Since October 2019, Lebanon has experienced a series of compounding crises. These include the Syrian crisis, economic collapse and monetary devaluation, political instability, the COVID-19 pandemic, and the Beirut Port blast. These shocks have damaged the schools and learning facilities of around 135,000 vulnerable school-aged Lebanese children. At the same time Lebanon hosts at least 1.5 million Syrian refugees, and an estimated 15,800 refugees from Ethiopia, Iraq and Sudan. Among these refugee communities there are many children and youth whose education is disrupted. Together with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) as well as non-government partners, UNICEF is supporting vulnerable Lebanese and refugee children as well as youth to access learning through a series of non-formal education (NFE) programmes. Among these important programmes is the innovative Lebanon Learning Passport (LP) pilot. This 12-week summer programme started in August 2021 and has reached more than 4,000 learners and their caregivers.

The LP is a global partnership between UNICEF and Microsoft created to address the challenges faced by over 30 million children and youth who are displaced or affected by crisis. It aims to help them continue their learning through access to quality education. In Lebanon UNICEF is using the LP to help children and young people enter or get back into national education systems, and also to acquire skills to boost their livelihood opportunities. This personalized, web-based digital platform delivers an interactive NFE curriculum to students. It includes adaptive lessons as well as supplementary learning and assessment material for teachers. Additionally, it provides support to caregivers through a parenting programme.
This raises awareness on mental health topics related to emergencies and COVID-19 and promotes coping mechanisms, while also teaching users how to access mental health and psychosocial support.

During this pilot phase, programme implementers evaluated the technology and content used, and localized the platform, ready for the country to adopt.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

- An estimated 4,362 children and youth (2,792 girls) and 965 teachers and caregivers across six governates in Lebanon participated in the LP programme, surpassing the original target of 4,000 participants.
- 1,152 users (775 girls) completed at least one course through the LP programme.
- One in five users (872 total users, 583 girls) were enrolled in three or more courses.
- During the pilot phase, 2,356 learners completed 90 per cent or more of the course they enrolled in.
- Students across different courses completed 3,303 quizzes, with an average score of 66.1 out of 100, 16 points above the pass score of 50.

LESSONS LEARNED

- Caregivers and parents were highly engaged with the LP, but they required additional orientation as many lacked the needed literacy skills and technology know how. When additional instructions were given via groups led on WhatsApp, the engagement rate of caregivers was higher.
- The LP helped educators cater to their students’ different learning levels. One educator, for example, observed the time required by each student to complete an assigned task, noting that some were significantly faster than others.
- Face-to-face support is needed for the most vulnerable users such as refugee learners in informal settlements and caregivers with limited technology skills. Local partners provided in-person and individualized support in the community as well as technology support for LP platform registration and orientation. This was necessary for orientating at least 50 per cent of users.
- Flexible learning schedules for LP classes are needed where energy is scarce. In Lebanon, where there is an energy crisis, classes that were conducted at varying times gave children and caregivers the ability to ration power throughout the day and use their generators to power their LP devices.
- Many families shared a single LP account between two to three children and caregivers. Only one account could be opened per household, therefore, it is estimated the number of users who engaged on the platform exceeded the registered number by more than 30 per cent.

NEXT STEPS

Lebanon’s LP will reach more users as it is scaled up across three strategic areas. The first is in partnership with MEHE and the Technical Vocational Education & Training (TVET) Directorate where UNICEF will integrate the LP into secondary and TVET formal education. The second is through UNICEF’s School Bridging Programme (and other NFE pathways) the LP which will reach 70,000 out-of-school children and young people, including those on the move, with accelerated and remote and in-person learning support to help ensure their transition back to formal schools or to age-appropriate income generating activities. The third is through UNICEF’s LP programme, which will use social media platforms to engage potential users who are interested in personalized and self-directed learning.

SPECIAL THANKS


**Cost effectiveness:** UNICEF has invested around US$ 49,000 into Lebanon’s NFE Learning Passport pilot programme, reaching 4,362 total users (2,792 girls) at roughly US$ 11 per user.

For more information, please contact:
UNICEF Lebanon Country Office: Beirut@unicef.org
UNICEF Learning Passport Team: lp-support@unicef.org
©UNICEF February 2022