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ANNEX II

of the Commission Implementing Decision on the Special Measure in favour of Lebanon for 2022

Action for the EU Response to the Syrian Crisis: Ensuring learning continuity in Lebanon

ANNUAL MEASURE

This document constitutes the annual work programme in the sense of Article 110(2) of the Financial Regulation, and a measure in the sense of Article 23(4) of NDICI-Global Europe Regulation.

1. SYNOPSIS

1.1. Action Summary Table

1. Title CRIS/OPSYS Basic Act	EU Response to the Syrian Crisis: Ensuring learning continuity in Lebanon Annual measure in favour of Lebanon for 2022 OPSYS business reference: NDICI-GEO-NEAR/2022/ACT-61245 ABAC Commitment level 1 number: JAD.1013810 Financed under the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI-Global Europe).
2. Team Europe Initiative	Yes – Support to education in Lebanon (in the making).
3. Zone benefiting from the action	The action shall be carried out in Lebanon.
4. Programming document	N/A
5. Link with relevant MIP(s) objectives/expected results	N/A
PRIORITY AREAS AND SECTOR INFORMATION	
6. Priority Area(s), sectors	Dac Code: 112: Basic Education
7. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)	Main SDG: SDG 4 Education Other significant SDGs: SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. SDG 8: Promotion of inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all.

	SDG 10: Reduced inequalities - Reduce inequality within and among countries. SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.			
8 a) DAC code(s)	110 – Basic Education: 100 % 11110 Education policy and administrative arrangements 11120 Education facilities and training 11220 Primary Education 11240 Early childhood education			
8 b) Main Delivery Channel	40 000 Multilateral Organisations			
9. Targets	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Migration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social inclusion and Human Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Rights, Democracy and Governance			
10. Markers (from DAC form)	General policy objective	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Participation development/good governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Aid to environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Gender equality and women's and girl's empowerment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Reproductive, maternal, new-born and child health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Disaster Risk Reduction	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Inclusion of persons with Disabilities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	RIO Convention markers	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective
	Biological diversity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Combat desertification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change mitigation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Climate change adaptation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Internal markers and Tags	Policy objectives	Not targeted	Significant objective	Principal objective

	Digitalisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags			/
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital entrepreneurship	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	digital skills/literacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	digital services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Tags			/
	digital connectivity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	energy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	transport	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	education and research	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	Migration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	Reduction of Inequalities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
	COVID-19	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BUDGET INFORMATION

12. Amounts concerned	<p>Budget line(s) (article, item): 14.020110 – Southern Neighbourhood</p> <p>Total estimated cost: EUR 40 000 000.00</p> <p>Total amount of EU budget contribution EUR 40 000 000.00</p> <p>EU Member States part of the Team Europe Initiative (under consolidation for budget): Finland, France, Germany, and Italy. EIB might join at a later stage (no ongoing education programs).</p> <p>The commitment of the EU’s contribution to this action will be complemented by other contributions from Team Europe partners. It is subject to the formal confirmation of each respective partners’ meaningful contribution as early as possible.</p> <p>In the event that the Team Europe Initiatives (TEI) and/or these contributions do not materialise, the EU action may continue outside a TEI framework.</p>
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MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

13. Implementation modalities (type of financing and management mode)	<p>Project Modality</p> <p>Indirect management with UNICEF</p>
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1.2. Summary of the Action

Lebanon has been facing compounded challenges with its largest peace-time socio-economic and financial crisis, aggravated over time and intensified by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on key sectors of the economy and the consequences of the explosion of the Port of Beirut in 2020. More than 80% of the Lebanese population would be living in multidimensional poverty. Lebanon has been hosting the largest number of refugees per capita in the world for more than a decade, with currently over 1.5 million Syrian

refugees, a number equivalent to 25% of its population, and around 200 000 Palestinian refugees. Their situation has been deteriorating gradually as well. Despite increasing humanitarian aid, almost 90% of Syrian refugee households are below the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket, and are not able to afford the essential goods and services to ensure their minimum living standards. Educational structures have been closed for months during and the COVID-19 outbreak and learning losses are accumulating. The risk of a third year of severe learning losses for the most vulnerable children is looming. One out of ten Lebanese children and half of non-Lebanese children were not enrolled in formal schools during the scholastic year 2020-21.

Considering a possible collapse of the education systems, the overall objective of this 60-months action is, for the scholastic years 2022-2025, to contribute to improve literacy and numeracy skills and qualifications through learning continuity for vulnerable children. For that purpose and in complementarity with other education programs financed by the EU and other donors, the specific outcomes are (1) Inclusive, equitable and safe access to public education provided for all vulnerable boys and girls through reduction of barriers for enrolment and retention into formal education; (2) Enlarged access to quality education for out-of-learning children through new learning pathways (school-based bridging program in private schools); (3) Education system able to maintain the delivery of education in times of crisis (resilience).

The action is aligned with the priorities identified under the Lebanese Ministry for Education and Higher Education 5-Year Education Sector Plan 2021-2025. The implementation of the activities proposed in this action will be flexible to three learning scenarios linked with the complete reopening of schools, partial opening or even full closure in case of deterioration of the situation.

Taking into account the Council conclusions on Lebanon of the 7 December 2020¹, the action responds to the political commitments made at the Brussels Conferences on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region"² co-hosted by the European Union and the United Nations in 2021 and 2022 and builds upon actions of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis. It is aligned with the European Commission's Priority "Promoting our European Way of Life", in particular the policy area "Education and Training" and with the Joint Communication "*A Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean*"³, in particular its priority on "Human development, good governance and the rule of law" and its "Flagship 1- "Support to social sectors, education, skills and health". The action will contribute to several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the SDG 4 on ensuring the right to access quality education.

The action is also aligned with the "Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework (3RF)" launched by the European Union, the United Nations and the World Bank in December 2020 in response to the explosion of the Port of Beirut. The 3RF pursue a people-centred recovery track to address urgent needs of the most vulnerable populations and small businesses affected and a reform and reconstruction track to address governance and recovery challenges as well as investments for the reconstruction of critical assets, services and infrastructure, including in the education sector. The action also feeds into the "Lebanon Crisis Response Plan - LCRP".

The action will be at the heart of a Team Europe Initiative, with Finland, France, Germany, and Italy and possible the European Investment Bank, which will ensure better alignment and visibility with EU Member States and ultimately increase the overall impact of the EU in the education sector.

¹ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47184/st13730-en20.pdf>

² The overarching objective of the Brussels Conferences is to continue supporting the Syrian people in Syria and the region, and mobilise the international community in support of a comprehensive and credible political solution to the Syria conflict, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254. https://www.eeas.europa.eu/eeas/brussels-vi-conference-supporting-future-syria-and-region_en#44907

³ https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/joint_communication_renewed_partnership_southern_neighbourhood.pdf

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Context

Lebanon has been facing compounded challenges with its largest peace-time socio-economic and financial crisis, aggravated over time and intensified by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on key sectors of the economy and the consequences of the explosion of the Port of Beirut in 2020. According to the World Bank, the financial crisis that Lebanon is going through is “one of the top ten, possibly top three most severe economic collapses worldwide since the 1850s”. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic took its toll on the economic activity, especially on small businesses and the informal sector. Lebanon defaulted on its public debt, cutting its access to financial markets. In 2021, the devaluation of the national currency against the US dollars accelerated, affecting dramatically an economy highly dependent on imports. The Central Bank and the banking sector severely restricted access to people’s savings and limited cash withdrawals. Subsidies (food, gasoline, medications) were lifted abruptly. In 2022, the country might be facing a “bread crisis” as 80% of its wheat imports originate from Ukraine. A triple digit annual inflation rates was reported for the 18th consecutive month in December 2021, with annual inflation reaching a record 224%, compared to December 2020. Food and non-alcoholic beverages witnessed a staggering annual increase of 438%, compared to December 2020. Lebanon’s economy contracted by 10.5% in 2021, the highest contraction amongst 193 countries globally. This devastating contraction follows from a 21.4% contraction in 2020, reflecting the near complete destruction of an economy and a shrinking GDP to 21.8 billion USD. Lebanon’s inflation rate for 2021 is the third highest globally after Venezuela and Sudan.

Poverty rate amongst Lebanese would have reached 81% in 2021 and the extreme poverty rate 34%. More alarming is that food insecurity is today a reality in Lebanon. In October 2021, 53% of families reported skipping a meal compared with 37% only 6 months beforehand. Seven in ten families had to buy food on credit or borrow money to afford food; the situation is even more alarming for Syrian refugees with nine out ten families having recourse to this coping mechanism. The crisis has resulted as well in a massive impoverishment of the middle classes, with the bulk of the labour force - paid in Lebanese lira– including civil servants - suffering from plummeting purchasing power. Thousands of highly qualified Lebanese (especially medical practitioners, university professors and scientists), entrepreneurs and young graduates, are migrating in search of better opportunities. The living conditions of the population have deteriorated dramatically, in part due to lack of resources and a robust social protection systems. Households are facing difficulties in accessing basic services, including electricity, health care, water supply/sanitation and education.

Lebanon’s leadership policy responses to these challenges have been highly inadequate, which is not so much related to knowledge gaps and quality advice, but rather the result of a dysfunctional governance system based on vested interests hampering the achievement of political consensus over effective policy initiatives. Prior to the Parliamentary elections in May 2022, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reached Staff-Level Agreement on economic policies with the Lebanese authorities that aims to “bring back confidence and put the economy back on a sustainable growth path, with stronger private sector activity and job creation”. The 2022 parliamentary elections showed growing support for candidates representing civil society and demanding reforms, which increases the potential to implement the five key pillars of reform outlined in the IMF Staff-Level Agreement, namely 1) restructuring the financial sector, 2) implementing fiscal reforms, 3) reforming state-owned enterprises, 3) strengthening governance, anti-corruption and anti-money laundering / combating the financing of terrorism and 5) establishing a credible and transparent monetary and exchange rate system.

Lebanon has been hosting the largest number of refugees per capita in the world for more than a decade, with currently over 1.5 million Syrian refugees according to the Government of Lebanon (839,000 registered with UNHCR), a number equivalent to 25% of its population and around 200.000 Palestinian refugees. Their situation has been deteriorating gradually as well. Despite increasing humanitarian aid, 88% of Syrian refugee households are below the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket⁴ and are not able to afford the essential

⁴ *Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon, 2021, UNICEF – UNHCR – WFP.*

goods and services to ensure their minimum living standards. Legal employment options for Syrian refugees are limited to three sectors, i.e. agriculture, construction and waste collection. Households continue to resort to negative coping mechanism, including not sending their children to school. Around half of Syrian refugees are food insecure and violence against children has increased by 56%. With rising poverty, competition over jobs and resources for survival is increasing, creating a high risk of social tensions between refugees and host communities.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have been closed for 15 months since February 2020. The distance learning strategy did not manage to reach the most vulnerable children. Public schools were open for a few days between September 2021 and March 2022 due to teachers' strikes caused by the low value of their salaries, arrears and inflated cost of transportation. The risk of a third year of severe learning losses for the most vulnerable children is looming. 12% of Lebanese children and 43% of non-Lebanese children were not enrolled in formal schools during the scholastic year 2020-21⁵. 30% of school-aged Syrian refugee children have never been to school. Additionally, 29% of households declared having reduced their education expenditures in 2021 with child labour as the first negative coping mechanism.

In response to these multidimensional crises, including in particular the explosion of the Port of Beirut in August 2020, the EU, jointly with the United Nations and World Bank developed, in close cooperation with the Government of Lebanon, Lebanese civil society, and the international community, the "Reform, Recovery and Reconstruction Framework - 3RF". Launched in December 2020, the 3RF focuses on the impact of the explosion on affected communities and businesses in the Beirut area. It distinguishes two types of priorities: (i) supporting the most vulnerable individuals, communities and businesses affected by the explosion (track 1); (ii) reconstructing critical assets and services (track 2). The inclusion of reform priorities under the second track recognises that reconstruction will not be feasible nor sustainable without reform. The education sector is included under the pillar IV "Improving services and infrastructure" through actions at reform and policy level, at investment/program level and at institutional strengthening level. The action also feeds into the Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP).⁶

The Ministry for Education and Higher Education (MEHE) faces difficulties in maintaining its operations, with civil servants and other staff working on irregular basis. In 2021, the Ministry released its first comprehensive strategy for the education sector "5-Year Education Sector Plan: Building Lebanon's Human Capital through Resilient High Quality Public Education"⁷. While the "National Strategy Reaching All Children with Education RACE 2014-2021" was established to increase access to education for Syrian refugees, this new plan proposes a shift from a nationality approach to a vulnerability approach for all children (Lebanese and non-Lebanese). Considering the crisis of the sector, the MEHE, the Parliament and the Prime Minister organised a series of national consultation early 2022 to rescue private and public schools.

Taking into account the Council conclusions on Lebanon of the 7 December 2020⁸, the action responds to the political commitments made at the Brussels Conferences on "Supporting the Future of Syria and the Region" co-hosted by the European Union and the United Nations in 2021 and 2022 and builds upon actions of the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis. It is also aligned with the European Commission's Priority "Promoting our European Way of Life", in particular the policy area "Education and Training" and with the Joint Communication "A Renewed Partnership with the Southern Neighbourhood – A new Agenda for the Mediterranean", in particular its priority on "Human development, good governance and the rule of law" and its "Flagship 1 "Support to social sectors, education, skills and health". It is in line with the European Commission priorities on the European Education Area, on Governance, Peace and Security, Human

⁵ *Lebanon Multi Sector Need Assessment*, January 2022, REACH.

⁶ The LCRP is a joint plan between the Government of Lebanon and its international and national partners aiming to respond to the challenges of the Syrian crisis in Lebanon.

⁷ This Plan focuses on seven priority areas: enrolment and retention in education, early childhood education, learning environment, quality of teacher and workforce management, curriculum reforms and learning assessment, school performance and management, and system strengthening and governance

⁸ <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/47184/st13730-en20.pdf>

Development, and on Migration Partnerships and forced displacements. Education is also defined as an investment priority in the 2021 Global Gateway on smart digital, and a policy priority of the EU Commission on “Alliances for Sustainable Growth and Jobs”. The action will contribute to several Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the SDG 4 on ensuring the right to access quality education.

This action complements support from France, Germany, the UK, and the World Bank, through education investments at children and family level to remove barriers in access to education, at learning level, at school level, at teacher level, and at system-level. Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, and the European Investment Bank have expressed their interest in a Team Europe Initiative on education in Lebanon, which should materialise in 2022.

EU added value

The action will support the implementation of the external dimension of the European Commission’s priorities on education through aiming at building the human capital of Lebanese and refugee children and youth in Lebanon under a multiple crisis context, offering a learning continuity through multiple education pathways. It is aligned with the 5-Year Education Sector Plan of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (2021-2025) and its annual work plan for the scholastic year 2021-22.

2.2. Problem Analysis

Short problem analysis

Several core challenges need to be addressed in the design, management and implementation of a strategy to support the access to quality education for vulnerable children in times of crisis, aiming at ensuring a learning continuity. The EU has progressively redesigned its activities to address the crisis needs⁹ and problems detailed hereunder.

First, at access to education level, the current percentage of Syrian children out-of-education is very high and, as a worrying trend, an increased number of Lebanese children are also dropping out of any form of learning¹⁰. Many caregivers are facing competing choices as they cannot afford access to all basic services and bear education-related expenditures, with transportation costs as firstly ranked, but also stationeries, snacks etc. Many families cannot afford anymore the tuition fees in private schools.

Second, at quality learning level, children in both private and public schools¹¹ are suffering from a decrease in learning outcomes, accelerated by the closure of educational centres during the COVID-19 pandemic, social unrest and teachers’ strikes. Lebanon is scoring lower over the years at PISA¹² and TIMSS¹³ assessment. Progress needs to be made towards modern structure pedagogy, increased use of formative learning assessment, digital learning, as well as teacher’s management framework. Outreach and quality of distance learning under COVID-19 has been limited, requiring a sound plan to improve digital skills and learning outcomes during distance and hybrid learning, favouring no to low tech solutions while, over a long term,

⁹ 2021 UNICEF operational plan for EU-KfW 2019/2020 savings focusing on pilot summer school programme, school-based management and financing through school funds top-ups, bridging the digital divide through school connectivity hubs, learning recovery initiative, and support to safe schools re-opening for school year 2021-22.

¹⁰ See figure in 2.1.

¹¹ The 1,637 private schools in Lebanon accommodate 750,000 pupils while the 1,237 public schools host 385,000 pupils, meaning the private sector represents 57% of schools but 66% of students, while the public sector represents 43% of schools but 34% of students only.

¹² Programme for International Student Assessment piloted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

¹³ Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study coordinated by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

establishing connectivity hubs in selected schools to bridge the digital divide¹⁴. Learning losses are high and to be addressed through a sound learning recovery strategy. Special needs children have seen their situation aggravated under the crisis and cases of violations of child rights are on the rise. Additionally, several schools are in poor physical state, lacking the proper equipment and recreational infrastructures to offer quality education and ensure retention of children. School improvements plans are lacking, with a high number of rented schools (31%) putting a strain on the education budget and a variable pupil teacher ratio over the territory, necessitating a pooling through larger structures and closure of others.

Third, at education system level, Lebanon has a low public spending on education, equalling 1.89% of the GDP in 2017 compared with 4.2% in the MENA region. The education budget is not results-based¹⁵ and suffers from fragmentation and inefficiencies in allocations. Arrears in payments to contracted teachers - the latter representing 60% of the workforce, have become the norm. This impedes the calculation of the real costs of education while the budget is systematically underspent. The revision of the 20 years-old curriculum is only expected in 2025. A framework for better teachers' management is yet to be devised. A unified data system to inform decision making is not yet in place while progress is being made towards a unique identifier for each student. Administrative and operational processes need to be streamlined and digitalised. Key functions for a sound assessment of learning outcomes, monitoring and evaluation, and financial management and budgeting are not in place. A more decentralised model would allow giving more responsibilities at school level, with school principals able to set a vision for their school and defining their priorities through school improvement plans. Lastly, the current regulatory framework on non-formal education pathways to bring back to education out-of-school children does not allow in practice a tangible transition to formal education, with age gaps and lack of flexibility given to implementing partners

Identification of main stakeholders and corresponding institutional and/or organisational

The primary stakeholders and direct beneficiaries of this proposed action are vulnerable school-aged children (right-holders) of all nationalities in Lebanon in need of support for access and retention in education. This action should support the enrolment of a minimum of 54,000 Lebanese and 60,000 non Lebanese children per year¹⁶. A specific emphasis will be put on children at risk of dropping out of education. A minimum of 87,000 children should receive cash for access to education. Parents and other caregivers of students are indirect beneficiaries through support to subsidised education for their children.

Personnel at school level and regional education offices will also be among direct beneficiaries, notably with the salaries of second shift Lebanese teachers fully covered by the EU and Germany every scholastic year. At the level of public education authorities, the direct beneficiary will be the Ministry for Education and Higher Education (MEHE) as duty-bearer, and notably the Directorate General for Education and the Centre for Educational Research and Development. Technical assistance to various Directorates is also proposed to support an under-staffed Ministry and demotivated staff ensuring basic functions. Accompanying reforms is needed to ensure a more cost effective approach of the education model under crisis, while accompanying the delivery of the 5-Year Education Sector Plan. The other stakeholders are United Nations agencies with a specific mandate on education (UNICEF, UNESCO and UNHCR). Finally, both public and private schools will benefit from this action – the latter under a new complementary approach, the school bridging program, aiming at reintegrating into private schools (including faith-based) out-of-school children from areas where

¹⁴ Supported by the EU and aiming at equipping selected schools with connectivity and establishing digital readiness of school teachers and personnel to improve access to digital content, teaching and learning, while also accommodating teachers' work from schools during distance and hybrid learning.

¹⁵ The budget is not based on policy or plans, and no cost estimation of activities is made. A new national budget template for education has been developed by Oxford Policy Management as an analytical tool to accompany planning and implementation. It is not yet clear if and how it would be endorsed by the Ministry for Education.

¹⁶ A conservative figure of 115,000 Lebanese and Syrian refugee children could be covered by this Action for access to education (tuition fees) per scholastic year, depending on the revised unit cost system that will be defined.

those children are in high number and where public schools have limited spaces and capacities to reintegrate them.

2.3. Lessons Learned

At activity-level, as a result of more than 2 years of schools closures due to COVID-19, social unrest and strikes, distance learning solutions put in place in public schools did not allow to reach the most vulnerable children. Education stakeholders recommend to implement different distance learning solutions, favouring no tech to low tech solutions under blended or full distance learning in case of protracted closure of educational centres, depending on ages of children, households' situations, parents' support and access to information technology. Establishment of pilot school connectivity hubs where teachers can deliver distance learning and children can download on and off line learning materials is also an option, while seeking at preparing schools for digital skills and digital learning needs for the 21st century.

The *Non-formal education assessment Lebanon 2017-2020*¹⁷ highlighted important recommendations for the reform of non-formal education (NFE). Despite offering useful grounding on literacy and numeracy, with a rather good alignment between non formal and formal education curriculum, it is too rigid and does not fit the profiles of all children. Quality assurance of program delivery across the range of NFE offers is not standardised. The transition from non-formal to formal education is limited, with Accelerated Learning Programs as a main bottleneck, as well as a limited number of places available in formal education to cater for NFE graduates. UNICEF proposes to review the NFE 2017 alternative pathways on certification benchmarks, tools, data system and Standard Operating Procedures.

Transportation has been identified as a main barrier in access to education for children under the crisis situation. While, there is a need to scale-up support for transportation, the EU is so far the only donor supporting such activity through cash for access to education. The link between the intervention, attendance and retention should be assessed. The second main barrier to education is the incapacity of households to cover other education-related costs. It requires complementarity investments shared between EU and other donors for coverage of enrolment fees, education supplies, textbooks, uniforms, school feeding programs etc. In the long run, targeted social assistance schemes should be gradually put in place for refugee and Lebanese families. Those barriers add to recurrent issues faced by parents to register children due to documentary requirements (e.g. birth certificates and certification from previous schools). It requires putting in place a timely enrolment barrier tracking and follow-up mechanism. To this end, an action-research pilot is proposed under this action.

At processes and implementation modalities level, the action is building on the recommendations of the Mid-Term Review of the “National Strategy Reaching All Children with Education RACE 2014-2021”, which in particular highlighted the need to set up a sound data collection system and monitoring and evaluation framework and streamlined the decision-making and coordination structure through shared responsibility and accountability. The costing model of RACE, which has never been revised since 2014, will be reviewed to factor in devaluation and inflation parameters. Direct and regular payments at full value to beneficiaries (i.e. school, teachers and families) need to be ensured to stabilise the sector, ensuring transparent, resilient and effective financial management and procurement. In lieu of the parallel Programme Management Unit established under RACE, this action will support an integrated system embedded in the organisational structure of the MEHE.

In a recent assessment¹⁸, the European Training Foundation highlighted the importance of addressing inequalities in the access to the education system and learning outcomes and the need to work on better budget planning, budget clarity on all costs, allocation and management on the overall sector, linking it with execution and addressing fragmentation issues. It noted the good progress on quality data collection to inform evidence based programming and policies but called to reform teacher management, allocation, training and deployment

¹⁷ <https://proman.lu/project/non-formal-education-nfe-assessment-in-lebanon/>

¹⁸ Rapid diagnosis of the education sector in Lebanon, 2021, European Training Foundation.

policies. The report recommends to put in place decentralisation processes, with more decision to be taken at regional and school level, along with school improvement plan.

This action considers the various results and recommendations from EU Trust Fund Reviews¹⁹ and notably the sector evaluation and the 2021 Result Oriented Monitoring of UNICEF education project in Lebanon (importance of combining access to education through direct support to children with system strengthening; ensure alignment with policies; need for an improved coordination structure, risk management plans and financial accountability tracking expenditures at school and child level; better measurement of change at outcome level; fragility in sustainability approaches...).

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTION

3.1. Objectives and Expected Outputs

The Overall Objective (Impact) of this action is, for the scholastic years 2022-2025, to contribute to improve literacy and numeracy skills and qualifications through learning continuity for vulnerable children.

The Specific(s) Objective(s) (Outcomes) of this action:

1. Inclusive, equitable and safe access to public education provided for all vulnerable boys and girls through reduction of barriers for enrolment and retention into formal education (Early Childhood Education to Grade 9)²⁰.
2. Enlarged access to quality education for out-of-learning children in private schools (new learning pathways through the school-based bridging program in private schools)²¹.
3. Education system (Ministry for Education and Higher Education) able to maintain the delivery of education in times of crisis.

The Outputs to be delivered by this action contributing to the corresponding Specific Objectives (Outcomes) are:

contributing to Outcome 1 (or Specific Objective 1)

- 1.1 Facilitated access of vulnerable children to Early Childhood Education and public primary education.
- 1.2 Facilitated enrolment of vulnerable children in Early Childhood and public primary education.
- 1.3 Increased retention of vulnerable children in Early Childhood and public primary education.

contributing to Outcome 2 (or Specific Objective 2)

- 2.1 Facilitated access and retention of out-of-school students in private schools (scaling-up of the school-based bridging program).

contributing to Outcome 3 (or Specific Objective 3)

¹⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/trustfund-syria-region/results_en

²⁰ This Action will not address secondary education. The World Bank is putting in place a specific program to support Lebanese children as secondary education level through the Social Safety Net.

²¹ Reintegration of out of learning children in selected private schools suffering from the crisis as bridges to formal education. This activity is complementary to the support provided to public schools under the outcome 1 and proposes an alternative to the existing non formal education pathways which suffer from a low transition from non-formal to formal education and limited learning outcomes. Private schools represent a potential for rapid and substantial reintegration of out-of-school children directly in formal education in areas with increased number of children out of education and limited places in and capacities of public schools. The overall target is to reintegrate 100,000 children in 400 schools. Private schools, including faith-based, would be selected under strict criteria linked to school location, environment and capacity; safeguarding and child protection history; and additional requirements (infrastructure for children with disabilities, devices...).

- 3.1 School Directors, teachers and other school-based staff trained on leadership, modern pedagogies, Foundational Literacy, Numeracy and 21st century skill development and learning assessment.
- 3.2 Strengthened capacities of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education to plan, budget, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the education sector.

The objectives of the Action contribute to the general objectives of the Team Europe Initiative (under preparation with the participation of Finland, France, Germany and Italy, while EIB might join at a later stage), which are to join forces to alleviate the devastating effects of the socio-economic crisis on the education system, which has led to an education catastrophe, and to address certain of its structural weaknesses, while also opening spaces for shared advocacy and strategic dialogue. It aims at answering to the basic education needs of children - Lebanese and refugees - who have seen their education disrupted for many months and have accumulated learning losses. It acknowledges the necessity to invest through emergency support over the short term to alleviate the immediate effect of the crisis, as well as through mid to long term investments to maintain the resilience of the system. The TEI proposes four areas of concentration for support that are aligned with this action: student and household level, school level, teacher level, and system strengthening level.

3.2. Indicative Activities

The proposed list of activities hereunder is indicative and allows flexibility in order to adapt to different learning scenarios - which are not exclusive - as following:

- a) Back to a regular scholastic year through the reopening of schools; teachers back to teaching and children accessing education centres for physical learning.
- b) Using private schools with capacities for out-of-learning children (in order to adapt to limited capacities and even full collapse of the public sector) through the school-bridging programme.
- c) Support learning at home and in the community if schools are very partially operating or fully closed.

Activities related to:

Output 1.1:

- Expansion of early childhood education;
- Support for education-related costs (out of enrolment fees);
- Expanding school digital connectivity hubs;
- Pre-deployment of print materials and low-tech learning solutions with integrated feedback loops with teachers/facilitators and opportunities for formative assessment (i.e. print, TV, radio, mobile) as part of contingency planning and preparedness for emergencies
- Support safe reopening and operations of schools (PPE equipment, health protocols) if and where relevant).

Output 1.2:

- Coverage of enrolment fees for vulnerable children in formal education

Output 1.3:

- Early identification mechanism of children at risk of dropping out and referral system
- Remedial classes, homework support and other learning recovery activities for children at risk of dropping out and to catch-up with learning losses.
- Equipment and rehabilitation of schools in line with EU Green Agenda, with a focus on readiness environment for early childhood education (extension or arrangement of schools, equipment, recreational spaces).

- Provision of psychosocial activities, Social Emotional Learning and extracurricular activities (extended school model) to enhance children’s wellbeing and resilience
- Support to teachers for improved working conditions (notably system for regular payments to contracted teachers and efficient teacher deployment).
- Research for evidence-based and efficient interventions and for advocacy (to be confirmed with the education stakeholders: continuous assessment of barriers to education for all children and drop-out, completion of learning losses assessment, impact evaluation of specific programmes such as cash for education or teachers incentives focusing on learning outcomes).

Activities related to:

Output 2.1:

- Early identification mechanism of children at risk of dropping out and referral system;
- Coverage of enrolment fees for the reintegration and retention of out of learning children in private schools²².
- School-level multiple support to the selected private schools²³ (inter alia heating, electricity, transportation, rehabilitation).
- Parental engagement and awareness raising of caregivers on the importance of education and available pathways.

Activities related to:

Output 3.1:

- Development, and expansion of use, of structured pedagogy (lesson guides);
- Strengthen teacher training on content, pedagogy;
- Increase use of formative learning assessment;
- School-based management through school leader coaching and mentoring, all focused on building skills (foundational literacy, numeracy and 21st century skills).

Output 3.2

- Contribution to the establishment of key missing functions (inter alia monitoring and evaluation, strategic and operational planning, public financial management, policy reform, governance and delivery) for strengthened capacities and improved working processes in the Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

3.3. Mainstreaming

Environmental Protection, Climate Change and Biodiversity

Outcomes of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) screening: the EIA screening classified the action as Category C (no need for further assessment).

Outcome of the Climate Risk Assessment (CRA) screening: the CRA screening concluded that this action is at no or low risk (no need for further assessment).

The activities dedicated to educational centres rehabilitation will be aligned with the EU Green Agenda and include, where relevant, activities dedicated to energy efficiency and quality solar panels installations in order to address the electricity shortage. The project will build on the current expertise and know-how developed through ongoing rehabilitation programs.

Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls

As per OECD Gender DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as G1. This implies that a specific attention will be put on the child protection needs of boys' and girls' out-of-education (child marriage, child labour...) or at risk of dropping-out.

Human Rights

The action is aligned with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and SDG Goal 4 on ensuring the right to access quality education. A focus will be put on equity and vulnerability. It adopts a

²² Two years of learning before transitioning to public schools. Support to enrolment fees will be capped to an average fee of USD 250 per academic year.

²³ Selected based on a set of criteria linked to presence in areas with high number of out of learning children, available classrooms capacity versus low capacity in public schools, capping amount of enrolment fees etc.

rights-based approach, distinguishing the role of duty-bearers (Ministry for Education and Higher Education – MEHE, caregivers, schools and teachers) and rights-holders (children and also teachers).

Disability

As per OECD Disability DAC codes identified in section 1.1, this action is labelled as D0. Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are indeed targeted by another EU Action supporting inclusive education for scholastic years 2021-2023.

Democracy

This action intends to support the 5-Year Education Sector Plan of the MEHE under one of the proposed scenario that the public education authorities and public schools do not fully collapse. It includes a specific component dedicated to strengthen the public education system and capacities in the MEHE for efficient management and operational processes to deliver on the plan. It participates to democratic governance through improving the efficiency of a public entity delivering a social service for citizens.

Conflict sensitivity, peace and resilience

Both refugee and Lebanese children and youth will be targeted under a vulnerability approach. Specific activities will be implemented to avoid social tensions at local levels and through targeted communication.

3.4. Risks and Assumptions

Category	Risks	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating measures
1- External environment	The deepening socio-economic crisis and competition over resources risks worsening the protection situation of refugees and increasing social tensions and political opposition to the presence of Syrian refugees in Lebanon.	High	Medium	EU will continue to advocate for Lebanon to adhere to obligations for refugee protection, as per international law. Continuous dialogue will be pursued during programme implementation, ensuring a clear framework is established to safeguard refugee protection and livelihoods. International partners to focus on greater recognition of Lebanese concerns, resilience, burden sharing and the temporary nature of Syrian displacement, emphasising solidarity with the refugee situation and highlighting support given to vulnerable Lebanese.
1- External environment	Further devaluation of the LBP resulting in high levels of inflation and increased levels of poverty among populations in Lebanon, Lebanese and refugees.	High	High	Mitigating measures to be seen from a systemic perspective, through the introduction of macroeconomic stability measures. Current policy from the Central Bank to stabilize the parallel market exchange rate, close to Sarayfa are not sustainable. From an operational point of view, the implementing partners will implement modalities for overcoming the loss of purchase power through securing the value of contributions.
1- External environment	USD/LBP exchange rate used by implementing partners differs from the open-market exchange rate, negatively impacting the overall efficiency of interventions.	Medium	High	Continued multi donor negotiations with Lebanese Government to obtain an exchange rate which corresponds to the open-market rate. Facilitation to use USD as main currency for disbursement. At contracting stage, privilege USD for disbursement, where possible, while agreement on satisfactory exchange rate for assistance is pending.

Category	Risks	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating measures
1- External environment	Distorted communication and perceptions against the international community accused of insufficient support to the education sector given the increased needs	High	Medium	Strategic communication campaign to be defined and launched in cooperation with the MEHE, UNICEF, the EU and other donors towards Lebanese citizens, parents, teachers and schools about the support provided, benefiting the whole Lebanese education sector and Lebanese children/families – not only refugees.
1- External environment	Limited access to and opening of schools due to COVID-19 outbreak, educational staff strikes, and difficulties of families in affording education-related costs and of schools to cover their needs.	High	Medium	3 scenarios are developed to adapt to the learning situation, from public schools safe reopening to school-bridging programs in private schools, and to education at home and in the community in case of partial/full closure of public schools. Full distance and blended learning strategies developed and to be reinforced. Support at the level of children, teachers and schools to remove barriers to education.
2- Planning, processes and systems	Bureaucratic impediments and lack of efficient work with and inside the MEHE. Lack of coordination and cooperation between the MEHE departments.	Medium	Medium	Reinforced coordination, accountability and governance mechanisms put in place under the 5-Year Education Sector Plan and program implementation modalities. Research piece on barriers to education to inform advocacy.
2- Planning, processes and systems	Restricted financial transparency of MEHE expenditure and/or procurement	Medium	Medium	New modalities under program implementation modalities to strengthen financial assurances, including through third party for management of financial flows directly to teachers and school level, with a direct control on allocation and use of funds, while building the capacities of MEHE on financial management and budgeting as well as M&E.
2- Planning, processes and systems	Further deterioration of the quality of public services due to the deepening economic and financial crisis, decrease of the national budget allocated to education, and lack of motivation or shortage of teachers, with a risk of full collapse of the education sector	Medium	Medium	Access to quality education remains a priority for the government under the national budget with a proposed. The MEHE delivered its Education Sector Plan. The international community increases its support at school, children and teachers level to address barriers to education. EU and its partners developing cost-efficient models for support to education with new program modalities. Activities, adapted to different learning scenarios.

External Assumptions

The 5-year education sector plan of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education is implemented and tracked against progress, with coordination structures in place.

A new aid modality to support the education sector post-RACE (National Strategy Reaching All Children with education 2014-2021) is agreed between donors and the MEHE.

3.5. Intervention Logic

The underlying intervention logic for this action is that Lebanon is experiencing multiple crisis which risks disrupting education and learning, especially for the most vulnerable children (i.e. poorest, refugees, children with disabilities, vulnerable girls and boys). Multiple complementary strategies are required to ensure learning continuity as a main objective, adapted to learning scenarios. The latter are non-exclusive and range from public school reopening with teachers back to teaching and children accessing education centres for physical learning, to using private schools (school-bridging program) with capacities for out-of-learning children in order to adapt to limited capacities of the public sector, and eventually support for learning at home and in the community if schools are very partially operating or fully closed.

If the MEHE continues to deliver education policies and priorities identified in its 5-Year Education Sector Plan and Annual Work Plans - including through the support of external technical assistance around key functions - under which the EU can anchor its support even under a crisis context, and if, as a transversal approach, gender-sensitive, equitable and pro-vulnerable policies and practices are in place,

If vulnerable children (Lebanese and non-Lebanese) have their enrolment fees for Early Childhood Education and Public primary education fully covered,

If vulnerable children (Lebanese and non-Lebanese) have access to educational-related supplies, their education-related costs are covered, they benefit from integrated services in schools and modern/relevant education,

If new learning pathways in private schools are put in place to bring back to education an increased number of out-of-school children (school-based bridging program), offering quality and cost-efficient learning approaches,

If schools are offering safe, attractive and properly equipped places for quality learning, with sufficient support for addressing their operational costs (electricity and others),

Then vulnerable children will benefit from an enlarged access to public primary education.

Moreover, if teachers training modules and learning models are delivered at scale to teachers including on structured pedagogy and formative learning assessment.

If school leaders (MEHE Regional Administrators, School Directors) receive management and instructional leadership training, especially in school-based management.

If there is strengthened collection of high-quality data to set targets, track progress and drive accountability.

Then students and schools will benefit from an increased availability of qualified teachers and other education staffs with better capacities for leadership, modern pedagogies, foundational literacy, numeracy and 21st century skill development.

It will lead on short to mid-term to improved use of appropriate teaching and learning resources, improved retention in education, improved completion rates and learning outcomes, and on long-term to improved literacy and numeracy skills and qualifications of the population.

3.6. Indicative Logical Framework Matrix

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Impact	Contribute to improved literacy and numeracy skills and qualifications through learning continuity for vulnerable children in Lebanon	1. % of children graduating at Grade 6 and Grade 9 (exam grades). 2. % of children (3-14) out-of-learning.	1. Scholastic year 2019-20 graduation rate: 94.2% at G6 and 92.8% at G9 for all first shift schools. Graduation grades for second shift schools scholastic year 2018-19: 68.1% G6, 50.1% for G9 2. Scholastic year 2019-2020: 47 % of primary school aged refugee children (age 6-14) out of school and 57% out of any learning (age 3-18).	End of project target TBD in the Description of the Action (DoA) Data may vary if new episodes of COVID-19 outbreak and hybrid-learning.	CERD annual report, School Information Management System, MEHE reports on the 5-year education sector plan Other specific studies and sources.	<i>Not applicable</i>
Outcome 1	1. Increased access to inclusive, equitable and safe public education for vulnerable boys and girls in Lebanon	1.1 % of children dropping-out of school in primary public education per scholastic year. 1.2. % of students enrolled in Lebanese public schools transitioning to a higher level (disaggregated by nationality, shift, grade and gender).	1.1 For scholastic year 2018-19: Drop-out rate of 3.13% for first shift schools G1-G6 (average), 13% for first shift schools G7-G9 (average). Survival rate (average): 96.9% for first shift schools G1-G6, 87% for first shift schools G7-G9. 1.2 Not relevant for the last scholastic year under COVID-19 and distance learning as automatic promotion was granted by MEHE.	1.1 TBD in the DoA. 1.2 TBD in the DoA.	CERD annual report, School Information Management System, MEHE reports on the 5-year education sector plan, education implementation agency report.	The 5-year education plan of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education is implemented and tracked against progress. A new education program implementation modality post-RACE is effective and its implementation adapts to learning scenarios.
Outcome 2	2. Enlarged access to quality education for out-of-learning children in private schools	2.1 # of out of learning children retained in formal private education 6 months after their referral, disaggregated by sex and community of origin.	2.1 5,000 children in 18 schools under phase one of this new approach in 2022	2.1 Overall program target of 95,000 children in +400 schools. EU share TBD in the DoA.	Implementation agencies reports.	

Outcome 3	3. Ministry for Education and Higher Education has strengthened capacities to deliver education in times of crisis.	<p>3.1 % of missing functions updated in the MEHE (monitoring and evaluation, strategic and operational planning, public financial management, policy reform, governance and delivery) t</p> <p>3.2 % point increase in the share of civil servants in Program/Project management key tasks</p> <p>3.3 Amount and GDP share of the national budget allocated to basic education, disaggregated by sex/community of origin</p>	<p>3.1 0</p> <p>3.2 10%</p> <p>3.3 USD 1,2 Billion in 2020 (less than 2% of the GDP)</p>	<p>3.1 TBD in the DoA (depending on Technical Assistance provided to MEHE in coordination with other donors).</p> <p>3.2. 90%</p> <p>3.3 TBD in the DoA (worldwide recommended target of 5%)</p>	<p>Quarterly reports from the technical assistance team</p> <p>Semi-annual narrative progress report against 5-Year Plan</p>	
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The education sector has been affected by long episodes of school closures over the last three years, following the COVID-19 outbreak, social unrest and more recently strikes of teachers refusing to teach given the low-value of their salaries. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education is facing difficulties in providing verified and reliable data under distance learning and school closure. Some baselines at impact and outcomes levels are based on pre-COVID-19 data. Given the severe learning losses - which are still under evaluation - and increase in the number of out of school children – the first estimation for 2022 is considered not reliable. More consultation between education donors will take place in the course of the year to set realistic targets (graduation, drop out, transition...). An in-depth baseline assessment is planned to take place to support the discussion.

Results	Results chain: Main expected results	Indicators	Baselines (values and years)	Targets (values and years)	Sources of data	Assumptions
Output 1 related to Outcome 1	1.1 Facilitated access of vulnerable children to Early Childhood Education and public primary education.	<p>1.1.1 % of children aged 3-5 receiving at least 1 year of Early Childhood Education</p> <p>1.1.2 # of vulnerable children in formal education receiving support for educational-related supplies and other education-related costs.</p> <p>1.1.3 # of school digital connectivity hubs</p> <p>1.1.4 % of children with access to personalised/adaptive digital learning in public school</p> <p>1.1.5 # of schools supported with PPE equipment</p>	<p>1.1.1 TBD</p> <p>1.1.2. Approx. 87,000 children receiving cash for access to education under EU support.</p> <p>1.1.3 Ongoing assessment.</p> <p>1.1.4 0 (needs based depending on next scholastic year).</p> <p>1.1.5 0 (needs based depending on next scholastic year sanitary situation).</p>	<p>1.1.1. TBD in the DoA</p> <p>1.1.2 TBD in the DoA</p> <p>1.1.3 TBD in the DoA</p> <p>1.1.4 TBD in the DoA</p> <p>1.1.5 TBD in the DoA</p>	Implementing agency report Semi-annual narrative progress report against 5-Year Plan	
Output 2 related to Outcome 1	1.2 Facilitated enrolment of vulnerable children in Early Childhood and public primary education.	1.2.1 # of children enrolled in primary public education with EU support (disaggregated by: nationality, grade, gender, community of origin)	1.2.1 Approx. 54,000 Lebanese and 60,000 non Lebanese children enrolled per year under EU support.	1.2.1 TBD in the DoA (revised unit cost but at minimum same target as the baseline).	Implementing agency report Semi-annual narrative progress report against 5-Year Plan	
Output 3 related to Outcome 1	1.3 Increased retention of vulnerable children in Early Childhood and public primary education.	<p>1.3.1 # of children benefitting from remedial and homework support, disaggregated by sex and community of origin</p> <p>1.3.2 # of schools constructed and rehabilitated</p>	<p>1.3.1 TBD (ongoing learning recovery assessment)</p> <p>1.3.2 80 public schools to be rehabilitated under current EU support</p>	<p>1.3.1 TBD in the DoA</p> <p>1.3.2 TBD in the DoA</p>	Implementing agency report Semi-annual narrative progress report against 5-Year Plan	

		1.3.3 # of children benefitting from PSS, SEL, extracurricular activities, disaggregated by sex and community of origin 1.3.4 # of contracted teachers paid on time under EU support 1.3.5 # of researches conducted and disseminated.	1.3.3 Not known. 1.3.4 Level of arrears of contracted teachers not quantified 1.3.5 Not indicative.	1.3.3 TBD in the DoA 1.3.4 TBD in the DoA 1.3.5 At least 2 pieces of research.		
Output 1 related to Outcome 2	2.1 Facilitated access, and retention of out-of-school students in private schools (scaling-up of the school-based bridging program).	2.1.1 # of children referred to services disaggregated by sex and community of origin 2.1.2 # of children enrolled in private schools with EU support through the school-based bridging program (disaggregated by: nationality, grade, gender, community of origin) 2.1.3 # number of parents and other caregivers engaged in awareness raising sessions on education disaggregated by sex and community of origin	2.1.1 0 (new program) 2.1.2 5,000 children in 18 schools under phase 1 February-September 2022 2.1.3 0 (new program)	2.1.1: TBD in the DoA 2.1.2 Overall program target of 95,000 children in +400 schools. EU share TBD. 2.1.3 TBD in the DoA	Implementation agency reports. Semi-annual narrative progress report against 5-Year Plan	
Output 1 related to Outcome 3	3.1 School directors and teachers trained on leading and teaching skills.	3.1.1 # of teachers trained and coached for the use of structured lesson plans disaggregated by sex and community of origin 3.1.2 # of trainers trained and coached for the use of structured lesson plans disaggregated by sex and community of origin. 3.1.3 # of school directors and school administrators coached	3.1.1 Baseline 0. 3.1.2 Baseline 0. 3.1.3 Baseline 0.	3.1.1 55,000 teachers trained (tbc) 3.1.2 TBD in the DoA 3.1.3 TBD in the DoA	Implementation agency report. Quarterly performance report of the implementation support team. Semi-annual narrative progress report.	

		and mentored on school-based management. 3.1.4 # of trainers trained on school-based management.	3.1.3 Baseline 0.	3.1.4 TBD in the DoA		
Output 2 related to Outcome 3	3.2 Strengthened capacities of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education to plan, budget, implement, monitor, evaluate and report on the education sector.	3.2.1 # of MEHE staff coached, trained or mentored, on key functions disaggregated by sex and community of origin 3.2.2 # of trainers trained on key MEHE functions disaggregated by sex and community of origin 3.2.3 # MEHE staff reporting to use the acquired training skills in their daily work)	3.2.1 Baseline 0 (new activity) 3.2.2 Baseline 0 (new activity) 3.2.3 Baseline 0 (new activity)	3.2.1: 1 team of experts deployed and operational, producing quarterly reports 3.2.2 TBD in the DoA (new activity) 3.2.3 TBD in the DoA (new activity)	Implementation agency report. Quarterly performance report of implementation support team. Semi-annual narrative progress report against 5-Year Plan	

4. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

4.1. Financing Agreement

In order to implement this action, it is not envisaged to conclude a financing agreement with the partner country.

4.2. Indicative Implementation Period

The indicative operational implementation period of this action, during which the activities described in section 3.1 will be carried out and the corresponding contracts and agreements implemented, is **60 months** from the date of adoption by the Commission of this Financing Decision.

Extensions of the implementation period may be agreed by the Commission's responsible authorising officer by amending this Financing Decision and the relevant contracts and agreements.

4.3. Implementation Modalities

The Commission will ensure that the EU appropriate rules and procedures for providing financing to third parties are respected, including review procedures, where appropriate, and compliance of the action with EU restrictive measures²⁴.

4.3.1. Indirect Management with a pillar-assessed entity²⁵

This action may be implemented in indirect management with UNICEF. This implementation entails the activities described under outcome 1, 2 and 3. The envisaged entity has been selected using the following criteria:

- Experience in the country: capacity to address political, technical, logistical and institutional challenges of the education sector under a multiple crisis context;
- Specific expertise: capacity to engage with the Ministry for Education and Higher Education on a sound and regular dialogue on strategies, policies and technical orientation and assistance; in complementarity with other agencies in support to the education sector
- Logistical and management capacities: capacity to manage large-size education programmes at national and local level, with a presence at the level of regions or capacity to cover district and school levels;
- Continuation of an existing programme: knowledge and capacity to work with a network of international and local education organisations able to implement activities at community and school levels;

In case the envisaged entity would need to be replaced, the Commission's services may select another replacement entities using the same criteria. If the entity is replaced, the decision to replace it needs to be justified.

If negotiations with the above-mentioned entity fail, this action may be implemented in direct management in accordance with the implementation modalities identified in section 4.3.2.

Exception to the non-retroactivity of costs:

The Commission authorises that the costs incurred may be recognised as eligible as of 1 September 2022 in order for the action to cover the whole scholastic year 2022-23.

²⁴ www.sanctionsmap.eu Please note that the sanctions map is an IT tool for identifying the sanctions regimes. The source of the sanctions stems from legal acts published in the Official Journal (OJ). In case of discrepancy between the published legal acts and the updates on the website it is the OJ version that prevails.

²⁵ The signature of a contribution agreement with the chosen entity is subject to the completion of the necessary pillar assessment.

4.3.2. Changes from indirect to direct management (and vice versa) mode due to exceptional circumstances

If indirect management with any of the entities foreseen cannot be implemented due to circumstances outside of the Commission's control, the alternative modality would be direct management through grants. The purpose of the grant will correspond to the description of outcomes and activities under section 3.1 and 3.2. The type of applicant would be non-governmental organisation (or a consortium of NGOs) meeting the criteria laid out in section 4.3.1. Under the responsibility of the Commission's authorising officer responsible, the recourse to a reward of grant without a call for proposals is justified given the crisis situation in Lebanon (Article 195 (a) FR).

4.4. Scope of geographical eligibility for procurement and grants

The geographical eligibility in terms of place of establishment for participating in procurement and grant award procedures and in terms of origin of supplies purchased as established in the basic act and set out in the relevant contractual documents shall apply, subject to the following provisions.

The Commission's authorising officer responsible may extend the geographical eligibility on the basis of urgency or of unavailability of services in the markets of the countries or territories concerned, or in other duly substantiated cases where application of the eligibility rules would make the realisation of this action impossible or exceedingly difficult (Article 28(10) NDICI-Global Europe Regulation).

4.5. Indicative Budget

Indicative Budget components	EU contribution (amount in EUR)
Implementation modalities – cf. section 4.3	
<p>Objective 1 - Inclusive, equitable and safe access to public education for all vulnerable boys and girls provided through reduction of barriers for enrolment and retention into formal education (ECE to Grade 9).</p> <p>Objective 2 - Enlarged access to quality education for out-of-learning children through new learning pathways (school-based bridging program in private schools).</p> <p>Objective 3 - Education system (Ministry for Education and Higher Education) able to maintain the delivery of quality education in times of crisis (resilience).</p> <p>composed of:</p>	
Indirect management with an international organisation (contribution agreement) – cf. section 4.3.1	40 000 000.00
<p>Evaluation – cf. section 5.2</p> <p>Audit – cf. section 5.3</p>	will be covered by another decision
Total	40 000 000.00

4.6. Organisational Set-up and Responsibilities

The implementing partner(s) will, be responsible for the management of the whole programme, including sub-contracting for activities, services, works and supplies in all of the components. A project committee gathering the EC, the implementing partners and the Ministry for Education and Higher Education shall be set-up to monitor progress and steer decisions. The project committee shall take stock of the progress of the action and facilitate its smooth implementation. It should provide guidance for the programme's activities, review programme achievements, discuss strategic issues, decide of corrective actions where needed or call for extra information and gathering of specific sub-committees attached to specific thematic issues. It should gather at a technical level on a regular basis at a fixed and recurrent date. It can be complemented by high-level political steering committee. The EU shall play an active role in the committees and sub-groups. Each member of the steering committee shall feel empowered with decision and guidance authority.

The EU will maintain a constant policy dialogue with national stakeholders to ensure the highest possible support and political commitment needed for successful implementation.

As part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union, the Commission may participate in the above governance structures set up for governing the implementation of the action.

5. PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

5.1. Monitoring and Reporting

The day-to-day technical and financial monitoring of the implementation of this action will be a continuous process, and part of the implementing partner's responsibilities. To this aim, the implementing partner shall establish a permanent internal, technical and financial monitoring system for the action and elaborate regular progress reports (not less than annual) and final reports. Every report shall provide an accurate account of implementation of the action, difficulties encountered, changes introduced, as well as the degree of achievement of its Outputs and contribution to the achievement of its Outcomes, and if possible at the time of reporting, contribution to the achievement of its Impacts, as measured by corresponding indicators, using as reference the logframe matrix. The Commission may undertake additional project monitoring visits both through its own staff and through independent consultants recruited directly by the Commission for independent monitoring reviews (or recruited by the responsible agent contracted by the Commission for implementing such reviews).

Roles and responsibilities for data collection, analysis and monitoring are the responsibility of the implementing partner(s) which will be selected on the basis on proven sound monitoring capacities. Third party monitoring through local organisations and/or a network of local agents, or specific mechanism to cross-check data provided by the Ministry for Education or Higher Education can be required to the implementing agent. It is also expected from the later to collect a specific set of indicators on access to education to measure attendance, participation, absence, dropping out rates and other education data from the logframe under any learning scenario (face-to-face, hybrid, full remote learning). Reports on such data are expected to be provided on a regular basis. As a lessons learned, the Ministry is progressing well towards the set-up of a unified data system, with the School Information and Management System as its core, but transparency in access to education data is not yet ensured through regular external publication nor information flows to education donors, more especially since the outbreak of the COVID-19. Therefore, an external mechanism under the control of the implementing partner(s) is crucial to ensure access to data and monitoring of the action.

A part of technical assistance expected to be provided to the MEHE is dedicated to strengthening the Ministry's capacity for monitoring and reporting, linking with the monitoring mechanism that will be put in place under the implementation and operationalisation modalities of the 5-year national Education Sector Plan.

5.2. Evaluation

Having regard to the importance of the action, a final evaluation will be carried out for the actions or their components via independent consultants contracted by the implementing partner.

It will be carried out for accountability and learning purposes at various levels (including for policy revision), taking into account in particular the fact that a new approach for the support to the education sector is implemented post 2021, anchored to the 5-Year Education Sector Plan 2021-2025 of the Ministry for Education and Higher Education, as the national Strategy Reaching All Children with Education (RACE) came to an end by December 2021.

The Commission shall form a Reference Group (RG) composed by representatives from the main stakeholders at both EU and national (representatives from the government, from civil society organisations (private sector, NGOs, etc.), etc.) levels. If deemed necessary, other donors will be invited to join.

The evaluation reports shall be shared with the partner country and other key stakeholders following the best practice of evaluation dissemination. The implementing partner and the Commission shall analyse the conclusions and recommendations of the evaluations and, where appropriate, in agreement with the partner country, jointly decide on the follow-up actions to be taken and any adjustments necessary, including, if indicated, the reorientation of the project.

Under the Team Europe Initiative, each partner will carry out the monitoring and evaluation activities of its respective components given that they are very different in nature. A joint reporting can however be envisaged based on the agreed intervention logic to inform policy dialogue and visibility communications.

The financing of the evaluation shall be covered by another measure constituting a financing Decision.

5.3. Audit and Verifications

Without prejudice to the obligations applicable to contracts concluded for the implementation of this action, the Commission may, on the basis of a risk assessment, contract independent audit or verification assignments for one or several contracts or agreements.

6. STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

All entities implementing EU-funded external actions have the contractual obligation to inform the relevant audiences of the Union's support for their work by displaying the EU emblem and a short funding statement as appropriate on all communication materials related to the actions concerned. To that end they must comply with the instructions given in the [Communication and Visibility Requirements of 2018](#) (or any successor document).

This obligation will apply equally, regardless of whether the actions concerned are implemented by the Commission, the partner country, service providers, grant beneficiaries or entrusted or delegated entities such as UN agencies, international financial institutions and agencies of EU Member States. In each case, a reference to the relevant contractual obligations must be included in the respective financing agreement, procurement and grant contracts, and delegation agreements.

For the purpose of enhancing the visibility of the EU and its contribution to this action, the Commission may sign or enter into joint declarations or statements, as part of its prerogative of budget implementation and to safeguard the financial interests of the Union. Visibility and communication measures should also promote transparency and accountability on the use of funds. Effectiveness of communication activities on awareness about the action and its objectives as well as on EU funding of the action should be measured.

Implementing partners shall keep the Commission and the EU Delegation fully informed of the planning and implementation of specific visibility and communication activities before the implementation. Implementing partners will ensure adequate visibility of EU financing and will report on visibility and communication actions as well as the results of the overall action to the relevant monitoring committees.

For communicating on Team Europe Initiatives, the EU and its Member States can rely on the specific guidance on the Team Europe visual identity.