resistance to use of the term, a tension arises from the perception that actors cannot influence the political situation, because the locus of power – or the decision to 'end' the conflict – resides 'elsewhere', often implicating the UN in the process. The perception that “UN action is politicized” (and its agencies are therefore not in a good position to “talk about peacebuilding”) is highly relative and dynamic among groups of Lebanese, Palestinians and others living in Lebanon. This perception creates tensions for peacebuilding initiatives conducted by UN entities such as UNICEF, or their implementing partners.

Related is the notion that “we need to be very realistic in Lebanon about what we want to achieve” (interview, UN senior staff). Stakeholders at multiple levels of command expressed this caveat about tempering expectation and the sense that there are limitations to what is possible in terms of peacebuilding, and by implication, education's contributions to peacebuilding.

Finally, there was a sense that peacebuilding had expanded as a term for programmatic purposes:

It turns out that anyone can interpret it how they want, and you have less consensus on what to do. Because it's 'peace writ large,' not just to stop the likelihood of conflict ... so it's hard for the UN and its various components to agree ... part of the problem is in the concept. (interview, UN senior staff)

The sense that peacebuilding could be interpreted as an all-encompassing notion on the one hand, or as a narrow and limited construct on the other, illustrates the ways in which peacebuilding is contested in post-conflict contexts. In Lebanon, the tensions in meanings associated with the term are taken forward in this report as an extension of the analytic framework.

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<sup>7</sup> According to one UN source, two distinct concepts of peacebuilding can be drawn along Lebanese political party lines: (1) civil peace, and (2) peace with Israel.

<sup>8</sup> In another example, UNESCO reported that, at a December 2009 conference on Inclusion in the Early Years, participants boycotted the session on peacebuilding. UNESCO subsequently replaced the term 'peacebuilding' with 'character building' in later projects to encourage participation. Other UN and national NGOs expressed have experienced similar issues and have opted to operationalize their work under such terms as 'consensus building' and 'civil peace' (Akar 2011).

## 1.4. Overview

Lebanon's long history of formal and non-formal education, which has weathered decades of civil strife, within a longer history of regional, national and localized armed conflicts, offers a rich context for the study of education, conflict and peacebuilding. As a country categorized among the 'middle income' group and one of the first to become eligible for the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), Lebanon also provides an important case for understanding the emerging role of the PBF, to which Lebanon was incorporated in 2010.

This report proceeds in Section Two with a brief history of conflict in Lebanon, and an analysis of the drivers of the conflict and the challenges of building peace. The purpose is to contextualize educational developments and to situate peacebuilding initiatives in education. The chronology is important to understanding the relationship between education and conflict, which is described in the section that follows, noting both the impact of conflict on the educational system and on the educational experiences of students and educators, as well as the factors contributing to their resilience.

Section Four then explores the role of the UN and international intervention in Lebanon. It describes the recent development of the PBF in Lebanon and considers the role of education therein. Section Five turns to a chronology of education programming during various phases of conflict in Lebanon throughout the past 20 years, paying particular attention to programmes that engage peacebuilding objectives, whether explicitly in name, or by intent. The analysis considers the various entry points to peacebuilding attempted from the education sector, and the assumptions or theories of change underpinning these programmes.

The next section focuses specifically on issues related to curricular development, as a dimension that emerged repeatedly as the perceived primary entry point to peacebuilding in education. Curricular development, both formal and non-formal, is an area that (1) spans UNICEF's contributions during the period under analysis; (2) has the potential to cut across an education sector that, despite the prominence of private schooling, reaches all schools and students through a mandated national curriculum;<sup>9</sup> and (3) provides useful insights into the potential and missed opportunities for peacebuilding in education. After exploring these issues, the final sections revisit the research objectives and conclude with key issues and recommendations for developing a peacebuilding agenda for education.

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<sup>9</sup> A minority of students is exempted from the national curriculum because they meet particular conditions, such as having lived outside Lebanon for a significant number of years, which would negatively impact their ability to follow aspects of the curriculum in Arabic. These students follow alternative programmes and examinations.

## 2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Lebanon is home to diverse peoples, both citizens and non-citizens, who have survived violent conflict, dispossession and exile during generations. With 18 officially recognized religious communities,<sup>10</sup> Lebanon has been alternately described as a diverse plural democracy and a sectarian mosaic with a protracted identity crisis at the core of its political unrest. Such imagery bears implications for how violent conflict, its root causes and consequences are variously interpreted and understood, and how such understandings in turn shape policies and programming during crisis and in the aftermath of political violence. This section provides a brief background to these conflicts and their legacies for Lebanese, Palestinians (since 1948), Armenians (since 1915) and Kurds (intensively in 1940); more recently Iraqis (since 2003) and Syrians (since 2011, and prior); and other minoritized peoples who have come to call Lebanon their permanent or temporary home.

Focusing on the major armed conflicts that have drawn attention from the international community, this analysis demonstrates the ways in which the political landscape, and how various groups experience it, is profoundly impacted by interconnected global, regional and national conflicts. These conflicts manifest themselves in localized tensions and in schools and school policies. The political landscape is also dynamic and multifaceted, requiring ongoing conflict analysis that both takes into account a long view of history with its longstanding and unresolved issues, and also pays heed to newer forms of direct and structural violence. To this end, this section provides a brief reading of conflict that considers both root causes and structural challenges, alongside their contemporary violent manifestations. It concludes by suggesting that Lebanon's spatial and temporal geographies of conflict challenge linear accounts of progression from conflict to post-conflict peacebuilding. This dynamic situation has implications for staged, or sequential, approaches to education and peacebuilding. These notions are revisited in later sections.

### 2.1. Sectarian foundations

Socio-political features preceding Lebanon's independence have shaped a culture of sectarianism that has pervaded Lebanon's societal institutions, underpinning the mobilization for major episodes of direct violence, and various forms of structural violence, since independence in 1943.

Sectarianism, or "the deployment of religious heritage as a primary marker of modern political identity," emerged as both a practice and a discourse during nineteenth-century Ottoman Lebanon (Makdisi 2000, p. 7). By that time, Lebanon already constituted a diverse region of minorities, including Muslims, Christians, Druzes and Jews. In the 1840s, the Sunni Ottomans established confessional councils to oversee the self-governance of these communities. The system included autonomy over children's schooling, which was developing under the patronage of various European

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<sup>10</sup> This number is often cited as 17 because the Lebanese Jewish community has been marginalized. The officially recognized Muslim sects are: Sunni, Twelver Shi'a, Druze, Alawite and Isma'ili. The officially recognized Christian sects are: Maronite, Greek Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, Evangelical Christian (including Protestants: Baptists, Quakers, Seventh-Day Adventists), Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Assyrian Church of the East, Chaldean Catholic, Copts, Syriac Catholic, and Syriac Orthodox. In addition, other religious groups such as Baha'is, Buddhists and Hindus exist in smaller numbers.

and American missionary groups who had competing interests in the region. Every religious community had an educational sponsor, who schooled their sect through the Arabic language and the language of the mission, except for the Shi'a, who were largely ignored by the educational enterprise of the period (Abouchedid and Nasser 2000).

The massacres of 1860 and subsequent formation of the Mutasarrifiyya of Mount Lebanon in 1861 saw the introduction of the *Règlement Organique* by Ottoman and European parties. This treaty determined the precise borders of the new province and partitioned Greater Lebanon into six districts according to sect-based administrative units. The *Règlement* "tried to create a rational, workable and, above all, elitist sectarian system" (Makdisi 2000, p. 161). Every aspect of the new order was to be sectarian, circumscribing public identity of inhabitants in a particular district to a single identity that would define their position in governance, taxation and the law. It is in this period that sectarian consciousness first took root in the region (Makdisi 2000).

At the same time, ties emerged between Christian communities and their international counterparts, such as the Maronites with France, and the Protestants with Britain and the United States. In addition, the Russians, Germans, Greeks and other European authorities seeking influence in the Ottoman region of Lebanon had established educational ties there (Frayha 2004). In this way, language and education spread along sectarian lines, with the ruling Ottomans developing schools for Sunni Muslims. This period would see the Arabic language assigned a literary function in schools, whereas foreign languages – the languages of the missions – were assigned "scientific and modernizing" functions in education, with lasting consequences (Zakharia 2009a). These developments would begin to implicate education in a process of differentiation, contemporaneous with the emergence of sectarianism as a discourse and practice and related inequalities (Zakharia 2009a).

The development of 'national' Christian and Islamic schools was also underway, largely in response to missionary and colonial activity, to establish 'Lebanese institutions' that would rival both the 'foreign school' and the Ottoman bid for mass schooling and Turkification. The stage was set for the rise of private and parochial schooling, embedded in the international and regional conflicts of the period. Further, the notion that these schools were superior to their state-governed counterparts took root at this time.

The culture of sectarianism was consolidated under the French Mandate (1920–1943), which saw the grooming of a Christian political elite and the forging of a political system that would define the sect-based power-sharing formula of present-day Lebanon. During this period, French schooling and the French language became prominent in private institutions and public life (Massialas and Jarrar 1991). Under French rule, the official census of 1932 found that Christians made up a 51 per cent majority of the population, while Muslims comprised 47 per cent (Maktabi 1999). Accordingly, the National Pact of 1943 established the governance formula of an independent Lebanon that would include a Maronite Christian President; a Sunni Muslim Prime Minister; a Shi'a Muslim Speaker of Parliament; and a Parliament to comprise a 6:5 ratio of Christians to Muslims. The resultant confessional-consociational democracy (Hanf 1993) structured the Government based on the

population's sectarian affiliations, or confessions.<sup>11</sup> The constitution gave the Maronite Christian president ultimate executive authority and Maronites were assigned to key positions in the ministries, the army, the judicial system and the Central Bank. No other census has been conducted since 1932; however, it is estimated today that almost 60 per cent of the population is Muslim (CIA World Factbook 2011), with Shi'a commonly believed to make up the largest minority. It is widely perceived that conducting a census that confirms these changed demographics would threaten a 'delicate balance of power'. Interviewees for this study suggested that they employ alternative terminologies when gathering household and other data in order to skirt this sensitivity.

Attempts to revise government representation to give Muslims a greater share have led to armed conflicts, including the War of 1958, and in part, the Civil War of 1975–1990. Significantly, observers note that the model of democracy has reinforced a culture of sectarianism that pervades public life and supports a system of kinship in which the succession of power is handed to family members, albeit through electoral processes that provide a veneer of democratic governance. In reality, like other nation-states beleaguered by conflict, the political leadership comprises a largely exclusive governing elite.

## **2.2. Armed conflict and unresolved grievances**

The insurrection of 1958 was just one manifestation of growing inequalities. Throughout the next decade, inequitable development would focus largely on Beirut and the Metn, while ignoring other regions such as the South, North and Bekaa valley. In particular, historically marginalized groups, such as the Shi'a, would be underrepresented in development efforts through the institutionalization of sectarianism as the means of accessing resources (Deeb 2006).

In education, government-initiated curricular reforms were underway by the late 1960s to foster a shared Arab national identity in public and private schools and to strengthen the public sector (Frayha 2004). These included strengthening the position of the Arabic language. However, by 1975, disparities in class-income distributions among the various sects would contribute to the ways in which elites were able to mobilize their lower-income compatriots against each other, and government-led educational initiatives were cut short by the onset of war.

The 1967, Arab-Israeli War had displaced a second round of Palestinians to Lebanon. Among these was the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), which established a base in Beirut to launch operations into Israel. This growing presence was to create a new dynamic of tensions. Competing notions of nationalism and what it meant to be Lebanese would contribute to dispositions towards forming alliances (or not) with the Palestinians. In addition, the notion that the Lebanese army was already biased towards the Christian leadership and that Palestinians could help tip the balance of power provided further rationale among some factions for the formation of alliances. Regional politics further contributed to these dynamics by financing the PLO, which established its stronghold and extended its networks by arming its Lebanese allies.

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<sup>11</sup> Consociationalism is a form of government that is meant to ensure group representation for divided societies, particularly those with no clear majority, to mitigate conflict and guarantee government stability and democracy through power-sharing. In Lebanon, this representation is based on sect and is often referred to as confessionalism.

The Cairo Agreement between the PLO and the Lebanese Army and approved by Parliament gave the PLO legitimacy over Palestinian refugee camps and allowed for the safe influx of arms from Syria. Thus, while the Arab states prevented the PLO from operating within their borders, they brokered the PLO's use of arms in Lebanon (Moubarak 2003).

Although these tensions were manifested in numerous armed encounters prior to 1975, the start of the Lebanese civil war is commonly attributed to 13 April 1975, which was to launch the brutal war that pitted groups of Christians, Muslims and Palestinians with and against each other and with and against Israelis and Syrians. Conflict and state failure compromised public schooling and the capacity of the Government to supervise curricula and schools more generally. The situation resulted in a proliferation of private and parochial institutions, which further contributed to religious and factional divisions. In linguistic terms, this was evident in the ways in which the Arabic language was stripped as a symbol of national unity and private schools promoted other languages (Zakharia 2009b). Education was widely viewed as a pathway to opportunities abroad, or a way out of the conflict (Ibid.). The segregation of religious communities due to protracted insecurity further entrenched the segregation of school communities, in which families could no longer bus their children across an insecure terrain.

The civil war has been characterized as religious in nature, but in reality, the composition of the various armed groups was much more complex, as were the trenchant political, economic and social factors underlying the conflict. The inadequacies of the political system established by the 1943 National Pact led to paralysis, and various ensuing interventions by regional and international forces failed to stop the fighting.

Between 1975 and 1990, it is estimated that between 150,000 and 200,000 people were killed, more than 100,000 were severely wounded, and 17,000 disappeared and remain unaccounted for. An estimated 810,000 people, among them Lebanese and Palestinians, were displaced (UNDP 1997), of which a quarter emigrated permanently. These displacements have had lasting consequences, despite the best efforts of the Ministry of Displaced that was established in 1992 to address illegal occupation, compensation and other issues.

For some, the civil war was the outcome of injustice in the confessional system in which a minority, namely the Maronite Christians, received a disproportionate share of power and economic resources. In short, it was viewed as a war for, or against, the status quo.

For others, the civil war was viewed as a consequence of the Palestinians in Lebanon, a Sunni-majority people who brought their conflict with Israel to Lebanon. This scapegoating would become a major legacy of the civil war for generations of stateless Palestinians.

Others point to the internationalization of communal conflict (Khalaf 2002), or what Ghassan Tueni has termed "the wars of others" (1990), whereby international and regional interests were played out in proxy wars in Lebanon, implicating Palestinians,

Syrians, Israelis, the United States and others. Importantly, the drivers of conflict at the beginning of the civil war evolved over time, changing as the conflict progressed and through various international interventions.

The 1989 Ta'if Agreement, led by Arab regional actors, resulted in a national reconciliation accord that brought an end to the civil war in 1990. The agreement constituted a compromise among Lebanese parties and ushered in 31 constitutional amendments, which were approved by Parliament in 1990. The agreement asserted the Arab identity and unity of Lebanon, and defined the Lebanese political system as a parliamentary democracy. It also defined the socioeconomic system as a free economy, favouring privatization, while emphasizing the need for balanced development across various regions of the country. Significantly, the agreement stated that abolishing political sectarianism constituted a progressive national goal, as articulated by article 95 of the Constitution. However, it did not set out a road map for this major undertaking. Thus, the agreement reproduced the Lebanese confessional state under a new formula of sectarian balance (Krayem n.d.), and did not address the structural limitations of such a system.

The Ta'if Agreement also addressed post-civil war educational reform, stipulating, among other things, the need to standardize curricula, to protect private schooling, and to develop public schools, with increased government control over both (Frayha 2004; Inati 1999). Through Ta'if, curricular reforms were charged with promoting "national belonging," "integration" and "spiritual and cultural openness" (Inati 1999, p. 60). Thus, strengthening a shared Lebanese national identity was among the general tenets of the resultant 1994 educational plan, which stipulated, among other things, common language (Arabic), history and civics components. The resultant post-civil war government-mandated national curriculum was launched in 1997 (see Section Three for further discussion).

### **2.3. Post-civil war conflicts**

Conflicts since the end of the civil war are a legacy of unresolved political tensions and grievances, as well as manifestations of the deepening polarization of political factions in recent years. They also reflect new regional dynamics and their influence on localized geographies and the process of sectarian differentiation. As such, the major episodes of contemporary violence, outlined briefly in this section, cannot be viewed in isolation, but rather, must be seen within the context of a longer history, and in relation to the challenges posed by the political system, inequitable economic development and social injustices. Recent conflicts also constitute localized geographies of humanitarian crises, embedded within larger and uneven geographies of medium- and longer-term development, complicating common linear notions of conflict to post-conflict progression. The dynamics of conflict in Lebanon suggest concurrent manifestations of age-old grievances and newer forms. For this reason, ongoing conflict analysis is critical in contexts like Lebanon. The dynamic brings into question the applicability of staged approaches to peacebuilding on a national scale.

**Israeli occupation and multiple incursions, 1990–2000.** After 22 years of occupation, Israel withdrew from the South and Bekaa valley in 2000, leaving behind 430,000 unexploded ordnances (UXOs). Hizballah led the resistance and is credited for playing an instrumental role in liberating the South. In addition to the hardships

faced by inhabitants of the occupied zone, during this period, a number of Israeli invasions and regular violations of airspace created an ongoing sense of insecurity for other segments of Lebanese society, as well as multiple temporary and permanent internal displacements. The Qana massacre of 1996, in which civilians taking refuge at a United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) makeshift shelter were directly targeted along with peacekeepers, marks one of the low points of this period. Since 2000, 27 have been killed and 232 injured by UXOs.

**Political assassinations, 2004–2008.** In 2004, the attempted assassination of a public official was to become the first of a series of politically motivated assassinations, and attempted assassinations, of high-profile figures, including journalists, intellectuals, and government and military officials. These operations claimed the lives of 10 officials and countless civilian bystanders. The 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, in particular, prompted massive demonstrations that precipitated the resignation of the Government and withdrawal of Syrian troops, whose presence dated back to 1976. It is to date, the first case to be referred to an international criminal court. The Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) was subsequently established with the support of the UN, pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1664 (2006) to prosecute those responsible. The statute went into force in 2007 under Security Council Resolution 1757 and four indictments were issued in June 2011. The STL is a source of great tension between backers (14 March and their allies) and opponents (8 March and their allies), and many fear the consequences of a deepening political and sectarian divide over this issue. These issues remain unresolved.

**The July War, 2006.** Israel launched a massive offensive into Lebanon after Hizballah kidnapped two Israeli soldiers across the Blue Line on 12 July 2006. The ensuing 34-day war between Hizballah and Israel killed 1,187 civilians as well as combatants, and injured 4,398, 15 per cent of these permanently. One million were displaced, of which one quarter fled to other countries, namely Syria. Of the 750,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs), 600,000 were sheltered by host families or in public buildings, notably schools (OCHA 2006). The war devastated civilian infrastructure, including hospitals and health clinics (11) and educational institutions (342), and exacted a heavy toll on the environment and agricultural lands. Approximately 1.2 million UXOs were dropped. The direct violence disproportionately impacted Shi'a Muslims living in South Lebanon, the Bekaa valley and Beirut's southern suburbs. A UN-brokered ceasefire took effect on 14 August following UN Security Council Resolution 1701, which also called for Israel's provision to the UN of all maps of landmines in Lebanon.<sup>12</sup> UNIFIL peacekeepers were deployed throughout the South. Resolution 1559 also called for the disarmament of all armed groups in Lebanon. These issues remain unresolved.

**Sit-Ins, protests, and riots, 2006–2007.** In addition to the political assassinations and other explosions and roadside bombs characterizing this period of insecurity, increased polarization of the Government led to its paralysis when six opposition (8 March) ministers resigned, rendering the country without an acting legislative body for 1.5 years, and without a president for 6 months. During this period, the 8 March coalition staged a major sit-in in the Beirut Central District, including the symbolic Martyrs Square, demanding the resignation of the Government. The sit-in, which was

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<sup>12</sup> The war formally ended when Israel lifted its naval blockade of Lebanon on 8 September 2006. However, Israeli troops remained in the border town of Ghajar as late as October 2006.



accompanied by several nonviolent demonstrations and marches, lasted 1.5 years, effectively paralyzing downtown businesses and negatively impacting tourism and investor confidence. More significantly, however, the sit-in raised the visibility of sectarian political issues. In January 2007, these tensions erupted into violent sectarian street confrontations in Beirut, the Bekaa and Akkar.

**The Nahr el-Bared Crisis, 2007.** In May 2007, a violent confrontation took place between about 300 members of the Al-Qaeda-inspired Fateh al-Islam and the Lebanese Army, developing into a war lasting more than three months, in and around the Palestinian refugee camp of Nahr el-Bared, near Tripoli in North Lebanon. Palestinians, whose history in Nahr el-Bared dates back to 1949 (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2010), were caught in the crossfire, which killed 50 civilians and displaced approximately 26,000 Palestinians and 1,000 residents of the surrounding area. In addition, 179 Lebanese soldiers and 226 militants were reportedly killed. The camp was almost entirely destroyed in the process, along with parts of the surrounding neighbourhood. The conflict not only wrought destruction and displacement, but also tension between the Palestinian refugees and their Lebanese neighbours, the latter blaming Palestinians for bringing the hostilities to their neighbourhood, and the former blaming the Lebanese for the destruction of their homes and human losses. As of 2009, an estimated 3,621 families continued to be displaced in temporary accommodations and 571 families were living with host families in the undamaged sections of Nahr el-Bared or the nearby Beddawi camp (United Nations Population Fund 2009). Less than 30 per cent of the original camp inhabitants were able to return (IDMC 2010). These issues remain unresolved.

**Sectarian clashes, 2008.** In May 2008, Hizballah took to the streets of West Beirut in a show of force in response to a decision by the Government to dismantle Hizballah's private communications installations and to fire the airport security chief. In addition, since the withdrawal of Syrian troops in 2005, tensions had been mounting in Tripoli between Alawi Muslims, supporting the 8 March block, and Sunni Muslims, supporting the 14 March block, in the largely Alawi neighbourhood of Jabal Mohsen and the largely Sunni neighbourhood of Bab Tebbaneh. The skirmishes mounted during this period led to a number of deaths, injuries and displacements. The tensions, which reflect, in part, sectarian allegiances in Lebanon, as well as orientations towards Syria and Saudi Arabia, have not been resolved.

**Sectarian clashes, 2011.** Violent clashes erupted again in 2011 between the Sunnis and Alawis of Tripoli's Bab Tebbaneh and Jabal Mohsen neighbourhoods. Observers noted that the clashes illustrate the ways in which localized conflicts are embedded in sectarian and regional issues. Most recently, the people's protests in Syria have been enacted in Lebanon alternatively through demonstrations of support of the Syrian regime and demonstrations of support of the Syrian people against the regime. As the Syrian uprising persists, its impact on tensions in Lebanon is likely to develop.

#### **2.4. The challenges of building peace**

Contemporary episodes of political violence, particularly since the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, are manifestations of a longer history of unresolved tensions and grievances, international and regional influences, structural challenges posed by the political system, inequitable economic development, social

injustices, and a deepening sectarian polarization in recent years. The education sector reflects these tensions and episodes of violence, which have impacted schooling in various ways (see Section Three). In addition, various instances of prolonged political deadlock throughout the past 20 years have effectively paralysed the Government and its institutions, posing challenges to progress on development goals in education.

In a 2008 report on strategic approaches to peacebuilding, Kraft et al. identified five structural challenges to peacebuilding in Lebanon:

- Conflicting concepts of national identity;
- The involvement in major regional and international conflicts;
- The consociational political system;
- An inequitable economic system; and
- The patriarchal value system.

These structural challenges, they argue, manifest themselves in core political, economic and social problems and impede the ability to manage contradictory interests in a peaceful manner. The deepening crisis of political polarization since 2006 is rooted in new manifestations of age-old considerations and concerns, both internal and external. These include the relative weight of the different sects within the power-sharing system; their position regarding regional conflicts (Arab-Israeli, US-Iran, Sunni-Shi'a); and the personal interests of political elites within the system to increase their own power base (Kraft et al. 2008). These issues are interconnected and point to historical issues related to the structure of the consociational democracy. While article 95 of the Lebanese Constitution, drawn as part of the 1989 post-civil war Ta'if Accord, calls for the "abolishment of confessionalism," there has been no effort to detail the path.

Another challenge to peacebuilding in Lebanon is that grievances from various violent events remain unresolved. No official channels were established for reconciliation after the civil war or any of the ensuing conflicts or assassinations (see Sections 2.2 and 2.3). As a result, there have been no outlets for grievances, no notable public dialogue or mechanisms for transitional justice. In 1991, civil war crimes received amnesty and today, many of the wartime elite hold public office. Thus by some accounts, peacebuilding has not been on the table in any real sense, except as reflected in security measures (interview, UN senior staff; Lebanese CSO representative). This creates a disconnection for individuals and groups working on peacebuilding in more localized capacities, between their initiatives and the larger reality. Their sense that the system is unchangeable is one of the primary reasons given for why peacebuilding activities in education have largely focused on individual transformation. However, such a focus, when funded by UN organizations, is also perceived by beneficiaries, who have grievances, as hypocritical, for not addressing what they perceive to be the root causes of conflict at the national or international level (interview, Lebanese CSO representative; Palestinian CSO representative).

Furthermore, while a surge in public expenditure followed the end of the civil war, research has shown that sect has been the criterion underlying its allocation in the areas of education, health and infrastructure needs (Salti and Chaaban 2010). In

addition, the association between need and expenditure has been loose, at best. Further, regional poverty indices have shown no relation to the distribution of government social-assistance expenditures (Ibid.). Thus, regional disparities have widened. For example, in a 2007 UNDP study, poverty rates (based on expenditure) were shown to decrease in all of the *mohafazat*, or counties, between 1997 and 2004, except for in the poorest: North Lebanon – which not only started in the poorest position, but was the only *mohafaza* to also show an increase in poverty.

This sect-based strategy of disbursement is linked to a premise of ‘balanced development’, which was called for in the 1989 Ta’if Accord and which has been central to development planning. Dibeh (2005, as cited in Salti and Chaaban 2010) argues that various re-distributional mechanisms played a significant role in the reconstruction of physical, political and social capacities of the various regions, and in the reintegration of the population and legitimization of the Government in post-civil war Lebanon. However, this allocation of funds has not been driven by an equity or needs-based approach.

This reality is compounded by inefficient spending. In education, for example, Lebanon is reported to input 13 per cent more to achieve the same outputs as best practice countries (Salti and Chaaban 2010). In the education sector, indicators on poverty, literacy and drop-out rates have been shown to bear no relation to programme investment in expanding school capacity or allocation of other educational resources (Ibid.). In short, the distribution of government expenditure by *mohafaza* has not been consistent with the regional distribution of need.

As Khalaf (2002) and others have observed, since the civil war, political leaders have increasingly drawn on sectarian affiliations and established television stations, newspapers, institutions of higher learning, research foundations, voluntary associations, sports teams and advocacy groups, each with its explicit factionalized mission. This sectarian identification has become a prime marker or lens through which to interpret behaviour, including policy and programming.

The differentiation and identification of space, or geographies, by sect has also been exacerbated. The splintering of space is both physical and psychological and is an enduring consequence of the civil war (Khalaf 2002). This differentiation has been accelerated by post-civil war conflict, and it is felt through increased segregation in the education sector, whereby school principals have voiced concern regarding the increased segregation of their school communities (Zakharia 2009a). This phenomenon is more widespread in public schools and low-tuition private schools.

The 2008–2009 National Human Development Report, entitled *Towards a Citizen’s State*, notes that the relationship of the Lebanese citizen to the state is mediated by sect, through which Lebanese citizens are unequal before the law in terms of personal status matters (UNDP 2009). The authors outline the necessity of moving towards a citizen’s democracy, one that strengthens the allegiance of citizens to their state and to each other as citizens. In this vein, citizenship, human rights and equity frameworks could provide vision to peacebuilding efforts in Lebanon, for both citizens and non-citizens, by addressing the root causes of conflict, their structural features and contemporary processes of differentiation.

## 2.5. Stateless and displaced peoples

Stateless, undocumented and displaced people of Lebanon face innumerable challenges, including various forms of structural violence and discrimination. Long-term comprehensive visions of peace require recognition of their histories, their complex relationships with conflict and their contemporary struggles, which are inextricably linked to those of the Lebanese people.

Palestinians in Lebanon trace their histories to the 1948 Nakba or to the 1967 Arab-Israeli War, during which an estimated 700,000 were displaced, settling in large numbers in neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, Syria and Jordan (Petee 2005). As of December 2010, 455,000 Palestinian refugees (or 10 per cent of Lebanon's population) were registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Lebanon, with many residing in the country's 12 refugee camps (UNRWA 2010) and some 16 informal gatherings. During the 1950s, a window of opportunity allowed for Christian Palestinian refugees to claim Lebanese citizenship as part of a larger interest in increasing the Lebanese Christian population. Such privileges were not extended to the Sunni Muslim majority of Palestinians who, as stateless people, do not share the same social and civil rights as the rest of the population. They are also barred from working in 20 professions and have limited access to public health and educational facilities. As such, many refugees rely on UNRWA, as the provider of social services and as a major employer. In addition, discriminatory social laws render Lebanese women who marry Palestinian men unable to transfer their citizenship to their children, who are born stateless. Such laws constitute institutionalized forms of discrimination, or structural violence, by the Government of Lebanon (GoL).<sup>13</sup> They are compounded by entrenched social forms of discrimination by the Lebanese people. Armenians (mainly Christian) comprise the largest non-Arab ethnic group in Lebanon, constituting 4 per cent of the population (CIA Factbook 2011). While Armenians have been present in Lebanon for centuries, contemporary communities were established largely after World War I, when an influx of Armenians occurred as a consequence of the Armenian genocide. The survivors settled in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon and Palestine and eventually became Lebanese citizens.

In addition, Lebanon is home to thousands of other stateless, undocumented or displaced people, including Kurds, Iraqis and Syrians. Several forced migrations brought Kurds to Lebanon, starting in the twelfth century and again in the early and mid-twentieth century (Meho 2002). Kurds represent the second largest non-Arab ethnic group in Lebanon, but unlike the Armenians, who are recognized as a distinct ethnic and religious group, the Kurds are not ascribed any special status. They are counted among the Sunni Muslims, but they are generally not citizens.

In addition, an estimated 50,000 to 60,000 Iraqi refugees reside in Lebanon since the start of the US-led war on Iraq (2003). Undocumented Syrian migrant labourers who move across the border with Lebanon form another group. Since March 2011, an estimated 5,000 Syrians have taken up refuge in Lebanon as a result of the Syrian uprising and brutal government crackdown on protesters (IRIN 2011). Of these, 3,500 are registered, and numbers may actually be higher. It is expected that the number of Syrians will grow and that children will require accommodation into the school system

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<sup>13</sup> For a description of institutionalized discrimination against Palestinians in Lebanon, see, for e.g., NISCVT et al. 2004.

as the situation persists. Syrians in Lebanon face various forms of discrimination and threats to their security (IRIN 2011).

In addition to these historical and current displacements, the Norwegian Refugee Council's Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2010) identifies three general periods of violence that have led to massive internal displacements of Lebanese citizens that remain unresolved: The 1975–1990 civil war; 2006 July war; and 2007 Nahr el-Bared crisis (see Sections 2.2 and 2.3 for an overview). In 2008, other forms of sectarian violence also caused significant temporary displacements, including up to 6,000 families in Bab Tebbaneh and Jabal Mohsen (IRIN 2008).

## 2.6. Discussion

Section Two demonstrates how socio-political features preceding Lebanon's independence in 1943 set the stage for a culture of sectarianism that has pervaded Lebanon's societal institutions, including schools, and has underpinned the mobilization for major episodes of armed conflict, including the Lebanese civil war (1975 to 1990) and more recent forms of political violence. It has also underpinned the institutionalization of various forms of discrimination, notably against the Palestinians, whose dire socioeconomic situation is compounded by discriminatory laws and regulations, which deny them enjoyment of civil and social rights.

In addition, more recent Iraqi and Syrian refugees and other migrants face related challenges and social exclusion, particularly in schools. Because of historical sensitivities and the complexity of contemporary regional political alignments and internal polarizations, refugees hold at best ambiguous status in Lebanon. For example, the GoL considers Syrians to be internally displaced, and lack of refugee recognition means that they are not entitled to the full care and protection of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (IRIN 2011). Furthermore, historical and contemporary internal dynamics and relations with Syria threaten both Syrian refugees' security and Lebanon's sovereignty. Thus, conflict analysis in Lebanon requires ongoing consideration of citizens and non-citizens whose histories of conflict and marginalization have been, and continue to be, inextricably linked.

To understand contemporary insecurities as they impact schools and the ways in which education may serve to perpetuate conflict, conflict analysis in Lebanon also requires looking at historically unresolved political, economic and social grievances alongside contemporary grievances and threats to security. Sectarianism becomes a lens through which to understand a process of differentiation that has entrenched roots, and that is fuelled by the inadequacies of a confessional-consociational political system. This process of differentiation extends to citizens and non-citizens, and implicates the educational system, historically and in the present day.

These dynamics are compounded by the delicate positioning of Lebanon within the Arab-Israeli conflict, and of Palestinians within Lebanon, such that external regional tensions have combined with those internal tensions and marginalization factors to produce a series of conflicts throughout the past six decades. Furthermore, increased polarization between Lebanese political factions in recent years has resulted in a number of contemporary episodes of violence and political deadlock. These reflect

new regional dynamics, including historical and contemporary relations with Syria, and their influence on localized geographies and ongoing processes of differentiation.

Thus the contours of conflict and post-conflict situations are fluid; and in Lebanon, different phases of conflict coexist, demonstrating the limitations of linear conceptualizations of progression from emergency to post-conflict peacebuilding. For example, a localized humanitarian crisis, such as that experienced by Palestinian and Lebanese populations within and around Nahr el-Bared camp in North Lebanon in 2007, overlapped with immediate post-conflict reconstruction in other parts of the country after the July 2006 war, as well as insecurity caused by intermittent violence and targeted assassination, all within a larger post-civil war national trajectory.

Therefore, armed conflict and localized episodes of political violence have, and continue to, differentially impact communities across various geographies in Lebanon. These multiple and uneven trajectories of conflict are a significant feature of Lebanon's recent history, warranting a dynamic view of conflict that is sensitive to longer-term, deeply entrenched and persistent structural grievances, alongside newer forms of political, economic and social factors. The situation also warrants conflict analysis that considers populations of citizens and non-citizens alongside each other, and draws linkages between the threats to their security and marginalization, and the opportunities for peacebuilding therein. This has implications for attempts to devise staged, or sequential, approaches to education and peacebuilding towards a sustainable peace.

### 3. THE EDUCATION SECTOR

Education reflects its larger social context and Lebanon is no exception. The education system in Lebanon has a rich history, dating as far back as the early sixteenth century, when the ruling Ottomans permitted French communities in Lebanon to open their own schools. Over time, the education system has developed, in part as a consequence of its missionary roots and in part as a consequence of the civil war, into a diversity of schools and umbrella organizations, which oversee private and parochial schools. Article 10 of the Lebanese Constitution asserts that education is free and gives the freedom for confessional groups to run their own schools, given they follow the national curriculum and respect the principles of dignity and order. However, writing more than 40 years ago, Wheeler (1966) noted:

The Lebanese officially consider the diversity of educational institutions a source of intellectual enrichment, but the foreign observer notes the ill-concealed disdain with which many Christian middle class Lebanese regard the national (or 'Arab') school. Such an attitude is probably productive of social strain. (p. 303)

Wheeler's observation is not lost on today's system, in which public schools generally do not enjoy the same reputation as private schools, whether parochial or secular. They are also associated with a monolingual education, despite the bilingual structure of the national curriculum. The private-dominated educational system, high status of parochial institutions, and confluence of French and Anglo-American influences in

education and their missionary histories make Lebanese education somewhat distinct from most of its Arab neighbours.

This section provides an overview of the education system and the impact of armed conflict and other forms of direct and structural violence on it.

### 3.1. Overview of education in Lebanon

The MEHE regulates and administers its educational institutions and the Lebanese education system, which enrolls more than 1 million students. Although UNRWA schools are subject to MEHE school regulations, as other private institutions, Palestinian and other refugee children enrolled in these schools are excluded from the Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD) statistics (Nabti 2006). In Lebanon, UNRWA runs a total of 75 schools for 33,000 students.<sup>14</sup>

Among the three types of schools in Lebanon – public (state), private and private-free<sup>15</sup> – the private sector thrives significantly more than state education. One indicator is the rise of enrolment of students in private schools. Indeed, 61.5 per cent of students in Lebanon were enrolled in private education in 2002/03 and this figure climbed to 67 per cent in 2008 (CERD 2008). During the 2007/08 academic year, 70 per cent of elementary students were enrolled in private and private-free schools, as compared with 60 per cent of intermediate students and 50 per cent of secondary students (MEHE).

The MEHE has attributed the decrease in public school enrolments to a widening achievement gap between public and private schools. Low achievement in public schools is attributed to:

- Low qualifications of the teaching and administrative staff in schools, and the lack of coherence between the teachers' specializations and the needed requirements;
- Absence of a suitable learning and teaching environment (infrastructure: buildings and equipment); and
- Lack of laws and regulations, which are necessary for increasing the possibility for improvement. (MEHE)

The Lebanese education system awards the Lebanese Baccalaureate through a trilingual system of schooling that has emerged as a legacy of missionary education and civil war patterns. The Lebanese programme can be instructed in Arabic, English and French, with the exception of civics, history and geography, which are taught in Arabic. These three subjects were designed as programmes of study for promoting national citizenship, and for this reason, adhere to the Arabic language. Only holders of the Lebanese Baccalaureate are eligible for posts as civil servants and admission into the Lebanese University, the only state-funded institution of higher education. The Lebanese programme comprises four cycles (see Figure 1). After completing the first three cycles, typically nine years of schooling, students sit for their first government exam, the Baccalaureate I (Brevet), which sifts students into university preparatory or technical/vocational tracks of Cycle IV (Secondary). Within the second

<sup>14</sup> See [www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=65](http://www.unrwa.org/etemplate.php?id=65).

<sup>15</sup> Private-free, or fee-subsidized, schools are institutions subsidized by either confessional groups or NGOs, and although some do charge a fee, it remains much lower than private schools.

year of Cycle IV, students in the university preparatory track are sifted again into humanities and sciences tracks, in which they are further tracked in the final year, into four branches of the Baccalaureate II (Terminale). After the final year of secondary school, students sit for a second official exam, the Baccalaureate II, which, as a terminal exam, determines whether they receive official recognition of secondary completion. The rigid educational pipeline and tracking mechanisms create tremendous pressures on students and provide no recourse for students who face difficulties or who come to the system with different educational histories or learning needs.

**FIGURE 1. STRUCTURE OF THE LEBANESE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

Stages	Cycles	Years of Study		Official Exams
Kindergarten		2		
Elementary I	Cycle I	3	} Basic Education	Baccalaureate I (Brevet)
Elementary II	Cycle II	3		
Intermediate	Cycle III	3		
Secondary	Cycle IV	3		Baccalaureate II (Terminale)

Source: *Lebanese National Curriculum (MEHE 1997)*.

While article 10 supports the establishment of confession-based schools, all public and private schools are subject to following the Lebanese national curriculum unless the school also provides other forms of secondary certificates. Through private education, students can opt to pursue secondary school certificates such as the US-inspired High School Diploma, the International Baccalaureate, the UK-based Graduate Certificate of Secondary Education, or the French Baccalaureate. Unless students have official exemption from Arabic, such certificates must be pursued in addition to the Lebanese Baccalaureate.

Four MEHE agencies are critical to the development of educational programmes in conjunction with international and local NGOs. The first is the office of the Director General, who reviews educational programmes designed for the public sector and grants access to public schools. The coordination of donors and programmes that support components of the NES takes place through the Education Sector Development Secretariat. The Direction de l'Orientation Pédagogique et Scolaire (DOPS) provides guidance and counselling at the school level. Finally, the CERD, although not a government agency, serves as a research arm and provides statistics on the education system and support for curriculum and textbook development. Each of the six governorates also has a regional education office.

In a country report on Lebanon (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics 2010), financing and governance of education development was presented in two reconstruction periods: post-civil war (1990–2006) and recovery (2006–2009). The transition from one period to the next demonstrated progress in strategy and policy development and management of



external funds. However, the report still underlined shortcomings, including the recurrence of armed conflict in 2006 and 2007, the ongoing need for infrastructural reconstruction and the ongoing shortage of input from stakeholders (e.g., teachers and students) in developing policy and strategy. Another apparent set of trends is the change in government funding and influx of external financial assistance.

Government spending on education in Lebanon in the past decade (1999–2009) shows a reverse U-shape, illustrating a rise and decline in state expenditure on education (see Figure 2). Concurrently, international aid for education development in Lebanon has increased. The overlapping timelines of increased international aid and decreased government spending suggests that the influx of aid is correlated to a decrease in government spending on education. However, the nature of this relationship is not clear.

**FIGURE 2. GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE ON EDUCATION**

Year	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003 <sup>‡</sup>	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Expenditure on education as % of GDP	2.0	1.9	2.8	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6	2.0	1.8
Total government expenditure	10.4	9.2	11.1	12.3	12.5	12.7	11	9.8	9.6	8.1	7.2

Source: UNESCO Institute for Statistics.

<sup>‡</sup> Data for 2003 are not available; thus these figures represent the mean of 2002 and 2004.

International aid to educational development in Lebanon has come through direct and indirect routes. Direct routes entail funds assigned for the advancement of public education through the strategies and capacities of the MEHE. Indirect routes also aim at the quality enhancement of state education, or non-formal education, but are channelled through missions of NGOs.

Probably the most noteworthy inflow of direct government aid came after the publication of the revised National Curriculum in 1997, a result of the Education Reform Plan of 1994. In 1997, the World Bank proposed and co-funded (nearly 80 per cent) the US\$71 million Education Development Project (EDP 2000–2009) for enhancing the quality of education and opportunities provided by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports,<sup>16</sup> developing a national education strategy, and increasing student enrolment in the public sector. Funds for the EDP were also generated from the Paris III donor conference in 2007. The outcomes of the EDP, mainly the Education Sector Development Plan (described further on), led the World Bank to design the Second Education Development Project (EDP II), with a loan for US\$40 million from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. From November 2010 to 2016, EDP II aims to: (1) enhance the quality of learning and teaching in general and preschool education; and (2) further develop the managerial capacities of the MEHE, regional education departments and schools. Furthermore, the components of the NES have also drawn funds from other international

<sup>16</sup> The ministry was soon after restructured into the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

organizations. For instance, the European Commission (EC) has committed to building the capacity of finance management at the MEHE for the NES elements of citizenship education and improving retention. Also, the French-based Agence Française de Développement and the Arab Council are in talks with the MEHE to finance the NES components for curriculum reform and development.

In December 2010, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) officially awarded the GoL US\$75 million for the five-year Developing Rehabilitation Assistance to Schools and Teacher Improvement (D-RASATI) project. This project aims at improving access to schooling and quality education at all public schools in Lebanon with a US\$33 million allocated budget for computer labs. Unlike the EDP and EDP II, the USAID funds will be managed by local NGOs.

In addition, the EC has committed 15 million euros to UNRWA for improving the employment opportunities of Palestinians by providing access to higher education. Thus, aid to education comes through a number of direct and indirect routes, whether explicitly for peacebuilding projects or for other related dimensions.

### **3.2. The impact of armed conflict on schooling**

The civil war crippled the public education system, which had been enjoying some developments in the 1950s and 1960s. The insecurity, daily disruptions to schooling and immobility impacted access to education. The situation resulted in a proliferation of private schools, which remained open to varying extents throughout the war period, despite being physically targeted, occupied by militias and displaced people, and used as centres for disseminating propaganda and recruiting youth to various causes (Zakharia 2004). The use of foreign languages in schooling, namely French and to a lesser extent English, reverted to pre-civil war sectarian divisions (Joseph 2004). In addition, confessional versions of history were developed and deployed.

According to Oweini (1998), the average child during this period was exposed to at least one of the following traumatic events: bombardment, displacement, witnessing violent acts, bereavement and extreme poverty. Militias recruited child soldiers who participated in brutality by day and returned to their families by night (Hermez 2010). Personal memoirs from this period make frequent mention of the disruption to schooling. In addition, teachers were regularly threatened at gunpoint and some were assassinated. Rules lost their meaning for schools, with an increased movement of populations, militia presence on campuses, and increased transience (Assal and Farrel 1992). The economic decline led to schools at various points not being able to pay their teachers' salaries. At one prominent school, teachers agreed to take a 50 per cent pay cut at the expense of their own families in order to keep the school going (personal communication). Stories of this form of commitment are well known and point to the value of education in emergencies for both teachers and students, and the particular value attached to schooling in Lebanon.

School disruptions and closures meant gaps in the curriculum and materials being cut for examinations when they were held. Irregularity of the national exam further hampered students' promotion and graduation, and corruption became widespread. Students were discouraged from presenting opinions that did not follow the 'script', and

thus critical thinking was impeded to ensure an examination 'pass' (Akar 2009). Insecurity further segregated school populations.

Public high schools, in particular, were chaotic throughout the country (Assal and Farrel 1992). Because of the perception that private and religious schools were better managed, parents increasingly enrolled their children in such schools, where possible. Secondary school narratives from this period focused on the importance of schooling for signalling an improved security situation, as well as bringing some order to the chaos of conflict, structuring their days and assigning tasks (Assal and Farrel 1992). Importantly, schooling was cited as an important avenue for developing friendships and relationships with caring teachers (Zakharia 2004) and providing a measure of protection (Assal and Farrel 1992).

The 2006 July War and its aftermath similarly had a damaging impact on another generation of students. The teachers in the aftermath of the July War were formerly students during the civil war, and they were at a loss as how to cope with the sectarian tensions that emerged in the post-2006 academic year. The war destroyed schools and internally displaced teachers and students, mainly in the South of Lebanon and southern suburbs of Beirut. Nearly 50 schools were completely destroyed and about 300 were seriously damaged. An approximation of war damages to education was estimated at US\$45 million. Further, in 2007, the Nahr el-Bared crisis and the destruction of the Palestinian refugee camp displaced thousands of students. In addition, the constant clashes in the North of Lebanon, as a reflection of (1) the unstable situation in Lebanon since 2005, and (2) the situation in Syria since March 2011, have had a considerable impact on schooling and peacebuilding-related initiatives in schools.

During this period, student security has figured largely in the lives of schools. This is reflected in the ways that policies are taken on whether to open or to close a school in the face of violent protests or road-side bombs in particular neighbourhoods, or calls to action to display political support for one movement or another.

Schools established a policy of silencing political discussion in schools in the wake of political and sectarian tensions in the post-2006 climate. This official silencing policy barred dialogue among teachers and among students, and measures were taken to ensure that parents understood this policy through circulars home and signage on school walls (Zakharia 2011). From the perspective of school administrators, these policies were meant to protect, because teachers were perceived not to know how to handle alternative views and there was growing concern to ensure an absence of violence between students on school campuses.

Still, it should be noted that students engaged in conversations about the political situation and sought teachers who were willing to skirt the rules in order to explain to them what was going on (Zakharia 2011). This reality suggests that supporting teachers and preparing them to undertake difficult conversations is vital to establishing both negative and positive peace in schools during violent conflict. Further, public and private schools would benefit from disaster preparedness training.

The sectarian nature of violent conflict in Lebanon has reinforced a culture of sectarianism, which has manifested itself in the strengthening of confessional schools. The vast majority of schools and educational institutions in the private and public sectors have, to some degree or another, a confessional status, whether by mission or by geography. So, while schools with religious missions exist (primarily found in private schools), schools without an explicit confessional mission still comprise a population representative of the community in which it is located. However, a concern is raised when one sees the establishment of two or three public schools on the same street, which 'naturally' houses students from similar confessions together. This questions the extent to which confessional schools can promote attitudes and skills for social cohesion (Akar 2011).

Furthermore, studies have shown that a civil war discourse is reproduced in education among a population of students that did not live it (ESCWA). Larkin (2010) refers to this phenomenon in Lebanon as "post-memory," or the ways in which a generation of Lebanese youth have grown up dominated by accounts of events that preceded their birth. The general public silence regarding the civil war and the confessional orientation of schooling has served to further the divisive features of schooling. However, in the conflict-affected regions of South Lebanon, after 2006, and North Lebanon, after 2007, the resilience of the education sector, including reconstruction and recovery, has been attributed to political and faith-based organizations (Euro-Trends 2009). Thus, while the confessional nature of schooling on the whole appears to re-inscribe social divisions, it appears to also play a significant role in the resilience of the education system on the whole.

### **3.3. Government plans and key documents for post-conflict education**

Only a small number of assessments on education were conducted after these armed conflicts, despite a flurry of educational activity. A short background paper for the *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007* reviewed early childhood care and education. It argued that the civil war in Lebanon "hampered" early childhood services and that, despite parents transferring their children from private to public schools due to economic struggles, enrolment in the private sector continued to increase (Faour et al. 2006).

One year after the 2006 July War, the UNDP carried out a progress review of educational development that demonstrated South Lebanon suffering the greatest damage (El-Hage 2008). Citing the UNICEF press release (17 October 2006), approximately 50 schools were completely destroyed and nearly 300 partially damaged with the presence of UXOs in and en route to schools. Nearly 400,000 students were directly affected. As a result of nearly 1 million displaced Lebanese, schools in Beirut struggled to accommodate an influx of students.

In a report conducted at the Consultation and Research Institute (World Bank and the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) 2007), statistics were used from a UNICEF press release (12 October 2006, AnNahar newspaper) indicating that 3.5 per cent of children in South Lebanon need psychiatric care and 95 per cent are in need of support to return to normal living. The study employed a Participatory Rapid Assessment, collecting qualitative data from 26 villages through interviews and focus groups. Findings indicated that the most serious damages to education caused by the 2006

war were the destruction of schools, loss of clean water, and psychological impact on students' learning capacities.

In January 2007, the GoL presented the Government Reform Programme at the International Conference in Support of Lebanon – Paris III – where the agenda was entitled, 'Recovery, Reconstruction and Reform'. This reform plan developed a fiscal strategy aimed at recovering the budgetary deficit and boosting the economy through the private sector. At the social level, the document stipulated plans for strategic development to enhance social safety nets and governance for health and education systems, financing of vocational education, and the development of a national education strategy that would ensure equal opportunities and quality general education. At the same time of the Paris III conference, the World Bank had commenced its EDP. As one of its outcomes, the Lebanese Association for Educational Studies (LAES) generated an NES, which was reported in the Paris III Progress Report (2007) and the EDP Completion Report (2010), and endorsed by the Council of Ministers in April 2010.<sup>17</sup> The NES outlined five priorities that were later extended into a 10-point NES framework (2010–2015) outlining a more comprehensive blueprint for developing general education (see Figure 3). This five-year strategy paved additional routes for external financial assistance.

**FIGURE 3. THE NES FRAMEWORK, 2010–2015**

<b>5 Priorities – LAES</b>	<b>10 Points – MEHE</b>
1. Education available on the basis of equal opportunity	Early childhood education
	Improving retention and achievement
	Development of infrastructure
2. Quality education that contributes to building a knowledge society	Professionalization of the teaching workforce
	Modernization of school management
	Achievement assessment and curriculum development
3. Education that contributes to social integration	Citizenship education
4. Education that contributes to economic development	Information and communications technology (ICT) in education
	National qualification framework
5. Governance of education	Institutional development

In 2007, the GoL published the 'Social Action Plan: Toward Strengthening Social Safety Nets and Access to Basic Social Services', which outlined an action plan aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), with particular emphases on eradicating poverty, improving access to primary education and basic health care and development of basic infrastructure and job creation.

Furthermore, the MEHE has established mechanisms for implementing the MES through working groups made up of education specialists and MEHE administrative personnel.

<sup>17</sup> The Council of Ministers did not meet during 2006–2009 due to government instabilities.

### 3.4. Discussion

Despite the devastating impact of conflict on schools, students and their communities, the education sector has shown remarkable resilience, although recovery has been slow and uneven. For example, according to the Lebanese Education Database, primary gross enrolment rates have been stagnant, at about 95–100 per cent (MEHE/UNESCO 2008) and regional disparities are significant, with primary net enrolments ranging from 50 per cent in the North, South and Bekaa to 97 per cent in other regions. Similarly, repetition and drop-out rates vary greatly, particularly at the end of lower secondary, when students prepare to sit for the Brevet exam and are tracked into university-bound and technical/vocational streams. Further, the education sector has suffered from the migration of thousands of teachers and related education professionals. Such issues differentially impact conflict-affected communities, and children and youth from minoritized groups.

The priorities set out by the NES seek to address the current fragilities of the education sector. The educational priorities have the potential to align with a peacebuilding agenda in education while also pointing to possible entry points for peacebuilding. However, being a nascent document, the NES has not yet enjoyed wide dissemination or discussion regarding implementation and the ways in which the priorities might align with a peacebuilding agenda in education. At a stakeholder consultation meeting, the priorities were presented by the MEHE as serving a peacebuilding agenda, particularly regarding Priority 1 (Education available on the basis of equal opportunity); Priority 3 (Education that contributes to social integration; and Priority 4 (Education that contributes to economic development). While these priorities suggest the *potential* for addressing equity and structural violence, their *alignment* with a peacebuilding agenda will have much to do with how they are implemented, such as which populations are included through targeted mechanisms and how, and to what extent the drivers of conflict are creatively addressed.

Government stakeholders noted the inefficiencies of the educational system and lack of specialized training for MEHE staff for this undertaking. The UN and the GoL were described as working along parallel tracks but in the same direction: the former on the fast track and the latter on the slow track (interview, government official). With greater coordination through working groups and joint frameworks, it was hoped that the tracks would eventually merge at their goal. This issue is revisited in Section 6.

## 4. INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTION AND THE UN PEACEBUILDING FUND

International intervention has been one of the mainstays of Lebanon's history. The UN began establishing specialized agencies soon after Lebanon's independence. Currently, 22 UN organizations are present in Lebanon, with various levels of activity and visibility. They administer a wide range of developmental activities at the country level. The UNCT and the Resident Coordinator, both supported by the Office of the Resident Coordinator, are tasked with aligning UN-related activities with government strategy and interagency programmes and initiatives. However, in interviews, UN stakeholders suggested that coordination and alignment between agencies, and with UN and government frameworks, required further attention, particularly in relation to peacebuilding. This section provides an overview of these frameworks.

### 4.1. Peacekeeping missions

In Lebanon, peacekeeping is the operation for which the UN is most widely recognized, reflecting the prominent role that the UN plays in security, as compared with other areas. To date, Lebanon has had three UN peacekeeping missions, two of which are still deployed.

UNIGOL. In 1958, the UN Security Council Resolution 128 (1958) established the UN Observation Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL) on 11 June 1958, following an outbreak of violence between Muslims and Christians regarding amendments to the National Pact. The mission served: "to ensure that there is no illegal infiltration of personnel or supply of arms or other material across the Lebanese borders" (UNSCR 128, 1958). Operations included observation posts, evaluation teams to review and monitor operation activities, and aerial surveillance. The UNIGOL was entirely withdrawn by 9 December 1958 following civil unrest.

UNDOF. In 1974, the second peacekeeping mission, which is still in effect, was launched to maintain the Agreement on Disengagement between Israel and Syria following the war that erupted in October 1973 in the Golan Heights. This agreement called for a UN observer force and, on the same day, the Security Council adopted Resolution 350 to create the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). Although its mandate is geared towards maintaining a ceasefire between Syria and Israel, UNDOF has situated observation posts on the Mount Hermon mountain range on the Lebanese-Syrian border. Despite the tranquillity between Israel and Syria, the UNDOF mandate is renewed every six months and will most likely continue until, according to the Secretary-General, settlement across the Middle Eastern region is reached.

UNIFIL. In 1978, the UN Security Council adopted Resolutions 425 and 426, which called for an Israeli ceasefire and withdrawal of all troops from South Lebanon, following the 14 March 1978 Israeli invasion. Simultaneously, the UN established UNIFIL and dispatched the first troops on 23 March 1978. The UNIFIL peacekeeping mission had three objectives: (1) to confirm the withdrawal of Israeli forces; (2) to restore international peace and security; and (3) to assist the GoL in ensuring the

return of its effective authority in the area.<sup>18</sup> During the civil war, Israel invaded again in June 1982 and UNIFIL maintained its efforts to protect and provide humanitarian aid to local communities. Complete withdrawal of Israeli troops took place on 25 May 2000, which the UN Secretary-General confirmed and reported on 16 June 2000. The withdrawal line became known as the Blue Line. Following a period of tranquillity, sporadic exchanges of fire between Hizballah and the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) erupted, and soon after, the 2006 July War broke out. Despite the 34 days of intense fighting, the UNIFIL mission continued to conduct military observations, assist in humanitarian aid and provide medical assistance. The war left 16 UN staff injured and 5 dead. The 2006 War ended soon after Resolution 1701, which also expanded the UNIFIL mandate by bringing in the Maritime Task Force and instantly reinforcing the 2,000 troops to 15,000 military personnel. Peacekeeping efforts continued despite the Israel-Lebanon border clash on 3 August 2010 between the Lebanese and Israeli armies during an Israeli tree-cutting exercise south of the Blue Line on Lebanese territory. UNIFIL is also heavily involved in demining activities in the South of Lebanon.

#### **4.2. UN post-civil war common country assessments and analyses**

Nearly a decade after the Ta'if Accord in 1989, the UNCT initiated the first of three Common Country Assessment (CCA) reports for Lebanon. The first CCA focused on “poverty alleviation, employment and sustainable livelihood, health, education, environment management, governance and institution building, empowerment and participation” (UNCT 1998, p. 2). It aimed to provide a framework for the improvement of inter-organizational work and development of the first UNDAF. Figures in 1997 indicated that 32.8 per cent of children were deprived of education. Literacy rates were also high at 88.4 per cent, and females fell behind males.

The subsequent CCA (UNRCSL 2000), by and large, had similar objectives to the previous report, though it added Housing and Urbanization, Private Sector Development, Youth, and Gender to its group of themes. While much of the statistical data from the 1998 report were still used, the 2000 report further explored factors that contributed to gender disparities at work (e.g., wages, segregated occupations) and in and through education such as orientation of females to non-scientific fields and lack of gender issues in teacher education. It concluded that national strategies would need to adopt a stronger rights-based approach when developing programmes and policies.

Most recently, the 2007 CCA report falls closer within the MDG and human rights framework. Furthermore, it shows a bolder analysis through its critique of the confession-based system and the acknowledgement of 400,000 Palestinian refugees in Lebanon. The 2007 CCA also consolidates the previously reported themes into four groups: good governance; economic development; poverty, education and health; and the environment and natural resources. Gender inequalities continued to raise concerns, with only 2 per cent of Grade 1 and 2 public administrators being women.

Lebanon also continued to have a poor ranking in the corruption index by Transparency International. While unemployment decreased to 8 per cent, female unemployment has more than doubled to 15 per cent from 1997 to 2004. In education, attainment has improved for gender equality. However, the report also suggests a degree of inefficiency in public expenditure on education since the student-teacher

<sup>18</sup> See [www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unifil/background.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unifil/background.shtml).



ratio in the public sector is only 9:1, while the quality of education is reportedly decreasing and dropouts are increasing.

In addition to the UNCT, the World Bank and the United Kingdom carried out two assessment reports contributing to the strategic development of the Government Reform Plan that was presented at the Paris III Conference in January 2007. The first report (World Bank 2007), aimed at ensuring a consensus of challenges, indicators and priorities in the fiscal, infrastructural and social reform strategies. Subsequently, a report following the Paris III conference (World Bank and United Kingdom 2007), described the impact of the 2006 July War on the livelihoods of vulnerable groups and interventions of stakeholders in 26 villages identified as Poverty Clusters and war-torn.

### **4.3. Country strategic and programmatic frameworks**

The UN and its organizations in Lebanon developed and contributed to the work of numerous post-conflict frameworks for reconstruction and reform. Most of these documents were immediate responses to armed conflicts. Below are selected strategic and programmatic frameworks that followed the 1975–1990 civil war and the second era of conflicts of the twenty-first century.

After the Ta'if Agreement of 1990, UNESCO hosted the 'Follow-Up Meeting on Peace Building and Development of Lebanon' in May 1991 in Paris. Among the attendees were representatives from Lebanese NGOs and UN organizations that established four priorities: (1) education for peace and human rights; (2) development, youth and the displaced; (3) women, children and peace; and (4) culture, peace and democracy. In addition to the specific interventions argued by representatives, approaches to building capacities of NGOs in Lebanon, their interrelated roles with UN agencies, the GoL and other NGOs, and the provisions of financing were also outlined.

The UNRCO has provided a set of frameworks in which to ground their operations. The CCA reports, government and presidential statements, the Constitution and national strategies have informed two five-year strategic frameworks. The UNDAF 2002–2006 (UNRCSL 2001) identifies two goals to which the UN system would direct its efforts. The first goal aims at building the capacities of decision-making for social justice. This would be done through legislative and civil service reform, transparency, participation in globalization and wider access to data and information. The second goal aims to achieve a "rights-based approach to development" (p. 8) by reducing disparities within gender, regions and groups. The objectives for this include decentralization, empowerment of disadvantaged groups and equality, and equity through policy and legislative change.

The UNDAF 2010–2014 (UNCT 2009) outlines a five-year strategy that coordinates inter-agency efforts with planning documents of various government ministries, including the 2007 CCA, the Government Declaration of 2008, and significantly, the Government Reform Programme (GRP) presented at the National Conference in Support of Lebanon – Paris III (January 2007). The GRP aimed at stimulating economic growth, reducing poverty and regional inequalities, and maintaining political and social stability. Based on national strategic documents, the UNCT identified five areas for UNDAF outcomes:

1. Democratic governance and institutional development;

2. Socio-economic development and regional disparities reduction;
3. Environmental sustainability;
4. Human rights; and
5. Gender.

The key targets prescribed in each of these five outcomes also explicitly aim to achieve the MDGs. One of the distinct features of the UNDAF 2010–2014 Lebanon is the detailed matrices outlining the desired outcomes, UN agencies and partners involved, and resources provided.

Further, the Lebanon Recovery Fund was established immediately after the 2006 July War at the request of the GoL for immediate recovery and reconstruction projects. Donations totalled US\$45.86 million, which came from the Governments of Spain (US\$35.4 million), Sweden (US\$9.8 million) and Romania (US\$660,000). The projects were to be led by the UNDP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), UNESCO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The majority of the funds went towards energy management, preservation of natural resources, infrastructural rehabilitation and agricultural development. Funds were also distributed to the recovery of communities from the 2007 Nahr el-Bared crisis. However, the planned US\$820,000 for enhancing ICT in education, allocated to UNESCO in partnership with the MEHE, according to the 2009 annual report, was discontinued due to complications between the two parties regarding recruitment processes.<sup>19</sup>

#### **4.4. UN Peacebuilding Fund**

The UN Peacebuilding Commission was launched in 2005 and Lebanon became one of the first countries in the Middle East to become eligible for the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) in 2010, under the Peacebuilding and Recovery Facility, which “supports a structured peacebuilding process driven by national actors based on a joint analysis of needs with the international community” (UNDP 2011). The peace and development agenda of the UNCT includes four thematic priorities that constitute dimensions of Lebanon’s PBF Priority Plan:

1. The issue of Palestinians;
2. Social disparities;
3. Human rights; and
4. Governance reform (personal communication, senior UN staff).

As of December 2010, the PBF Priority Plan had not yet been approved (UNDP 2011); however, a US\$7 million portfolio had been initiated, with US\$3 million approved at the time of this study. Planned activities included multi-pronged approaches to locating economic and legislative alternatives to mobilization for Palestinian youth, and working with the Lebanese Army on community outreach, with an integrated human rights training component (interview, UN staff).

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<sup>19</sup> The report can be accessed at <<http://mdtf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00065555>>.

In an interview, education was not explicitly cited among these activities, at first. A senior UN interviewee posed the question, “What is education and peacebuilding?”, suggesting that the relationship between the two had not been sufficiently explored as part of the PBF Priority Plan. The development and implementation of a Citizenship Education curriculum was later offered as an example of a peacebuilding activity supported by the PBF.

A UNCT assessment of preliminary lessons from existing UN peacebuilding interventions in Lebanon showed that a majority of initiatives focused on the local level and aimed to reduce tensions and intraregional inequalities through dialogue and socioeconomic initiatives (UNCT n.d.). Initiatives that addressed the national level were designed to strengthen state institutions in aspects of governance, such as human rights, elections and Palestinian issues. The assessment was based on a review of projects submitted by UNIFIL, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNDP, ILO, UNESCO and UNICEF. In other words, the organizations had identified these projects as corresponding with a peacebuilding agenda. According to the report, these interventions could be further clustered into the following types:

1. Supporting the recovery of communities affected by conflict.
2. Strengthening national institutions in addressing specific conflict issues.
3. Supporting crisis management mechanisms and initiatives, especially at the local level.
4. Strengthening a culture of peace, with a focus on changing perceptions, behaviours and attitudes.
5. Supporting consensus-building on key aspects of the reform agenda. (UNCT n.d.)

Initiatives involving education fell largely into the fourth category, although they also involved activities related to the recovery of communities. According to the report, the initial lessons learned centred around:

- Building consensus and investing in process design;
- Addressing the root causes of conflict;
- Identifying entry points;
- Establishing a long-term approach to address the root causes of conflict;
- Assessing impact; and
- Linking local and national levels of interventions. (UNCT, n.d.)

These lessons are also relevant to peacebuilding initiatives in education, as discussed in Section Five of this report. Further, they are reflective of the findings of ‘A Study of Civil Dialogue Initiatives in Lebanon’ (May 2011) commissioned by the UN Integrated Working Group on Governance for the United Nations Special Coordinator for Lebanon (UNSCOL) to inform UNDAF 2010–2014 Outcome 1.1 on democratic governance and institutional development. Among other things, the study concluded that CSOs preferred to promote dialogue through training and community action projects that address sectarianism without discussion of core issues. The impact of such projects on social, political or economic factors was not clear, although there was evidence of impact on individuals. Projects generally did not engage an explicit conflict

analysis and focused on individual prejudice, based on a belief that civil society lacks the ability to influence the drivers of conflict. Duplication and overlap of projects did not reflect coordination or an explicit strategy for how dialogue and peacebuilding programmes could align with national interventions or create conditions for a lasting peace.

These findings are significant and are reflective of the wider field of education and peacebuilding in Lebanon, in which multiple overlapping non-formal activities and initiatives with children, youth and adults have strongly featured dialogue as a component of their projects. UN-initiated projects reviewed for the purposes of this study reflected similar concerns, as discussed further in Section Seven.

#### **4.5. Discussion**

The UN has a long history in Lebanon, dating back to its independence. However, one senior UN staff member suggested that, unlike other countries, such as Nepal and Sierra Leone, the UN in Lebanon did not carry equal weight, saying: “Here, the UN is a small player on a stage with a lot of ‘heavies’... big heavy presences that will determine [the potential for peacebuilding].”

Perhaps for this reason, UN strategies in Lebanon have focused on a security-first agenda, ensuring ongoing peacekeeping, and working with the Lebanese Army, together with reconstruction and recovery activities to maintain a state of negative peace. A second priority in various periods of post-conflict peacebuilding has been to promote privatization and economic recovery as part of a ‘trickle-down’ peace approach. Government reform has also figured largely at various points in post-conflict peacebuilding. However, these measures have not been sufficient to address the core structural issues that have perpetuated conflict.

Among the challenges is the widely held perception that “at least 50 per cent of the causes of the problem in Lebanon come from outside and we’re not able to influence them at all” (senior UN staff). Furthermore, the tensions are summarized by the statement of a senior UN staff member that:

We’re working within the boundaries of this country, but with the reservation that we’re simply not designed as a UN system to even analyse the situation comprehensively, let alone act on it, because we have national mandates; we can’t talk to the Israelis or the Syrians. We can only work within the structural confines of the state ... This is one part of the world that really begs a regional approach [for peacebuilding].

A question is raised, then, about whether a regional approach for education and peacebuilding is possible on issues such as curriculum development towards peacebuilding, recognizing that such a strategy would require a political commitment from those involved (interview, senior UN staff).

The task of aligning UN-related activities with government strategy and inter-agency programmes and initiatives reflects some of these challenges and tensions. Despite several widely circulated CCAs and UNDAFs, UN staff interviewed for this project did

not recognize these as central documents to their work, nor could they identify which document articulated a joint UN vision for Lebanon.

Further, the PBF and its related thematic priorities are still nascent in Lebanon and an understanding of the activities that might fall under it, as well as the role that education might play are under development. In fact, no published PBF strategy or framework was available at the time of this study to officially articulate a country strategy. Further, while interviews with UN and other international stakeholders suggested that education is seen as an important entry point for peacebuilding, education has not figured largely on UN peacebuilding agendas.

This could be a reflection of priorities that place security as a primary objective. As stated by one interviewee, people are afraid to “rock the boat” and “they will say, corruption is better than war ... at the end of the day it works; it doesn’t solve issues, but allows for balance and coexistence most of the time” (interview, UN staff). One senior UN member suggested that since 2006 a security orientation has increasingly been felt in terms of security guarantees to Israel, which as a result have been not only internally divisive to Lebanon, but have resulted in the political polarization reaching a crisis point: “And this was an act of UN decision” (interview, UN staff). As a result, the UN peacekeeping force multiplied dramatically, from 2,000 troops to 15,000 military personnel, and tensions have emerged between those working on the humanitarian and development side versus the political and military side:<sup>20</sup>

The UN has been politically involved in this country through Security Council resolutions since its founding ... so there’s heavy political baggage ... The development agencies say that we should be able to work with everyone. And then others say that [we are bound by resolutions] and we can’t work [with certain groups]. It closes the development space when the political wing takes sides on issues. (interview, UN staff)

Within this context, the PBF aims to bridge the political and the development wings of the UN and through the initial coordination under way, a complementarity is being sought: “So, the Peacebuilding Fund matters, not because of the money, but it’s an exercise in politics and dialogue in Lebanon.” Thus, the PBF in Lebanon emerges as a strategy to “bring the [UN] political mission closer to the UN development team,” and to develop stronger internal understanding to the work of the UN (senior UN staff). The UN’s role in Lebanon’s education sector has been marginal, historically. Still, much educational activity has been underway since the end of the civil war. Despite its fragility, the education sector has demonstrated tremendous resilience, with UN support, in spite of repeated setbacks due to episodes of political violence and

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<sup>20</sup> Evidence from interviews with various staff from UNICEF, UNIFIL and other UN stakeholders further reflected these tensions.

## 5. CHRONOLOGY OF EDUCATION PROGRAMMING AND POLICY

The previous section located peacebuilding initiatives within UN frameworks and interventions and suggested that security emerged as a priority. The suggestion that peacebuilding sits at the intersection of the political and the development wings of the UN (see Section 4.5) has implications for education, and the location of peacebuilding initiatives in education (see Section 7). This section describes some of the educational programming conducted by government of Lebanon, UN organizations, and international and national NGOs and CSOs during two conflict and reconstruction periods: 1990–2006 and 2006–2009.<sup>21</sup> The section considers the chronology of activity, as well as the entry points for peacebuilding and theories of change reflected by various types of educational projects in order to meet the second objective of the study: to document country-specific education interventions where education has played an important role in contributing to peace or where it has missed the opportunity to do so. Because armed conflict and localized episodes of political violence differentially impact communities across various geographies, the phases generally ascribed to emergency and post-conflict programming do not fit neatly here (see Section 2 for a discussion).<sup>22</sup>

### 5.1. Towards the end of the civil war and beyond (pre-1990–2006)

The civil war brought many challenges to schools in the aftermath that mirrored the challenges of the state and larger society. Among these was the challenge of returning to a rule of law and orderliness in schools, contending with infrastructure losses, corruption and weapons on campus; addressing the impoverishment and displacement of students and staff, and school-based and domestic violence; and psychosocial considerations that manifested themselves in both students and teachers.

At the same time, promising programmatic and conceptual developments were already under way within the first years, some of which had taken root before the end of the civil war. These included efforts to maintain continuity to schooling and education inclusion through radio and TV programmes, and curricular programmes such as UNICEF's Education for Peace, which is the most widely cited education and peacebuilding initiative of this period. The immediate aftermath of the civil war saw an increase in non-formal educational programmes, such as conflict resolution training with target groups. Other UNICEF programmes targeted the formal sector, including the Global Education initiative; contributions to early childhood education and basic education; and significantly, the reform of the national curriculum. (*For a description of these programmes, see Annex 3.*)

In 1991, UNESCO hosted the 'Follow-Up Meeting on Peace Building and Development of Lebanon' in Paris. The four priorities established by representatives from Lebanese NGOs and UN organizations fell under the following categories: (1) education for peace and human rights; (2) development, youth and the displaced; (3) women, children and peace; and (4) culture, peace and democracy. Attention was also drawn to approaches for building the capacities of NGOs in Lebanon and their interactional roles with UN agencies, government and other NGOs. This attention to NGOs was to

<sup>21</sup> These dates coincide in part with UNESCO's (2010) report on financing and governance of education, which was presented in two reconstruction periods: post-civil war (1990–2006) and recovery (2006–2009).

<sup>22</sup> Refer to Annex 3 for a mapping of educational activities and programmes.

contribute to the burgeoning of the NGO sector starting in the mid- to- late 1990s, with many NGOs emerging on the scene within the first years of the twenty-first century.

At the same time, efforts were underway on a national systems level, in the period immediately following the civil war. Recovery and reconstruction focused on:

- Restoring primary and secondary schools, as part of access expansion, through largely community-based efforts;
- Restoring the teaching service through public teacher salary payment and education grants for teachers with children; and
- Initial stages of reorganizing the Ministry of Education. (Euro-Trends, 2009)

During this period, the education budget more than doubled between 1994 and 2004, rising from 9 per cent to almost 13 per cent of public expenditure (Ibid.).

These efforts are documented as being relatively successful, with indicators of enrolment growth and a proliferation of small schools in remote areas. However, high repetition and drop-out rates remained persistent and the public/private divide was not addressed, due to limited ministry capacity at the central level and poor delegation to regional authorities (decentralization). This period also saw a proliferation of educational programmes that were difficult to coordinate due to funding mechanisms that channelled funds directly to various organizations.

Programmes devised for restoring the teaching service were not systematic or transparent during this period, which saw the selection of teachers along confessional lines. The MEHE was neither able to design nor implement a systematic programme, nor establish systems for performance monitoring. Efforts during this period to develop a credible sector reform programme were further undermined by an uneven political commitment to reform (Ibid.).

International engagement in education in the post-civil war period focused on a wide range of small, short-term projects revolving around emergency relief, child protection and early recovery, as well as curricular programming, such as the Education for Peace and Global Education programmes. Sector reform planning and governance was not on the international agenda at this time, although UN agencies were engaged with aspects of an initial education reform action plan in the early 1990s. The absence of a UN strategic framework meant that efforts were neither coordinated with each other, nor aligned with government policy, and served to strain the capacities of the ministries (Ibid.). At the same time, limited attention was paid to regulating a growing private sector that had no system of quality assurance.

By 2000, institutional and management reforms led by the World Bank were under way, leading to a restructuring of the Ministry of Education (MOE), development of information systems, and a focus on quality education reforms. The progress of such programming has been mixed.

Donor activities included attention to the formulation of a NES framework, technical support to the MEHE, and financial planning supports by the end of this period. While this activity could be loosely linked to a peacebuilding agenda, in so much as peacebuilding entails the development of governance mechanisms to address structural violence, these efforts were not articulated in this way. Nor were they

coordinated under a UN or international peacebuilding strategy. Thus, while systems-level or sector governance initiatives were not articulated in terms of peacebuilding, smaller localized projects, such as non-formal training programmes in conflict resolution, conflict mediation and dialogue increasingly were.

## **5.2. Renewed political violence and its aftermath (2006–2011)**

The 2006 July War wrought new challenges, and various projects were undertaken at this time to support children and youth through psychosocial supports, child protection networks, and preparation to go back to school among the populations that were most affected. In addition, there were numerous school construction projects taking place all over the country, supported by various donors. Schools, which housed displaced families during the war, were delayed in reopening. Some of the various programmes that set out to support them are described briefly in Annex 3.

The sectarian violence and political polarization that followed the 2006 war, including the Nahr el- Bared crisis of 2007 and ongoing tensions in North Lebanon, prompted a proliferation of donor-driven activities under the banner of peacebuilding, with a view to positively impacting security. Indeed, from 2005 to 2011, interest in peacebuilding from international donors increased exponentially in Lebanon. These included non-formal educational initiatives involving dialogue projects, tolerance and contact groups, conflict resolution and non-violence training, and mediation. This period saw a rapid rise in CSOs established to meet this need. According to one CSO stakeholder, the situation developed “an economy of its own,” with older organizations developing new programming or linking their current work to peacebuilding rhetoric, and newer organizations setting up shop to capture projects (interview, CSO representative).

During this period, UNICEF was engaged in a number of programmes that sought to ensure child protection and attend to psychosocial recovery (Child-at-Risk Detection), educate about hygiene (WASH), attend to school rehabilitation (Child-Friendly School Initiative), and establish educational programmes on mine-risk education (MRE) and conflict prevention and peacebuilding (joint MDG-F Spain programme). These programmes engaged various dialogue, tolerance, and contact group methods for Lebanese youth from different regions and backgrounds, and for Palestinian and Lebanese youth who had not enjoyed much contact. (See Annex 3 for a list of such activities.)

In addition, efforts to develop a Citizenship Education programme are currently underway, including a Peacebuilding Toolbox, which will be piloted in public high schools this year under the supervision of the UNDP and in coordination with the MEHE, to meet NES Priority 2: Education that contributes to social integration and provides learners with the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for living together in a diverse society. The project is supported by EC funds. The Toolbox provides a complementary guide to the current civics curriculum, with “practical and very easy to use and interactive” applications that follow the progression of the official civics curriculum (interview, UNDP staff).

Such efforts have been accompanied by a variety of initiatives that constitute school-university partnerships, such as the National Lebanese Youth Parliament, and university-led peacebuilding initiatives, such as the Lebanese American University



Summer School and the Academic University for Nonviolence and Human Rights in the Arab World. (See Annex 3 for a summary of these initiatives.)

Thus, a great number of efforts were underway from 2006 to 2011, responding largely to humanitarian crises and an environment of insecurity. While much of this activity reflects a donor-driven security-first agenda, interviews with other actors, such as UNICEF staff and CSO representatives, revealed that they did not envision their own work in this way. Rather, they articulated their programmes in terms of meeting immediate needs, or engaging “an intersection of interests” related to individual or social transformation (interview, CSO representative). This discussion is taken up further in Section Six with a focus on curricular development.

### 5.3. Discussion

The field of education and peacebuilding in Lebanon is vibrant, diverse and fragmented despite an overlap of visions and frameworks, as expressed in interviews with stakeholders representing the government, international and national NGOs, and schools. An analysis of the types of interventions, their entry points, and theories of change reveals some interesting trends.

First, if we look at educational programmes and activities from the perspective of their relevance to post-conflict transformation, we find that most of the programming for Lebanon, particularly in the medium term, focuses on the *social* aspect of transformation, and in particular, individual transformation as a means for transforming society.<sup>23</sup> Such programming is concerned with social cohesion, socialization with adversaries, addressing intergroup conflict, shifting social identities and creating social networks. An overwhelming number of programmes focus on the social aspect of post-conflict transformation. For example, UNICEF’s work on child-friendly schools; psychosocial support; education for peace; and co-existence and dialogue-based youth camps, such as the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Programme in North Lebanon, fall into this area. In fact, in interviews with stakeholders, many programme facilitators assumed the social aspect of post-conflict transformation to be the primary locale for peacebuilding activity in education.

Educational programmes can also focus on transformation in the area of *security* in post-conflict contexts. Such programmes focus on such aspects as reintegration, reforming the justice system, community safety and ensuring fundamental freedoms, as expressed by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. UNICEF programmes that fall into this area included joint programmes for emergency relief, such as during, and in the immediate aftermath of, the 2006 July War and the Nahr el-Bared crisis. In addition, UNICEF has been heavily engaged in child protection mechanisms, developing a child protection network in South and North Lebanon and ensuring that schools are safe places. In addition, many conflict prevention and conflict resolution

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<sup>23</sup> See Annex 3 for a list of education and peacebuilding activities. Critiques of education-related programmes that focus on the social aspect of transformation include that they have not sufficiently connected individual transformation to longer-term structural transformation of social, economic, and political systems and institutions (interviews, CSO representatives). As one senior UN staff member put it: “There’s a lot of work being done on the individual level, but it’s very rarely connected at a policy or socio-political level.” However, this critique was also contextualized by adding that: “It’s a timing issue, because there’s nothing going on at the policy level,” suggesting that, without a “framework for doing peace” in Lebanon it is very difficult to connect localized work with structural change (interview, senior UN staff).

programmes seek to reduce the incidence of violence among children and youth.<sup>24</sup> In Lebanon, the reintegration of child soldiers was given little attention, however, because unlike other contexts in which children have been recruited into militias, child soldiers in Lebanon were not separated from their families (see Hermez 2010 for discussion), making them invisible, in a sense.

A third aspect of post-conflict transformation is in the *political* realm. Programmes of relevance to transformation in this area focus on constitutional reform and political institutions, as well as representation and elections and other political freedoms. Education programmes in this area of peacebuilding include civic and citizenship programming, voter education, capacity building for the MEHE, and participation in programmes such as UNICEF's Community Development programme.<sup>25</sup>

Fourth, education and peacebuilding can engage the *economic* dimension of post-conflict transformation. Such programmes focus on transforming the conflict economy, addressing unemployment, developing new skills for economic regeneration and addressing economic inequalities. Education-related programmes for economic transformation have reflected a security agenda, from the perspective of the UN, as a means to target and dismantle "classic employment in conflict," while also addressing legislation and options in the labour market, particularly for at-risk Palestinian youth (interview, UN senior staff). CSOs that address education for transformation in the economic arena, including unemployment issues, have focused on developing the entrepreneurship skills of youth, or "economic empowerment."<sup>26</sup> Of the programmes reviewed, UNICEF did not figure largely in such programming, although the Community Development Programme found that one of the municipalities identified English language education as a priority towards developing skills for employability and to address disparities in this area. As such, language programmes are in the process of being developed in response to this need.

Another way to conceptualize programming is through the useful distinction, drawn from Johan Galtung, between *negative peace*, as the absence of direct violence, and *positive peace*, as the presence of justice through the transformation of structural violence. Programmes that address the transformation of direct violence are concerned with security, that is, establishing negative peace. These include conflict prevention and child protection programmes, which are often conceptualized as part of humanitarian and immediate post-conflict programming.

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<sup>24</sup> Critiques of education-related programmes that focus on security include that they often do not address the root causes of conflict, but rather the symptoms, and therefore fall short of being transformative (interview, CSO representative). Further, by not being part of a comprehensive approach to transform the conflict environment, they are unlikely to have a lasting impact (interview, UN staff; CSO representatives). Finally, such programmes are critiqued as having faulty premises about what pulls youth to violence, rather than being designed based on evidence about the prevalence of violence and the applicability of violence prevention strategies to the specific context (interviews, Lebanese and Palestinian CSO representatives).

<sup>25</sup> The challenges to this work are widely acknowledged, particularly given the crisis of political polarization that has effectively paralyzed the government on a number of occasions, leaving it without an active legislative body. The situation has frequently stalled work plans and projects indefinitely, and created a sense among actors that programme approval is dependent on the whim of government representatives. Bearing these challenges in mind, it is important to note the critiques of current education-related programmes that fall into the political arena of post-conflict transformation. Critiques include that education-related programmes do not go far enough in being participatory and/or in transferring ownership or capacity to national government, localized government, or communities and their schools (interviews, UN staff; Palestinian and Lebanese CSO representatives). Further, various government, CSO and UN staff noted the importance of addressing the capacity of the MEHE in terms of developing MEHE staff understanding of their personal discriminatory leanings, as well as in institutionalized forms of discrimination and inequality in the law and/or in practice.

<sup>26</sup> Critiques of these programmes include that they do not go far enough in linking training to opportunity, or in supporting youth to develop their networks for employment (interviews, CSO representatives, international NGO representative).

Programmes that address the transformation of structural violence are concerned with establishing equitable structures, within their political, social and economic dimensions. A Lebanese CSO representative, reflecting on this role, stated: “Peace is the result of justice and equality ... It’s about educating people [about] their rights, how they confront, resist, and claim them, rather than becoming more peaceful” (interview). He added that education for economic empowerment was a significant entry point to peacebuilding. Such ideas embody the notion of education for positive peace. Educational research suggests that negative and positive peace in education do not have a clear-cut time dimension, whereby one necessarily precedes the other. Rather, according to Betty Reardon, strategies for both negative and positive peace in education are required for a comprehensive and sustainable peace. However, in practice, negative peace as reflected in security measures, have tended to precede other strategies in education, through focused, short-term programming that responds to immediate crises and manifestations of violence. While security is vital to other educational functions, such approaches, in their limited scope, and by addressing surface manifestations of conflict, rather than root causes, have missed the opportunity for longer-term transformation.

There are exceptions to the security-first approach. Indeed, UNICEF’s Education for Peace Programme was launched during the civil war and continued in the immediate aftermath despite security concerns. It is widely recognized as a programme that had a transformative impact on individuals who were directly involved and those who were one or two steps removed from youth who participated (interviews, UNICEF staff, CSO representatives, government representatives, former participants). The programme provides insights into the ways in which ruptures caused by war can create opportunities for individual and social transformation, during conflict and in the immediate aftermath, and not just in the longer-term.

Furthermore, while child protection measures have been engaged during and in the immediate aftermath of crisis, it is widely recognized that the need to address child protection in education often extends beyond this period, for a number of reasons, including the persistence of violence in schools, as well as concerns about the resumption of hostilities in an uneven geography of conflict.

Thus, the Lebanon case suggests that a comprehensive approach to education and peacebuilding requires a dynamic framework, rather than a linear or staged approach based on phases or chronology of conflict. “We seem to be dealing either with an incomplete solution, or the symptom, but not the root” (interview, UN staff). While negative peace measures can help to address the surface manifestations of conflict, positive peace measures can serve to address root causes. Both approaches are needed for a comprehensive peace strategy. Furthermore, the differential ways in which conflict affects populations (as discussed in Section Two), and the uneven geography of conflict that blurs the contours of emergency and post-conflict phases suggests that a dynamic approach is needed that draws both on ongoing conflict analysis and needs analysis.<sup>27</sup> This discussion is taken forward in Section Seven.

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<sup>27</sup> Interviews and observations during the course of this study suggested that education and peacebuilding programmes often did not meet the perceived or articulated needs of the beneficiaries.

A number of entry points to peacebuilding in education can be identified through formal, non-formal and informal routes. Based on the programmes reviewed through document analysis, interviews and the stakeholder consultation meetings, the entry points currently employed in Lebanon can be categorized and summarized as follows (see Figure 4).

**FIGURE 4: ENTRY POINTS TO PEACEBUILDING FROM THE EDUCATION SECTOR IN LEBANON**

ENTRY POINTS FOR SERVICE DELIVERY	Formal schooling Non-formal schooling Curricular development (public and private) Whole school approaches Equity approaches Protection and psychosocial approaches
ENTRY POINTS FOR EDUCATION SECTOR GOVERNANCE AND POLICY REFORM	MEHE capacity building Sector finance and planning Monitoring and evaluation of impact Advocacy
ENTRY POINTS FOR EDUCATION AND POST-CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION WITHIN BROADER SOCIETY	Advocacy and awareness-raising campaigns through media Conflict resolution and violence prevention training Citizenship education Dialogue and reconciliation initiatives Environmental awareness Poverty alleviation Psychosocial support Women and youth programming

*Adapted from: Smith et al. 2011.*

Peacebuilding through education service delivery often implies certain theories of change or assumptions underlying programming, even if these are not explicit. For example, interviewees involved in curriculum development and related trainings expressed the assumption that changing learner’s attitudes, perceptions or behaviours towards others, or equipping them with particular skills, would lead to individual or group transformation, and in turn, a change in society at large, such that future violent conflict would be prevented. Assumptions underlying protection approaches, on the other hand, included that education can aid with the protection of children, such that the negative impacts of conflict can be mitigated. Much of the work in Lebanon that worked from this entry point focused on non-formal education, such as after-school programmes, youth camps and trainings, based on the view that such venues provided greater flexibility for programming than the formal curriculum. These programmes could largely be grouped in terms of four potentially overlapping strategies: (1) the use of dialogue or contact groups; (2) protection and psychosocial support mechanisms; (3) conflict resolution, conflict prevention and mediation training programmes; (4) peace and citizenship education; (5) facilitator training. As stakeholders begin to look at longer-term planning, the development of an equitable and quality education (as signalled by NES Priorities 1 and 2) and citizenship education (as signalled by NES Priority 3), may reflect a longer-term programme theory that such service delivery in formal education will lead to a more cohesive society.

Peacebuilding through education sector governance and policy reform is underpinned by the assumption that such sector reform can enhance equity and that quality education is a direct or indirect driver of peace. Interviewees also expressed the idea that capacity building within the ministry could lead to stronger coordination across other sectors, and significantly, the process of capacity building in itself could lead to a greater sense of peace and justice among individuals within the ministry itself. Programmes that engage a framework of transformation within broader society as their entry point assume that advocacy and awareness-raising will lead to demands for change within families, communities, and institutions and the law. Programming for change within broader society assumes that particular values can be transmitted through education to serve the greater good.

While a variety of programmes, reflecting various entry points and theories of change, are present in Lebanon's current education and peacebuilding arena, many of these lack coordination. Further, in interviews and consultation meetings, stakeholders recognized that these initiatives did not explicitly align with NES or UN frameworks. Several CSO, government and UN stakeholders identified this as a need in the hopes of making impact. Further, it was widely noted that education and peacebuilding projects were not based on conflict analysis or needs assessment, but rather on a common understanding of the political situation. Stakeholders were unclear about how to measure impact of peacebuilding programmes beyond anecdotal material, and questioned whether it was indeed possible to do so with peacebuilding. These limitations are revisited in Section Seven.

The challenging environment of the past two decades has both fuelled peacebuilding programmes and limited their potential for impact. As one senior UN staff member noted, "There's no peace process; national dialogue is dead, so all of these issues that would provide the framework for doing peace in Lebanon are not active" (interview). Furthermore, the political deadlock in recent years has severely undercut the potential for long-term planning with government partners. Thus, UNICEF's work in particular has focused on short-term programmes that respond to the immediate emergency context. These have been particularly effective in working with a range of beneficiaries. As UNICEF begins to shift its orientation from short-term service delivery to longer-term developmental work, its potential to engage past learnings and institutional strengths with a strategic vision for equity and peacebuilding holds much promise for education.

## 6. CORE ISSUES FOR CURRICULAR DEVELOPMENT

As described earlier, curricular development and reform has been viewed as a main entry point for education and peacebuilding at various points in Lebanese history. Since independence, government efforts have centred on developing social cohesion through a mandated national curriculum that cuts across private and public schooling and that promotes 'national identity'. Such efforts have centred, in theory, on language policies to make Arabic the common language for all students, history curricula to develop the sense of a shared national narrative, and civics to develop citizenship attributes. In parallel, various non-formal curricula have been developed for co-curricular support (see Annex 3).

Indeed, conflicts have shaped educational curricula in Lebanon since its independence and educational reforms have followed distinct periods of national and regional political strife:

- Independence from the French mandate (1946 curriculum): During this period, the education system was based on Lebanese nationalism, reinforcing the Arabic language and patriotism to Lebanon. History, civics and geography were established as programmes of study for citizenship, or citizenship education. These three subjects continue to be instructed and assessed in the official exams only in the Arabic language.
- The pan-Arab revolution (1968/71 curriculum): This period triggered the second curricular reform, replacing Lebanese identity with Arab nationalism. Arguably, this may have contributed to resentments in the lead up to the civil war (1975–1990) since, typically, particular Christian communities are less likely to attribute to themselves an Arab identity and more likely will attribute Phoenician roots.
- Post-civil war (1997): The Education Reform Plan of 1994 developed the 1997 curriculum, bringing together Arab and Lebanese identities, constructivist approaches to learning, and a multifaceted framework of human rights and democratic values for the promotion of social cohesion and active citizenship. However, these have been differentially implemented.

The post-civil war Ta'if Agreement stipulated reforms in education, including the development of history and civics curricula. It also reasserted that Lebanon is Arab in its identity and affiliation, and it followed that the post-civil war curriculum reinstated the Arabic language as required for all students.

Historically, before and after armed conflict, Lebanon has always had various versions of history textbooks. Confessional groups ensured their versions of history were taught as accurate records in their own schools. The Ta'if Accord strongly recommended the unification of a history textbook. While an 'agreed' national history curriculum was drafted for Grades 1 to 9 through a committee of historians, a recent LAES conference on history education demonstrated that the debate about unified textbooks versus constructivist approaches that encourage learning to analyse versions of history remains contentious (interview, education expert). At the secondary level, the history textbook was never approved and students continue to study versions that pre-date the civil war, largely through rote memorization (Ibid.). The history textbook has gone through multiple committees of historians and negotiations with a number of governments; however, it continues to be "on hold" (interview, UNDP staff).

While the 10 general aims for civic education had stated the importance of skills for dialogue, critical thinking and conflict resolution, students' learning experiences in civics and history come mainly from traditions of rote learning as well. Sensitivities about political identities result in classroom tensions during debates and discussions. As a result, many teachers avoid facilitating discussions on controversial topics, but rather remain close to the text of the book (interview, education expert). Thus, teachers do not feel fully equipped to facilitate what they perceive to be difficult dialogues, particularly in the secondary grades.

Further, in a recent assessment, the MEHE identified the lack of mechanisms for curricular development as a significant gap, including:

1. The absence of periodical revision mechanisms of the curricula;
2. The absence of clear standards for writing, producing and assessing school textbooks; and
3. The absence of a unified curriculum, which allows for the use of information technology as an educational tool (despite the fact that 12 initiatives have been implemented in this field in about 450 public schools).

The development and delivery of formal and non-formal curricula was viewed by various international and national stakeholders as a central entry point for education and peacebuilding in Lebanon. A review of curricular projects suggested that this is an area of activity that sees much overlap and, paradoxically, fragmentation. Interviewees cited the following reasons: (1) lack of access to information about other curricular projects and materials; (2) poor coordination between facilitators of projects; (3) short-term planning; and (4) poor conceptualization.

Given (1) the vast array of activity and expertise in this area, in public and private schools and non-formal settings; (2) the ways in which the national curriculum intersects both public and private arenas of schooling; (3) the inclusion of curriculum development as one of the 10 priorities of the NES framework; and (4) UNICEF's rich history in developing impactful curricula and coordinating curriculum development teams (see Annex 3), curriculum development emerged as a core thematic area for peacebuilding from meetings and interviews with stakeholders and observations of UNICEF's non-formal programmes.

Curriculum development is closely connected to four of the priorities laid out by the NES framework: (1) equity in education; (2) quality of education; (3) social integration; and (4) economic development. Curriculum also provides an opportunity for advocacy and inclusion of marginalized populations, by focusing on child rights, both in content and in process. Indeed, international organizations, civil society and educators are engaged in developing much curricular material in Arabic, French and English. However, there is a disconnection between all of this production and mainstream schooling. Interviewees cited the inertia of the formal education system as a reason for working outside it, stating that it was too difficult or tedious to navigate, particularly when there are clear and immediate needs to be served. While they acknowledged that mainstreaming such peacebuilding curricula was an important aim, they questioned whether doing so would serve to undermine the programmes, as many teachers and schools were perceived not to be equipped to teach through active methods, or not confident to veer from the text.

However, UNICEF's experience demonstrates that the potential for influencing formal curricula through good curricular development and planning over longer-term periods holds great potential for addressing educational equity, quality and social integration, particularly when such approaches are multimodal. For example, UNICEF's Basic Education Programme of the post-civil war era included multiple entry points for education and peacebuilding – service delivery; education sector governance; and transformation within broader society. Three interrelated projects were engaged for this purpose (1993–1999): Global Education; Early Childhood Development (ECD);

and Educational Management Information Systems/Monitoring Learning Achievement (EMIS/MLA) (see Annex 3 for a description of these projects). The programme was large-scale, spanned a six-year period and was ambitious in its goal to have programming integrated into the national curriculum and to impact 80 per cent of families. While the content aimed to impact attitudes and enrolments, the process of curricular development indirectly entailed capacity development of then MOE staff and other educators. For example, curriculum development teams included educators who were also working on the new post-civil war national curriculum; thus the potential for cross-fertilization and advocacy though the process was very strong. The Global Education and ECD projects were developed in parallel with the EMIS/MLA data-gathering programme to assist with sector monitoring and evaluation. Thus, the projects together included advocacy, planning, development of human resources, development and delivery of educational materials, and monitoring and evaluation (Jurdak and Bashshur, 1999) Importantly, the Global Education programme in particular is remembered by educators, CSOs and MEHE stakeholders as one of UNICEF's finest legacies.

However, it is important to point out that all three programmes were UNICEF global or Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regional projects that were adapted for Lebanon. Thus, they were not established based on an identification of needs or sector analysis. Rather, there were a host of needs at the time, and these programmes were adaptable to the situation.

Similarly, the current life-skills programme undertaken as part of UNICEF's Child-Friendly Community development project in three municipalities in the North engages a pre-packaged curriculum with 'menu items' from which the Municipality Education Committees can choose the segments of the curriculum on which they wish to receive training, rather than identifying needs from the ground up. Observation of meetings in Akkar suggested that tensions were present between what local educators felt were their gravest needs and what was being offered by the life-skills programme.

Similar tensions were noted by civil society stakeholders who work with Palestinian youth, and other marginalized children, who articulate needs that do not necessarily coincide with curricular offerings, resulting in frustration and resistance. "You know, the projects are parachuted in ... and [youth] see that they sometimes are not addressing the main challenges or issues" (interview, CSO representative). Further, it was perceived that imposed curricular programmes come with particular donor agendas, which are viewed as "political projects," particularly among residents of the Palestinian camps (interviews, UNRWA staff; CSO representative). This notion was tied to the observation that needs assessments or evidence-based design processes rarely preceded implementation (interviews, CSO representative, UN staff). Furthermore, programmes were perceived to be disconnected from necessary change at other levels: "I don't mean that [conflict prevention or human rights] is useless to learn, but it needs to be accompanied with [change] at the government level and the law" (interview, CSO representative).

In short, it was observed that curricular programming needs to be embedded in a comprehensive approach to equity and peacebuilding that includes the active participation of youth and their communities in identifying their own needs.



At present, UNICEF Lebanon's curricular programming does not engage an explicit philosophy of education or overarching framework that engages curriculum and pedagogy, based on an explicit educational theory or vision for social transformation.

Rather, programming is based on assumptions about needs and outcomes, particularly educational outcomes. Still, contact programmes, such as the Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in North Lebanon summer camps, seem to be making some impact on individual transformation, as evidenced by descriptive youth participant feedback. For example, in a programme that brought together Lebanese and Palestinian youth for joint activities, a Lebanese youth participant commented that "she had pre-judgements about Palestinians living in Lebanon, because she had been told by her family that they're trouble-makers ... if she had known that there would be Palestinians in the summer camps she wouldn't have come. She apologized to the participating Palestinians in her group and promised that she would share her positive experience with her friends and family. She then convinced her parents to come watch the closing ceremony" (paraphrased from narrative evaluation report to UNICEF, Permanent Peace Movement). Such programmes are significant to challenging individual attitudes. However, educational research from other conflict-affected regions on the longer-term impact of contact groups is mixed, particularly where activities are short-term and isolated, rather than part of a larger integrated approach. Thus, conducting research on the impact of such programmes for the purposes of institutional learning is critical to refining UNICEF's curricular programming.

Further, the current curricular work in peacebuilding suggests work towards either (1) negative peace, or (2) positive peace in the form of equitable education rooted in a human rights framework, both of which are amenable to peacebuilding. However, these do not demonstrate a more targeted approach to peacebuilding, based on country analysis or needs analysis. As such, they may neither address the drivers of conflict nor local specific needs.

Currently, UNICEF is in a prime position to engage the experience and expertise of civil society partners. There is potential for great synergy between the NES framework; the focus of the 2008-2009 HDR *Towards a Citizen's State*; UNICEF's equity focus; and the UNCT peacebuilding agenda. In addition, the UNDP and various universities are engaged in curricular development of their own that shares overlapping agendas. The HDR team lamented the fact that no one had developed educational materials based on its study on citizenship, while citizenship education is not only part of the NES framework, but also has the potential to be an effective entry point to peacebuilding (interview, UN staff).

An advantage of curricular development in the formal schooling sector is that it has the potential to cut across both public and private schools, thus engaging the transformative potential of education, while creating a platform for advocacy for minoritized groups.

UNICEF has a strong history of working with diverse teams from the GoL, schools, universities and CSOs during emergencies and in the aftermath. Further, they are well respected because, unlike other UN agencies, it enjoys a perception that its work is not 'political' and that it has a clear understanding of how things operate 'on the

ground'. Thus, UNICEF is in a good position to broker an integrated approach to peacebuilding in education that is multimodal, long term, and addresses the drivers of conflict through systemic change and by incorporating an equity agenda. In order to do so, however, there is a need to address strategy. The next section discusses this issue further by addressing the final two objectives of the study: to provide guidance on education interventions contributing to peacebuilding and to identify strengths, weaknesses and recommendations for UNICEF-supported education programming as it relates to peacebuilding.

## **7. CONCLUSION: TOWARDS A PEACEBUILDING AGENDA IN EDUCATION**

This section ties together the major findings of the study and provides guidance aimed at the education and peacebuilding community in general, and with particular recommendations for UNICEF as it transitions towards a longer-term developmental approach in Lebanon. It is widely recognized that UNICEF takes forward a wealth of experience with diverse actors and sustains an enviable reputation for its steadfast commitment to all children.

### **7.1. Locating peacebuilding and education within broader approaches**

This study set out to locate peacebuilding initiatives in education within broader approaches to peacebuilding in Lebanon. In order to do so, it first described the sectarian foundations of conflict and how historical drivers of conflict have evolved within a matrix of regional, national and localized conflicts, underpinning mobilization for major episodes of violence. Sectarianism has also underpinned the institutionalization of various forms of discrimination. The inadequacies of a confessional-consociational power-sharing formula and the influence of regional actors both in armed conflict and in the peace formula, as outlined by the 1989 Ta'if Agreement, have also served to re-inscribe unresolved political, social and economic grievances, including inequalities in power and resources, among confessional communities and among geographic regions. Furthermore, Lebanon's delicate role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, and the legacy of this conflict for generations of Palestinians in Lebanon, serves to perpetuate discriminatory laws and regulations, which deny them equal enjoyment of rights. It also serves to fuel insecurity for both Lebanese and Palestinian populations. In addition, more recent Iraqi and Syrian refugees and other migrants face related challenges and social exclusion. Because of historical sensitivities and the complexity of contemporary regional political alignments and internal polarizations, refugees hold at best ambiguous status in Lebanon.

This paper argues that ongoing conflict analysis is required in order to capture these age-old considerations alongside their contemporary manifestations, and that such conflict analysis requires consideration of citizens and non-citizens in an interconnected manner that captures the ways in which their histories of conflict and marginalization have been, and continue to be, inextricably linked. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that the contours of conflict and post-conflict situations are fluid; and in Lebanon, different phases of conflict coexist, reflecting the limitations of linear conceptualizations of progression from emergency to post-conflict peacebuilding.

Armed conflict and localized episodes of political violence have, and continue to, differentially impact communities across various geographies in Lebanon. These multiple and uneven trajectories of conflict are a significant feature of Lebanon's recent history, warranting a dynamic view of conflict that is sensitive to longer-term, deeply entrenched and persistent structural grievances, alongside newer forms of political, economic and social factors.

The UNCT's influence in peacebuilding has been constrained by these regional dynamics. Also, while a peacekeeping presence has been maintained for most of Lebanon's history, until recently the UNCT has not had an integrated framework for peacebuilding in Lebanon. Currently, such frameworks are in their nascency and, where present, are not widely recognized by UN staff. Thus, coordination and alignment in peacebuilding is in its initial phases. Further, tensions abound in relation to the perceived meaning of 'peacebuilding' in Lebanon, and any work going forward would need to understand the source of these tensions, and self-reflexively, consider these tensions in relation to the positionality of the UN in Lebanon. The security orientation of the UN has been increasingly felt since 2006, which has contributed to political polarization in Lebanon, and tensions between those who work on the humanitarian-development side versus the political-military side of the UN in Lebanon.

Further, the situation of ongoing political and humanitarian crises has constrained the role of organizations such as UNICEF to emergency response measures and shorter-term programming in education and peacebuilding. Thus, there is a learning period to be engaged, as UNICEF moves towards longer-term planning for systems-level change.

In summary, security has figured largely in UN policy, and has been the priority area of the UN in Lebanon, which has narrowly framed its work in peacebuilding around negative peace, or ensuring the absence of violence, rather than a transformational peace that addresses structural change. Within this security-first approach, education has been on the margins of UN peacebuilding.

Still, much activity has been underway in education, with a burgeoning of CSOs to "capture the funds" that have been allocated to peacebuilding (interview, CSO representative). These educational activities have focused largely on individual and interpersonal transformation as means for transformation within larger society, articulating a positive peace orientation to peacebuilding. Thus the work of CSOs has reflected a different orientation to peacebuilding than UN and development partners. Despite this disconnection, this work has done much to create opportunities for children and youth to engage with dialogue and contact groups. However, this work has been fragmented, and it has largely addressed the non-formal sector through short-term trainings and projects whose longer-term impact and sustainability is not clear. In the formal sector, education has served to re-inscribe social divisions through an inequitable system that perpetuates a hierarchy between private and public schools and that exacerbates regional disparities in the quality and accessibility of schooling. In doing so, the formal sector has missed the opportunity to address structural violence, or institutionalized forms of discrimination that contribute to conflict. Furthermore, in narrowly focusing on 'citizenship' and/or 'civil peace', the NES framework and the

MEHE run the risk of excluding marginal groups of children and youth from its narrative, and thus its vision of justice for Lebanon's diverse communities.

In short, education, while highly valued and perceived to have a central role in the transformation of society, has not been prioritized by UN peacebuilding. However, UNICEF and other international and national CSOs have been active in delivering a range of programmes. The success of these programmes in addressing the drivers of conflict is dependent upon sound conceptualization and strategy, going forward, towards a peacebuilding agenda in education.

## **7.2. Recommendations**

This section draws on the various issues emerging from the study to offer some guidance on conceptualization and strategy for education and peacebuilding moving forward. These are divided into reflections for UNICEF Lebanon and for UNICEF headquarters and related development partners.

### **7.2.1. UNICEF Lebanon**

#### **Recommendation 1: Invest in the conceptualization of peacebuilding**

There is a need for the UNCT and agencies in Lebanon to invest in further conceptualization of peacebuilding in relation to the particularities of the Lebanese context and to clarify the positioning of peacebuilding 'between politics and development', which bears implications for education and the location of peacebuilding initiatives in education. Further, research showed that UN stakeholders could not always articulate a connection between education and peacebuilding. Indeed, various conceptualizations coexist and overlap, reflecting tensions, and requiring investment in conceptualization to allow for consensus within the UN family, and with other stakeholders, and thus a more harmonized approach in future.

#### **Recommendation 2: Establish a policy framework for education**

Establishing a policy framework for UNICEF's work in education is necessary for coherent programming. Such a framework should include an explicit educational philosophy, overarching theory of change, and pedagogical principles that both reflect current educational theory and conflict sensitivity. For peacebuilding, this means developing or adapting educational materials for the context based on *needs*, in conversation with stakeholders, rather than introducing pre-packaged materials that detract from stakeholders' agency. This is particularly significant for working with minoritized populations, such as Palestinians and other refugees, whose marginal status is compounded by a number of factors. Participatory and conflict-sensitive approaches are also significant for Lebanese and other populations who have been marginalized as a consequence of armed conflict and/or inequitable development. Imposing materials or programmes can work against empowerment goals and the potential for sustainability, particularly where participants articulate pressing needs that are not addressed by programming.

Peacebuilding requires a multi-pronged approach. A policy framework for education would allow for engagement of education with peacebuilding at multiple levels, as part of a holistic vision for UNICEF's approach to education and peacebuilding. An educational philosophy that reflects both equity and peacebuilding principles would provide a strong platform from which to engage the NES framework; advocate for

minoritized and conflict-affected populations; and ensure that practices are coherent with UNICEF's vision of equality and justice for all children. Ideally, an education policy framework put forth by UNICEF would also serve as a UNCT sector-wide framework in which development partners can locate nodes of synergy and align their interventions in education.

**Recommendation 3: Invest in creative design processes that engage a dynamic, long-term strategy and ongoing conflict analysis**

The study revealed that education programmes developed by various stakeholders for the purposes of peacebuilding rarely engaged conflict analysis. Rather, they drew on generalized understandings of the context. While these understandings are critical, there is a need to invest in programme design processes that engage *ongoing conflict analysis*, as part of a *dynamic, long-term strategy*.

Ongoing conflict analysis would serve to take into account (1) historical drivers of conflict; (2) new and localized features; and (3) interconnected conflict histories of Lebanese and non-Lebanese populations. This would enable separation of root causes from surface symptoms and address these through different strategies as part of a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding. UNICEF Lebanon could lead in the design and development of such a conflict analysis tool for the purposes of improved design processes.

A dynamic strategy, rather than a linear, or staged approach, would allow for country strategy that takes into account that: (1) phases of conflict are fluid and dynamic, not clear-cut and linear in progression; (2) conflict is differentially experienced in localized geographies, which also overlap with national trajectories; and (3) historical drivers of conflict coexist with new forms and manifestations, both internally and regionally. Thus, the need for negative peace and positive peace approaches coincide. The study also showed that impactful programmes for positive peace can precede the enjoyment of security, and that ongoing programmes for negative peace, such as child protection in education are needed well after armed conflict has ended. Thus there is no clear timeline to the effectiveness of programmes.

A dynamic, long-term strategy for education and peacebuilding, with related design processes, might be conceptualized as being 'staged' in relation to the articulated and evolving *needs* of communities, rather than on the 'phase' of conflict. A dynamic, long-term strategy would also appreciate that transformative processes take time, and likely, generations, particularly in education. Thus bringing vision to careful and creative design processes can sustain the work of colleagues through the repeated challenges that are likely to emerge.

**Recommendation 4: Develop mechanisms for coordination and alignment in education and peacebuilding**

Until very recently, coordination and alignment of activities has been a challenge for UNICEF and partners due to the complex conflict environment and the absence of UN peacebuilding and MEHE NES frameworks. Addressing coordination and alignment with other UN and MEHE frameworks is an essential aspect of conflict sensitivity and comprehensive approaches that target the drivers of conflict. It is also essential to

developing a common vision of peacebuilding (as per Recommendation 1) and influencing the policies therein on the role of education.

Coordination and alignment also implies working with localized communities as equal partners, particularly with Palestinian and other minoritized groups. Further, dynamic, long-term strategies may require identifying new partners, particularly from excluded groups, which until now has been somewhat constrained for a number of political and logistical reasons. In particular, bringing in the education community – including private, public, religious and secular school leaders and other educators – into discussions about the conceptualization of peacebuilding and related policy and strategy could complement current work. Furthermore, comprehensive peace measures require the inclusion of all parties with grievances, which is not always possible because of external pressures regarding ‘acceptable’ partners. Contesting such policies is important to developing the UN team’s vision for peacebuilding and recognizing the limitations created by such policies in terms of comprehensive peace.

If, as suggested in this study (see Section 1.2), peacebuilding from the UN perspective is to engage coherent and tailored strategies based on national ownership (see 2007 UN Secretary-General Policy Committee), then an education framework and related peacebuilding strategies must reflect these priorities. This requires coordination and alignment of activities (for coherence), conflict analysis (for tailored strategies) and explicit participatory mechanisms (for national and localized forms of ownership).

**Recommendation 5: Document the implications for UNICEF’s shift towards upstream engagement and peacebuilding**

The shift towards upstream work for UNICEF in Lebanon is contested. It is important to consider the implications of such a shift for education and peacebuilding and develop an appropriate strategy. For example, this might entail moving away from current types of programming towards facilitating processes and related advocacy in the Government and elsewhere. Such work underscores the need for educational principles, or a philosophy of education, to guide a holistic policy framework for education.

Similarly a shift towards framing education in terms of peacebuilding requires consideration regarding what might be gained or lost in the process and the ways in which this repositioning will redefine UNICEF’s role, its programming; relationship with youth and their communities; and theories and timelines of action. For example, greater alignment with UN peacebuilding frameworks could endanger UNICEF’s image as an ‘a-political’, or at least less political, actor. This could affect relationships with implementing and other partners.

**Recommendation 6: Develop high quality research and evaluation programmes for education and peacebuilding, and for the purposes of institutional learning**

UNICEF is engaged in a number of ‘pilot’ projects with a view to up-scaling those that are successful. However, these programmes have often lacked baseline data and assessment tools in order to determine which programmes are more effective. Furthermore, peacebuilding objectives in education may require different approaches to evaluation, particularly since transformational processes often take years – beyond

the scope of project cycles. Thus, engaging researchers, such as through university partnerships, for longitudinal studies could be particularly instructive. Also, research for the purposes of learning is different from programme evaluation, as it recognizes UNICEF staff as learners – they learn from designing and implementing projects. Observations throughout the course of the study indicated that staff required supports and strategies to learn from their experiences for the purposes of improving future projects in peacebuilding.

### **7.2.2. UNICEF Headquarters**

#### **Recommendation 7: Clarify the relationship between UNICEF’s equity approach and peacebuilding as they pertain to education**

In order to support UNICEF country offices with conceptualization issues, there is a need to clarify and develop the relationship between UNICEF’s equity approach and peacebuilding strategy in post-conflict situations, particularly as they pertain to education. Clearly, equity strategies are pertinent to a peacebuilding agenda, in that they address structural violence through targeted measures to support minoritized populations. However, peacebuilding goes beyond an equity focus in conflict-affected states to include other measures that address all children. Thus, the interaction between the two requires consideration.

#### **Recommendation 8: Find ways to influence peacebuilding strategies in order to better locate education within peacebuilding processes and to consider the implications of engaging a peacebuilding approach to education**

There is a need to advocate for a more central role for education in peacebuilding at the highest level, along with the development of frameworks for what this entails. This requires participating in decision-making at the policy level. Concurrently, there is a need to assess the implications of such an engagement, as well as the benefits and limitations of such an approach for UNICEF’s mandate.

#### **Recommendation 9: Develop tools for ongoing conflict analysis on the local level and related capacity development**

In order to support UNICEF country offices with conflict analysis, there is a need to develop tools that engage the UN’s macro analysis of conflict with changing conflict dynamics at the localized level and common understandings of events. Once such a tool has been developed, it needs to be followed up with related training in order to establish UNICEF’s internal capacity for assessment and application to programme design processes. Furthermore, the research suggests that training is required to assist UNICEF country offices to better align their programmes with UNDAF and other national and strategic frameworks. Such capacity development needs to go beyond training models, but rather support staff throughout the longer term through coaching mechanisms.

### **7.3. UNICEF’s niche in education and peacebuilding**

UNICEF’s positionality in Lebanon is a source of strength for its activities. Perceived among partners as the agency that has expertise based on experience ‘on the ground’ and by stakeholders as being ‘a-political’, UNICEF is uniquely positioned to work with a range of actors and to broker an integrated approach to peacebuilding in education

that is multimodal, long term, and addresses the drivers of conflict through systemic change.

A review of evaluation documents in the post-2006 disaster period suggests that UNICEF is also perceived to be the expert among agencies during emergencies and in the immediate aftermath regarding post-disaster recovery. As such, UNICEF has a significant role to play in this aspect of education and peacebuilding. There is an ongoing need for disaster preparedness for schools and teacher training to conduct difficult dialogues with students during conflict. Given UNICEF's experience in leading the Education for Peace initiative, including curriculum, pedagogy and teacher training, a significant niche could be filled by UNICEF in preparing schools for such events. It should be noted that UNICEF's Education for Peace curriculum is known as one of its greatest legacies in Lebanon, given that many of its students became activists and currently work in the MEHE or in civil-society peacebuilding efforts. The Education for Peace programme was initiated during the final years of the civil war, and interviewees who experienced the programmes either as students or as trainers have argued that the 'moment' was very significant to its success. According to a former UNICEF staff member, its success was in part because it was about survival: "People needed it." There is scope for better understanding why this programme made such a significant impact and how that might be connected to disaster preparedness and education in the immediate aftermath of conflict.

A related niche for UNICEF is in facilitating curriculum development frameworks upstream, based on both its positionality and its expertise. Formal curriculum provides a venue to reach all students in public and private schools, including Palestinian children in UNRWA-operated schools. As such, it also provides a key entry point for advocacy. UNICEF is also in a significant position to advocate for children and youth by lobbying for greater resources, legislation and structural change that will address the needs of the most systematically marginalized, particularly Palestinian and other conflict-affected and minoritized children and youth, as part of an equity and human rights approach.

In addition, acting on a potential synergy between the MEHE NES framework and peacebuilding principles, and bringing both of these visions in line with each other, and with the equity focus of UNICEF would do much to further the conceptualization of peacebuilding in Lebanon and more generally.

#### **7.4. Concluding remarks**

If peacebuilding entails supporting the transformative processes of society towards sustainable peace, then it needs to be recognized that this process takes generations and must be a product of locally driven efforts. The education sector is a significant entry point for this transformative process. However, education is also a reflection of broader issues in society and the everyday challenges of transformative change. Still education has the potential to support transformative processes in conflict-affected contexts. Interventions need to be creatively designed to be inclusive of communities in conflict, and to take into account the very dynamics of social transformation over time, even generations.



UNICEF's record of service and advocacy on behalf of minoritized youth in Lebanon make it a central figure for education and peacebuilding. UNICEF could significantly contribute to supporting the management of the education sector, advocacy therein, and facilitation of curricular development with stakeholders. However, for change to take hold, the support offered by UNICEF needs to recognize the significance of local ownership and the ethical implications of engaging in peacebuilding interventions. Change cannot be sustainable without local ownership. It also requires going beyond the narrow orientation of negative peace currently taken up by the UN security agenda in Lebanon. Thus, UNICEF has a role to play in advocating for expanded definitions, and for positioning education more clearly within these in order to address structural change.

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## ANNEX 1: SELECTED EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING ACTIVITIES

### Pre-1990–2006

**RADIO AND TV:** During the final years of the civil war, attempts were made to maintain some continuity to education by developing TV and radio programmes to teach basic literacies. The ongoing crisis had created gaps in student knowledge and students who lived far from school were not able to make the distance. These programmes aimed to address this problem and at the same time target potential non-enrolled students. Electricity shortages and other challenges impacted the effectiveness of delivery; however, many formerly young adults during this period recall these programmes as having provided some supports to their missed education.

**EDUCATION FOR PEACE (c. 1988–1993):** In the late 1980s, UNICEF was already engaged in the dissemination of a curricular programme that is recalled by many currently in the CSO community as having had revolutionary force: Education for Peace. This transformative programme entailed training youth above the age of 18 during some of the worst episodes of the fighting and during the immediate aftermath. The director and other prominent trainers confirmed in interviews that it was a unique time for this work: “People felt they needed peace; it was a time for survival and education for peace was part of that.” Throughout six years, the programme trained 600 trainers, many of whom currently operate their own peacebuilding organizations. The impact of Education for Peace was so profoundly felt that in interviews former participants talked about how it had transformed their personal and professional paths. Even those who did not participate in the programme had heard about it through peers, and they knew the songs and activities, which had percolated to other venues. However, the programme was soon politicized and internal conflicts at UNICEF saw its demise. The success of the programme rested on the shoulders of a handful of activists and multipliers. It is remembered as one of the most notable legacies of UNICEF in Lebanon. Other organizations, such as the YMCA, have been noted to run similar long-running transformative programmes.

**GLOBAL EDUCATION (1993–1998):** The Global Education Project was launched in Lebanon with the support of the National Centre for Educational Research and Development in 1993, as part of a MENA regional project. The project employed global education models, frameworks and interactive learning methodologies to deliver basic education, based on principles from the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All. The project involved developing three teaching/learning modules, training teachers in interactive learning and the use of the modules, field testing, evaluating and refining the modules, training cadres of teachers in workshop facilitation, and publishing and disseminating findings. The modules were to encompass three themes: (1) learning to live together, images of ourselves/images of others; and (3) futures. A core team of educators from schools, universities and the National Centre for Educational Research, along with external experts helped to develop the modules for math, science, Arabic language and social studies. These modules were incorporated into the national curriculum. An evaluation of UNICEF’s Global Education project in 1999 concluded that throughout its six years of operation, the project had extended its original goals to become an all-inclusive project (Jurdak and Bashshur 1999). It also

noted that the project had produced valuable materials that should be reincorporated into a “nucleus of a revived and more focused project in the future” (p. 33).

**EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SYSTEMS/ MONITORING LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT (1994–1998):** In 1994, following a MENA regional meeting, UNICEF Lebanon adopted the MLA Project as part of the UNESCO-UNICEF joint commitment to monitor and assess progress towards EFA following the Jomtien World Conference on Education for All. Two studies were conducted at this time to assess the learning achievement of fourth elementary students and fourth intermediate students drawn from large random samples to represent private and public schools; different mohafazat, or counties; urban and rural settings, gender and class size. The assessments were designed to measure achievement in Arabic, English and French, as well as mathematics, sciences, and life skills. The goal was to develop this into an EMIS as part of a five-year cooperation agreement with the GoL. The objectives of the cooperation agreement (1997–2000) were to be attained by conducting studies and surveys, building national capacities, monitoring and evaluation, and advocacy through a media campaign about Free Compulsory Education and its related study, which had been contracted to a research institute (Jurdak and Bashshur 1999). The team consisted of a diverse steering committee made up of CERD, MOE, UNESCO and several university representatives. An evaluation showed that the media campaign and the FCE study proved particularly valuable.

**EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (1995–1999):** The ECD project was another global/regional project supported by the UNICEF Global Education Fund. The goal was to provide caregivers with strategies and resources for enhancing the development of children during the first six years of life. The UNICEF Lebanon team, in conjunction with educators and experts, developed four videos, along with a facilitator’s resource guide and parent materials on the following themes: (1) Off to a good start, age 0–1; (2) A time for adventure, age 1–3; (3) Pathways to learning, age 4–5; (4) Ready for school, age 5–7. UNICEF headquarters provided four 10-minute animation films on the core ideas of child development. The Lebanon team was to then expand on these to produce 30-minute country-specific videos and related materials. The project was undertaken in partnership with the Ministry of Health, MoSA, the Lebanese University’s College of Education, and national NGOs. The stated goals were: (1) to improve the knowledge, attitudes and skills of 80 per cent of caregivers, including parents, with respect to early child growth and development; (2) to support UNICEF’s regional MENA ECD Better Parenting Video-Based Initiative; and (3) to ensure ECD equity of access by improving the quality of child care and KG services and standards.

**BASIC EDUCATION (1997–2001):** UNICEF Lebanon operated a basic education programme at this time that included three education projects: (1) Global education; (2) Educational Management Information System; and (3) ECD. These programmes were based on an agreement of cooperation between UNICEF and the GoL (1997–2001). The goals of the basic education programme were (1) to increase net primary enrolment in the public sector by 8–10 per cent in underserved areas; (2) to enhance the emotional well-being and intellectual growth of all children of Lebanon in an environment that fosters achievement, social cohesion and global citizenship; and (3)

to ensure the completion and retention of 80 per cent of school-age children within the basic education level (Jurdak and Bashshur 1999).

**NATIONAL CURRICULUM REFORM (1997):** As educational infrastructure was reconstructed and a surge of expenditure made its way to the social sector, the national curriculum also came under scrutiny. The new curriculum was presented in 1994 and involved an elaborate review process. Central was the consensus that was achieved around the development of the history curriculum; however, this curriculum was never approved (extend and CITE Bashshur). Trainings for trainers took place and the curriculum was officially launched in 1997. It entailed key changes around the languages of instruction, the pedagogical approach and the content, which had not been revised since the early 1970s. The launch of the 1997 curriculum could be considered an indication that recovery was under way, although many schools at this time still grappled with basic structural, material and social challenges and inadequacies that were legacies of the civil war.

## **2007–2011**

### **UNICEF INTERVENTIONS IN EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING IN LEBANON**

#### **Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in North Lebanon**

- UNDAF outcome 1.1 and components of MDG-F
- Joint Programme (UNESCO, UNICEF, ILO, UNDP, UNRWA and UNFPA) for improving inter-communal relations between Palestinian and Lebanese communities through youth and women empowerment.
- Output 4 of Joint Programme: UNV (UN Volunteers) led by UNESCO with UNICEF, ILO, UNDP, UNRWA, UNFPA and partnered with Lebanese Palestinian Dialogue Committee to promote intra-/inter-communal dialogue within three UNRWA high schools and four Lebanese state secondary schools.
- Coordination with the MEHE on supporting NES with training manuals developed from the programme.

#### **Child-at-Risk Detection Programme and Parent Involvement Programme**

- To achieve outcomes of component 1 (early childhood education) of EDP II in support of NES
- Design and finance Child-at-risk Detection Programmes and Parent Involvement Programme for component 1 of NES
- Train DOPS staff to implement

#### **MRE**

- Programme in 'UNICEF Humanitarian Action Lebanon in 2008' report
- Provide MRE activities for adults and children across 150 affected villages in north and south Lebanon on mine/UXO accidents
- Train 60 teachers from 15 villages on inclusion of child mine/UXO survivors

#### **Water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH)**

- In partnership with Lebanon Water and Wastewater Establishments
- Provide US\$2.5 million for access to clean water, improved sanitation facilities and promote behaviour change
- Through focus groups, identify strategies for hygiene education



- Promote hygiene awareness in 120 schools

#### Child-Friendly School Initiative

- In partnership with MEHE
- In 2007, 100 schools participated in activities related to school rehabilitation, health/nutrition and hygiene education, and literacy and remedial classes
- Environmental awareness activities took place in 1,100 schools
- The 2008 report proposed an additional partnership with MoSA for the addition of 55 elementary and intermediate public schools for in-service teacher training, support of parent associations and ECD policies and materials
- Funds were not allocated to measure impact

#### Let's All Go to School

- In partnership with MEHE and funded by the Italian National Committee for UNICEF
- Local implementing partners: The Scouts of National Education, municipalities of Fnaideq, Deir Dalloum, Wadi el Jamous
- Pilot project for South Lebanon and Akkar to be launched in Fall 2011
- Field assessment conducted in 2010–2011
- The project entails developing extracurricular activities with schools, in line with MEHE goals

## OTHER INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL INTERVENTIONS IN EDUCATION AND PEACEBUILDING IN LEBANON

INTEGRATED SUPPORT FOR THE REHABILITATION OF NAHR EL-BARED CAMP ADJACENT AREA (UNICEF, UNRWA, UNHABITAT, ILO AND UNDP): A joint project of UN agencies funded by the European Commission of Humanitarian Aid Office at the Nahr el-Bared Palestinian refugee camp. Through this project, the UN agencies would provide: (1) a coordination of recovery efforts; (2) the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure; and (3) capacity building of the Municipality of Mhammara in terms of service provision and joint Lebanese-Palestinian committees.<sup>28</sup>

EDUCATION FOR PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON (UNRWA): In Lebanon, there are 12 Palestinian refugee camps where more than 425,000 refugees reside. Since educational provisions do not fall within the jurisdiction of the GoL, Palestinian children are solely dependent on educational programmes provided by UNRWA. As of December 2009, 30,000 Palestinian children were attending 75 UNRWA schools. However, with funding cuts and limited training opportunities, the quality of education continues to be a growing concern. Still, the European Union has committed to 3 million euros on scholarships for higher education to Palestinian students (January 2007–April 2011) and 15 million euros on improving education of young Palestinian refugees for better access into higher education and employment opportunities (January 2006–February 2012).

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<sup>28</sup> More information on this project can be accessed through a link on this web page: [www.un.org.lb/Subpage.aspx?pageid=229](http://www.un.org.lb/Subpage.aspx?pageid=229).

**SUPPORTING GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION IN LEBANON (UNESCO):<sup>29</sup>**

Funded by the Government of Italy, this project aims to find and eradicate forms of discrimination, harm and inequalities based on gender through several studies. One of the studies aims at finding texts and contexts that promote gender discrimination by conducting a content analysis of the national curriculum and its textbooks. Another study investigates forms and incidents of gender-based violence inflicted on students in school settings.

**UNDP PEACE BUILDING PROJECT:** The UNDP Peacebuilding Project supported the LAU Summer School for Emerging Leaders in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding for four years (2005, 2007, 2008 and 2009). In 2010, the project focused greatly on the establishment of university peace clubs. During this time, it also completed the Peace Building Toolbox, which is currently being prepared for a pilot phase in public schools in October 2011 through coordination with the MEHE. The project supports NES Priority 2 and is supported by EC funds. Attempts have been made to consult individuals from various communities for initiatives planned from the Peacebuilding Fund.

**LEBANESE NATIONAL YOUTH PARLIAMENT (UNDEF, IOM):** Grants from the UNDEF supported the IOM and MEHE initiative of bringing together Lebanese youth to engage in debates, dialogues and negotiation skills on sensitive topics, including the reduction of the voting age from 21 to 18. In June 2009, 64 selected youth aged 15–19 attended their first plenary session. By September 2010, three issues updating the activities of the youth parliament were submitted to the MEHE.

**STRENGTHENING NATIONAL ACTION TO COMBAT THE WORST FORMS OF CHILD LABOUR (ILO):** According to the ILO's website, one component of eliminating child labour involves "remedial education" for children returning to schools. This project, funded by the Italian Cooperation, started in 2009 and is still in progress.

**ENHANCING ICT IN EDUCATION (UNESCO):** The LRF provided US\$820,000 for enhancing ICT in education, the only educational programme of the LRF. This project, in line with the ICT component of the NES, aimed at developing the ICT curricula for intermediate and secondary levels and at deploying Student Information Systems across schools and an EMIS at the MEHE linked to the student systems. Although the project took effect in September 2008, the 2009 annual report revealed complications between UNESCO and the MEHE during recruitment processes.<sup>30</sup> As a result, tasks fell far behind schedule and, consequently, the LRF Chair requested the termination of the project. The report states that the two parties – UNESCO and the MEHE – are in dialogue regarding future plans.

**LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY SUMMER SCHOOL (IPJE, MCC AND UNDP):** In 2002, the IPJE at the Lebanese American University, with MCC and LCRN, hosted a two-day workshop and three-day residential on conflict resolution. Then, for each summer from 2004 to 2010, with the exception of 2006, the IPJE and various partners, mainly MCC and UNDP, facilitated the 10-day residential 'Summer School for Emerging Leaders in Conflict Transformation and Peacebuilding'. Every summer, it

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<sup>30</sup> The report can be accessed at <<http://mdtf.undp.org/factsheet/project/00065555>>.

enabled 30 university students from around Lebanon to live together and engage in activities on conflict analysis, self-development and project development for peacebuilding. In 2008, it targeted the Arab region while, in 2009, it became localized to the Lebanese population. In the summer of 2010, half the participants were Lebanese nationals and the other half were Palestinian. It also invited Asaad Shaftari to share with the students his own personal transformation from warlord to being the first individual after the civil war to state a public apology. More than one third of the graduates of this summer school are either leading peacebuilding activities in civil society or pursuing graduate studies in conflict management. This is an indicator of the high level of impact this summer school has had on youth.

**ACADEMIC UNIVERSITY FOR NON-VIOLENCE AND HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ARAB WORLD:** In a similar vein, the university was established in 2009 after decades of non-violence trainings for youth and adults. The university aims to institutionalize its trainings and curricula into a research-based institution that offers accredited graduate degrees in areas of non-violence and human rights.

**NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTE:** This Washington-based NGO carried out 'Citizen Lebanon', a nationwide educational programme that sought to empower adults as citizens to make changes in their own communities.<sup>31</sup> The project started in 2008 with seven organizations and used a multiplier principle for its trainings, 'one conversation at a time', to train 67 facilitators to teach others in their own communities. The institute also works on Shariky for women political empowerment and on electoral processes through advocacy for reform with the Lebanese Association for Democratic Elections and the Civil Campaign for Electoral Reform.

**PERMANENT PEACE MOVEMENT AND THE PEACE BUILDING ACADEMY:** The Permanent Peace Movement, founded in 1986, has been active in the MENA region on conflict assessment and the promotion of peacebuilding activities through training and education. It has partnered with UNRWA, UNICEF, the MDG-F and MEHE in producing a set of training modules (2010, in Arabic) for the Peacebuilding and Conflict Transformation in North Lebanon. Currently, the movement hosts the office for the Peace Building Academy. The Peace Building Academy is an independent NGO working on non-violent means of conflict management across the MENA region. The Lebanon mission "aims at research and training for conflict management and capacity building of community leaders and Palestinian refugees." In the summer of 2010, the movement, the PBA and NOVA partnered with LAU bringing in, for the first time, Palestinian students to the annual summer school on peacebuilding and conflict transformation. In 2011, the PBA has focused on finding the challenges and mapping activities of peacebuilding in the MENA region.

**LEBANESE CENTRE FOR CIVIC EDUCATION:** The centre in 2008 partnered with People in Need, a Czech NGO, on implementing the international project, 'One World in Schools'. The project aimed to enrich students' classroom learning experiences through video documentaries and activities that engaged students in the controversial issues that the films presented. A feature of the project was that none of the films were on Lebanese issues, which crucially brought a global element to the classroom. While

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<sup>31</sup> A 10-minute documentary about the Citizen Lebanon non-formal educational programme is available at <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckZnk2qYjrl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ckZnk2qYjrl)>.

many of the teachers found the pedagogies from the in-service training useful for their classrooms, some faced difficulties continuing the integration of films in their lessons. Other projects the centre is involved in include 'Media and Citizenship', 'Debate in Schools', 'Foundation of Democracy Series' and 'Project Citizen', all providing students with opportunities to practice skills of active citizenship at school.

**TEACH FOR LEBANON:** From the United States, Teach for America has branched out to Lebanon, providing in-service and pre-service training to teachers. It has created partnerships with eight schools in Lebanon and certifies nearly a dozen of university graduates per year. Teach for Lebanon works only in the private sector.

**NAHWA AL MUWATINIYYA (TOWARDS CITIZENSHIP, NA-AM):** Na-aM is a youth-led, active NGO that works in public and private schools on several educational initiatives linking youth, their classrooms and their local municipalities. Baddi Koun Mas'oul (I want to be responsible) raises awareness to secondary school students on the importance of voting and of being critical and its ethical practices. Also, in partnership with Injaz Lebanon, Economic Citizenship is a project that raises awareness on economic rights and empowers youth with skills with it comes to lobbying, decision-making and civic participation. Other projects include Na-aM lil Hiwar (Yes to dialogue), Lebanese-Syrian dialogue and Yalla (Youth Activist Leaders in Lebanon).

**USAID, OFFICE OF TRANSITION INITIATIVES AND AMIDEAST:** USAID has granted the MEHE US\$75 million through the D-RASATI project (Developing Rehabilitation Assistance to Schools and Teacher Improvement) targeting all public schools in Lebanon. Nearly US\$33 million are dedicated to computer labs. This project supports three components of the NES: Teacher professional development, school infrastructure and community mobilization (extra-curricular activities). USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives supports numerous activities in underdeveloped or struggling communities around Lebanon. For instance, youth in Hermel, a town in the Bekaa valley, engage in training activities on civic empowerment, citizenship, conflict resolution and project management. September 2011 marks the end of a 10-year project from Amideast supporting professional development initiatives across all sectors in the country.

**OTHER ORGANIZATIONS:** Many other organizations and schools are involved in education and peacebuilding programmes in Lebanon. In addition, various religious and secular Palestinian committees, in collaboration with Lebanese NGOs, work on education and peacebuilding activities within their camp communities. Furthermore, for-profit organizations are engaged with these services, engaging in training for schools and youth, developing curricula and, to a lesser extent, producing research. Some of the organizations not already mentioned above include the following (this is not an exhaustive list, but provides a sampling):

- Adyan (Inter-faith dialogues among Christian and Muslim communities)
- Al Mabarrat Association
- ALEF
- AMEL Association
- Arab Resource Centre for the Popular Arts (Al-Jana)
- Baddawi and Nahr el-Bared Camp Scouts, Youth Centres

- Beyond Reform and Development
- Catholic Relief Services
- Centre for Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding
- Centre for Lebanese Studies (CLS): Education for Social Cohesion (whole-school approach to active citizenship)
- Common Space Initiative
- Forum for Development, Culture and Dialogue
- German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ)
- Hariri Foundation
- Imam Sadr
- Kaffa
- Lebanese Organisation of Studies and Training (LOST)
- Makassed Philanthropic Islamic Association
- Mennonite Central Committee (MCC)
- Mercy Corps
- Mouvement Sociale
- NABA'A
- National Scouts
- Rene Mouawad Foundation
- Safadi Foundation
- Save the Children
- Search for Common Ground
- Shatila Camp Children and Youth Centre
- WAZNAT
- YMCA

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