

The participation of children and young people makes a difference, when their voice is heard

[UNICEF children and youth consultations across Lebanon](#)

On 20 November 1989, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#), a landmark achievement that has since become the world's most widely ratified human rights treaty. Marking the 30th anniversary of the Convention, UNICEF organized activities to raise awareness on child rights across Lebanon and to provide a platform through which the voices of the nation's children about their concerns and ideas to build solutions for their future. UNICEF and partners conducted consultations among 170 children and young people between the ages of 10 and 18, who got the chance to identify their challenges and agree on joint recommendations aimed at providing solutions to the issues that they are raising.

These consultations took place from July till early October 2019 with participants from all eight governorates of the country: Beirut, Mount Lebanon, Akkar, the North, Bekaa, Baalbek-Hermel, South and Nabatiyeh. Meetings between children and the main stakeholders including municipalities, governors, and community based and non-governmental organizations followed. Here, children and the youth shared their concerns and made recommendations for the fulfilment of their rights and to help influence the future of their country.

UNICEF Lebanon takes these recommendations very seriously and will include them as part of the evidence informing our programme, ensuring that the voices of children and young people accurately shape UNICEF's ongoing plans in Lebanon.

This document compiles the children's concerns and recommendations, which are linked to the child rights in the CRC, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the observations and recommendations of the Child Rights reports to Lebanon.

Goal: Every Child Survives and Thrives	
Issues Raised by Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health services are very expensive, to the point that sometimes even basic medicines are out of reach for many. - People are unable to be admitted to hospitals and some are dying at the entrances. - Not all children are being fed appropriately. Lacking correct nutrition, many children's health requirements are not being met. - Expired and spoiled food is sold to children at restaurants, in shops or at schools. - Some children are addicted to smoking hookah and cigarettes. - There is a significant drug problem both on the streets and in schools. Habitual users find an easy supply due to widespread drug dealing networks. - Due to difficult life circumstances, many children experience frequent sadness. - Some children suffer from constant grief and fear.
Children's Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide free treatment, free medicine and free rehabilitation services. - Provide children with chronic diseases and permanent disabilities with the necessary free treatment and rehabilitation. - Provide access to food to prevent child malnutrition or fear of hunger. - Create awareness campaigns among children and adolescents to help build healthy lifestyles. - Ensure food safety standards are enforced at restaurants, in shops and in schools. - Provide easy access to preventative programmes to educate children and help protect them from drugs and other addictions. - Provide psychological support for children dealing with loss and deprivation.
CRC Articles	
Lebanon CRC Observation	Disability, basic health and welfare
SDG	

Goal: Every Child Learns	
Issues Raised by Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The curriculum is old and not up to date; topics learned do not meet children and youth needs, aspirations and/or capacities. - Teachers in public schools are not trained on modern teaching methods or modern technology and sometimes not willing to acquire new skills. - Teachers are underpaid and therefore not giving their full potential all the time. - Classrooms are overcrowded. - Students feel they have not been prepared well by teachers for exams and find the tests as a source of fear. - There is too much homework given. - Due to so many books required, school bags are heavy and cause children back pain. - Corporal punishment, violence, harassment and bullying are prevalent in schools. - There is discrimination in schools against persons with disabilities children, with no proper physical accessibility for them.
Children's Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop an updated modern curriculum using advanced technologies and including more arts, sciences, humanities, and sports. - Provide teachers with ongoing training to promote inclusion and foster a culture of acceptance. - Reduce homework and the use of heavy books. - Reduce the number of students in the classroom. - Ensure inclusive schools that guarantee the right of children with disabilities. - Promote a culture of non-violence in schools – for both children and teachers – with no resort to physical or psychological punishment. - Support schools as an environment of positive mental health and self-confidence. - Prevent children dropping out by respecting each child's capacities without stigmatizing. - Increase the length of recess time to 40 minutes to allow enough time to eat, pray and rest.
CRC Articles	 <p>28 ACCESS TO EDUCATION</p>
Lebanon CRC Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Education, Leisure and cultural activities -Dissemination, awareness-raising and training
SDG	

Goal: Every Child is Protected from Violence and Exploitation

<p>Issues Raised by Children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children are increasingly the victims of violence, sexual harassment, kidnapping and trafficking. - Parents often beat their children without reason. - Children's physical and mental health are compromised through the forced acceptance of child marriage, sexual harassment and substance abuse. - Violence and verbal abuse are prevalent not only at home, but at school and in the street. - Due to their family's financial circumstances, children are often compelled to drop out of school and to work in order to help provide income to their families. Sometimes, the nature of work and the circumstances are dangerous and put the children at risk of sexual abuse and of engaging in the use of cigarettes and drugs. - There has been a change to parents' priorities: social media and smart phones have become more important than children. Parents tend to neglect their children, not giving them enough attention or listening to them. - Despite their fears and problem, children feel they have no one to trust and refer to for help. - Children are the most affected by the problems between their parents and, in many cases, the resulting divorce, leading them to increased psychological problems and to feeling abandoned. - Children's voices are not heard by the religious courts when post-divorce decisions are made on their future. - Children's views are ignored by the parents and the society, and their needs misunderstood. - There is a general lack of road safety in Lebanon, putting children at constant risk especially close to schools since many children walk to school. - Children have no public spaces where they can play safely. The only option is to play in the street, which puts them in danger.
<p>Children's Recommendations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen and implement laws to protect children from sexual harassment, kidnapping, trafficking and all kind of violence. - Strengthen and implement laws to protect children from domestic violence and outlaw child marriage. - Eliminate child labor through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Enact and enforce a protective labour law that imposes severe penalties on employers who hire a child. o Improve job opportunities for parents o Improve access opportunities for vulnerable children to education through delivering higher quality education at public schools o Create rehabilitation and reintegration opportunities for drop-out children. - Ensure working conditions for children of legal work age are safe and secure, in terms of time and required labor. - Provide traffic safety with safe roads and sidewalks to the communities, including proper and safe public transport means to be used by children walking to schools. - Encourage dialogue between children and their parents and teachers and encourage them to speak up to strengthen their trust, mutual respect. - Create awareness amongst parents that highlights a child's needs and development.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a family atmosphere that embraces joy, affection and non-discrimination away from the personal problems between parents and where the child is not a subject of negotiation, or a focal point for parental anger. - Ensure child has the right to have their opinion heard before any decision on custody is made by religious courts. - Provide protection centers, play areas, and green spaces - Create comfortable environment that encourages children to report any kind of violence or bullying to their parents and school. - Support psychological comfort, freedom of expression, and self-confidence must be promoted and devoid of fear and refraction. - Strengthen safe friendships and encourage acceptance of differences, especially differences of opinion away from conflict and violence.
<p>CRC Articles</p>	
<p>Lebanon CRC Observation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social protection measures - Civil rights and freedom - Violence against children - Family environment and alternative care - Definition of the child
<p>SDG</p>	

Goal: Every Child lives in a Safe and Clean Environment	
Issues Raised by Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public schools lack good infrastructure, WASH services, and hygiene. - Clean water is not available in all homes. - In the streets, there is a lot of air and noise pollution, from garbage, factories and cars; all could lead to a child's severe illness and causing death in many cases. - Beaches and sea are not accessible for free to the public, and they are unclean and polluted.
Children's Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a healthy school environment in line with basic personal hygiene requirements. - Provide clean water at every home. - Provide the right to a clean environment free from the problem of untreated solid waste and effluent. - Provide clean beaches and the right to access the beach and to swim without any cost.
CRC Articles	
Lebanon CRC Observation	Social protection measures
SDG	

Goal: Every child has equitable chance in Life	
Issues Raised by Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Disabled children suffer from their status in society; many to the extent that wish they had never been born. - Disabled children have no access to basic services. - Discrimination, especially based on gender, ability/disability, nationality and looks, is prevalent in the community. - Parents want children to do chores and don't allow them to play. - Poverty and unemployment levels are becoming very high. Parents are frequently left with no income and, so, with no means to ensure the needs of their children. - The cost of education - even in public schools where the cost of transportation is a burden - is forcing youth to shift to the labour market. - Boys and girls are treated differently - especially when it comes to social life and right to go out at night. - Refugee children are not provided with the minimum opportunities to enjoy a happy life.
Children's Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure no distinction is made between children for any reason, including gender, poverty, disability, body shape and weight, school delays, etc.). - Promote non-discrimination between girls and boys and allow their equitable access to basic services. - Ensure the right to protected mobility in the village and in the city. - Ensure access for refugee children to basic needs, especially housing and learning. - Ensure children are entitled to the full enjoyment of their rights regardless of whether they are refugees or not. - Create awareness campaigns to promote good citizenship for all.
CRC Articles	
Lebanon CRC Observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordination & allocation of resources - Establishing strategic budgetary lines for all children with respect to health and education - Data collection - Strengthen technical cooperation with the relevant agencies and international partners (OHCHR, UNICEF). - Ratification of international human rights instruments - Developing a national mechanism for follow-up and reporting
SDG	

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