

R&R Syria AISBL

Educational Programme Line

Lebanon 2013-2015

Decision	Budget	Duration
Motion of JIC: 26/09/2013	Target: €226,800/year	01/10/2013 - 31/12/2015
Board R&R Syria: 29/09/2013	Minimum: €700/month	Priority A

I. Scope

The Educational Programme Line Lebanon 2013-2015 is one of the three main pillars supporting the overarching peacebuilding activities of R&R Syria AISBL in Lebanon. It is therefore directly linked to the Peacebuilding Programme Line Lebanon 2013-2015. The Psychosocial Programme Line Lebanon 2013-2015 is also closely related to this Programme Line.

The Educational Programme Line stems from a direct and immediate need for the education of refugee youth to continue while outside of Syria. It also recognises the difficulties faced by Syrian youth in the Lebanese school system, particularly with regard to instruction in foreign languages. Additionally, it addresses livelihood issues of both Syrian refugee and Lebanese host population. Life-skill modules, the facilitation of higher education and the offer of vocational training curricula shall contribute to the improvement of job and income perspectives.

The activities described in this Programme Line detail the education activities to be carried out in operational regions in North and East Lebanon. The reach of these activities goes beyond the premises and immediate surroundings of R&R Syria's Peace Centres, covering larger populations of refugees and host communities in need. This Programme Line shall benefit both Syrian and Lebanese communities, and is thus seen as a key offering from our Peace Centres. Integrated courses will contribute to the overall objectives of peacebuilding and reconciliation, as participants from various backgrounds will participate in activities together. In line with such an integrated approach, classes will be taught by both local teachers and qualified international volunteers. Innovative pedagogical methods shall be applied and diffused in the entire target areas.

This Programme Line shall cover every R&R Peace Centre established in Lebanon, including outreach activities in their surroundings. It was endorsed by the Joint Implementation Committee of R&R Syria AISBL and R&R Lebanon and adopted by the Board of Directors of R&R Syria AISBL on the aforementioned dates for the aforementioned duration. This Programme Line is labelled as Priority A with regard to available funding; it has to be frozen if no funding is available for covering at least the specified minimum operational costs for two following months, after deduction of minimum operational costs for Programme Lines with higher priority.

II. Needs Assessment

The team of R&R Syria has carried out an own needs assessment with regard to the education situation of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, having consulted international and national organisations operating in this field as well as Lebanese university experts and refugee families. Here some observations on the needs and on the state of play of the crisis response:

(a) Educational needs with regard to the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon

The Syrian refugee crisis is overwhelmingly a children's crisis. Children under the age of 18 are estimated to make up more than 50 per cent of the estimated two million Syrian refugees in Lebanon. In 2013, UNICEF has estimated that Syrian students in Lebanese schools will outnumber Lebanese students by 150 000.

Syrian students face many difficulties upon arriving in Lebanon. Many have not attended school for more than two years. They were taught almost exclusively in Arabic, and now face a curriculum demanding the mastery of either French or English. Parents worry about the reprisals their children may face if the Syrian government finds out their children are seeking school in Lebanon, and they worry about enrolling their children in schools that may not accept them because of their sectarian beliefs. Many families also do not have the financial means to cover the costs associated with schooling, a difficulty exacerbated in larger families with multiple children. And they face daily the stigma of not only the label of refugee, but of also not being able to provide for themselves or cope with the Lebanese curriculum.

Syrians are mostly kept divided from the Lebanese host population, whether through their physical location in camps and makeshift shelters, or through social divisions present both in schools and everyday life. This division only encourages feelings of resentment and stigmatisation. The Lebanese host population is wary of the effects of such a large influx of refugees, and many Syrians feel unsafe in a country that has ties to various sectarian parties.

(b) State of play of the national and international crisis response with regard to education

Bearing in mind that the number of Syrian refugees has almost reached one quarter of the entire Lebanese population, Lebanon has done a huge effort in accommodating Syrian refugees. The Lebanese Ministry of Education has officially welcomed Syrian refugees into its schools, and the government in general has provided funding for humanitarian aid as well as allowed a multitude of international agencies into its country to assist those in need.

However, there are still many obstacles to be overcome for Syrians in the Lebanese school system. Priority is given to Lebanese students, sometimes not leaving room for Syrian students to enrol. Syrian families often do not understand how to enrol their children, what school they should attend, or who to talk to about enrolment. Syrian families registered with the UNHCR have some, but not all, school fees and supplies taken care of, and those not registered have only the support they can obtain from other NGOs. And while Lebanese schools have the physical capacity to take more children, they often lack the materials and teachers to do so. Notably, as UNICEF reports, a significant lack of psychosocial support is present amongst Lebanese schools, with the traumas of Syrian children's experiences going overlooked and unaddressed.

The predominant difficulty facing Syrian students is overwhelmingly a lack of foreign language skills, particularly English and French. Many students either do not enrol in Lebanese schools at all, or drop

out of school, because of the “foreign language gap” between the Syrian and the Lebanese curriculum: public education in Syria does not require French or English to the same extent as in Lebanon. According to the UNICEF Rapid Needs Assessment for Displaced Syrian Children in Lebanon, the predominant Lebanese pedagogical method in public schools is curriculum based rather than needs based, meaning that Syrian students are expected to learn the language on their own without any additional help from their schools, while also keeping up with the Lebanese curriculum in both Arabic and a second language. The vast majority of teachers have not been trained in student-based pedagogical methods, and in general they do not see the need for it.

Stigmatisation from the host population is present and a significant barrier to Syrian students. UNICEF details several cases of the bullying of Syrian students, both by teachers and fellow students, and both physically and verbally. Syrians are often looked down upon for not knowing French or English, for being poor, or for associating with the “wrong” sectarian group, amongst other reasons. In the community at large, there is a sense of resentment that the Syrians are receiving financial and material aid from international organisations, while there are many poor Lebanese families that receive nothing. Notably, UNICEF reports that students who have completed a year in school, or families connected with family in Lebanon, feel less discriminated against and feel more comfortable in their host country. Syrian-run schools are present in some areas. Many of these schools are using Syrian curriculum, which is not officially recognised by the Lebanese state, and therefore may present difficulties for Syrian students when seeking to have their credentials recognised. Additionally, Syrian-run schools are mostly funded and administered by Islamic groups, and their curriculum tends to be Islamic leaning.

In addition to the concerns outlined above, R&R Syria’s own research has discovered a worrying gap in the area of livelihood, with high need for qualified labour. Many local community and municipality leaders have expressed concern of the lack of job creation and vocational skills training available. With these difficulties in mind, R&R Syria has developed a comprehensive Educational Programme Line to ensure that Syrian students can continue their education, free from stigma and discrimination, and to fill the gaps caused by a lack of vocational training.

III. Objectives

The specific objectives of this Programme Line shall adhere to the implementation of the objectives of the Peacebuilding Programme Line Lebanon 2013-2015. Against this background, this Programme Line shall strive to realise the following specific objectives:

- a) To integrate the educational crisis response into the broader context of peacebuilding work between different communities and factions, building trust and confidence especially with regard to the relationship between Syrian refugees and Lebanese host communities.
- b) To increase the capacity of Syrian and Lebanese adolescents to cope with the Lebanese school curricula, especially with regard to foreign languages, and to the demands of the job market, both in Lebanon and/or after a possible return to Syria.
- c) To enhance the life skills of Syrian and Lebanese adolescents that are required for coping with their situation, with particular emphasis on non-violent action.
- d) To establish and diffuse best pedagogical standards for the teaching of foreign languages and other relevant subjects to schools and NGOs in the areas of operations.

IV. Target Population

The main target population is the youth both from Syrian refugee and Lebanese host communities in the surroundings of each R&R Peace Centre in the North and in the Bekaa regions. Special emphasis shall be put on the approach of the following target groups:

- a) Adolescents from both refugee and host communities from the age of 13 to 19, especially those who are not enrolled in any school or who have learning difficulties.
- b) Children from both refugee and host communities from the age of 6 to 12, especially those who are not enrolled in any school or who have learning difficulties.
- c) Adults from both refugee and host communities of all age groups who wish to improve their foreign language conversation skills.
- d) Teachers and other educational workers from both refugee and host communities who are interested in improving and implementing innovative pedagogical methods.

Special emphasis shall be put on the objective to mix different communities, both with regard to confessional belonging as with regard to refugee and host population. The offer of foreign language courses is one of the main points of attraction to both Syrians and Lebanese families. It is of primary importance that no group feels discriminated against in this regard.

As outlined in the Peacebuilding Programme Line, R&R will start its operations with the establishment of its first Peace Centre in the surroundings of Halba (Akkar). Activities under this Programme Line shall be linked to the establishment of the Centre; they shall reach out to 4 out of 6 areas within the Akkar caza. These areas are listed as the following:

- Between Halba, El Aabde and Berqayel (Area AA): outreach starting in 07/13
- Between Halba, Aakar el Aatiqa and Meshmesh (Area AB): outreach starting in 07/13
- Between Halba, El Bire and Mashba (Area AC): outreach starting in 08/13
- Sahl area, between Halba and El Aarida (Area AD): outreach starting in 08/13
- Wadi Khaled and Akroum (Area AE): outreach operations foreseen in future
- Qbayyat area (Area AF): no operations foreseen in the near future

A second Peace Centre is scheduled to be established in the Western Bekaa in the following months, most probably in the surroundings of Job Jennine. The exact operational areas have yet to be determined, but the aforementioned selection criteria shall equally apply.

V. Expected Results

The following measurable results are expected as output of this Programme Line in the context of the Peace Centres' overall activities under the condition of full-fledged funding and implementation of the Activities as foreseen in this Programme Line for 2 years:

- a) The capacity of R&R Syria and of other local actors to cope with the special pedagogical needs of Syrian refugee and Lebanese host population has increased.

- b) At least 200 adolescents (13-19) who are not enrolled in school have received accelerated learning intensive courses for improving foreign language skills and at least 80% of them have integrated Lebanese schools following the completion of their courses.
- c) At least 1000 adolescents (13-19) have participated in homework and school support classes and not more than 10% of them have dropped out of school in the end of the school year.
- d) At least 1600 refugee children (6-12) not enrolled in school have participated in regular foreign language lessons and at least 80% of those of them still present on the Lebanese territory have integrated Lebanese secondary schools until the age of 13.
- e) Job market assessments have been conducted in each target region, at least two vocational training modules have been developed and implemented and at least 50 adolescents have successfully completed a one-year vocational training in every Peace Centre.
- f) Four life skill training modules have been established in the fields of non-violent action, computer literacy, hygiene and environmental awareness, diffused and implemented in every course offered in the premises or the surroundings of each Peace Centre.

VI. Activities

With the establishment of the first Peace Centre, the following Activities will start to unfold. The Country Director, after consultation with the Field Manager, decides about the most appropriate moment for the launch of each of these Activities:

(a) Application and diffusion of innovative pedagogical methods

All students shall be taught through a variety of interactive and inclusive pedagogical techniques, including educational games, group discussion work and problem-solving activities. Peer learning shall be encouraged as a main activity in classes to consolidate new information for the students. The material used in these classes will also reflect the values of R&R Syria to include themes such as diversity, respect, community and identity.

In keeping with R&R Syria's pillars of peacebuilding and psychosocial work, the education provided at the Peace Centres will pay close attention to students who could benefit from other programme lines. Any student observed as needing additional assistance to do with their emotional and mental well-being will be noted and followed up with staff from the psychosocial line. Where possible, staff will also assess students with learning disabilities and take action to assist them both through our programmes as well as possibly other organisations.

The pedagogical methods used in R&R Syria's Educational Programme Line will be diffused in the following manner: first, an outline of desired pedagogical methods and their implementation strategies will be compiled and be made accessible to all teaching staff. Secondly, teaching staff will attend training sessions prior to the commencement of their classes, to ensure that the pedagogical methods are understood and diffused into all educational programmes simultaneously. Finally, if possible and if desired by local teachers, these pedagogical methods will be shared with pedagogical staff of schools or civil society organisations in the target areas.

(b) Foreign language education for enhancing school enrolment

The lack of foreign language skills, especially in French and English, has been identified as the main gap preventing the enrolment of Syrian refugee students into the Lebanese school system. R&R Syria shall address this shortcoming at three different levels:

Regular foreign language courses in French and English shall be conducted in proximity to refugee communities, targeting children (6 to 12 years old) that are not enrolled in regular schools, aiming to equip them with the necessary skills to integrate into Lebanese secondary schools once they have reached the corresponding age. Courses shall take place from three to five hours a week for the duration of one term each (approximately for five months). The curriculum will be a predetermined curriculum, including student workbooks and textbooks.

Intensive foreign language courses in French and English shall be conducted at each Peace Centre, targeting adolescents (13 to 19 years old) that are not enrolled in school, aiming to equip them with the necessary skills to integrate into the Lebanese school system and to enhance future employment opportunities. Courses shall take place four days a week, at least three hours a day, for a mid-term duration, three months minimum. The curriculum will be a predetermined curriculum, including student workbooks and textbooks. The courses shall aim to provide as similar to a formal school environment as possible so as to accustom and prepare the students for formal school tasks.

Oral conversation clubs in French and English shall take place once a week during the evening, if possible both in the main Peace Centres and in Outreach Centres. They also serve to reach out to the local adult community and to bring individuals from different communities together. Maintaining small groups is important for ensuring that each participant benefits from one on one attention to their language production skills. Conversation clubs will aim to improve their abilities to converse in natural speech and express ideas and thoughts in French and English.

(c) Homework and school support classes

Homework and school support classes are intended to assist students who are enrolled in formal schooling to be able to cope with the Lebanese curriculum. The classes will be divided into four areas: English, French, Arabic, mathematics and sciences. The groups are also intended to further our work with communities of different faiths and to provide a foundation for further relationships with these communities. On a case-to-case basis, students without the necessary means and without assistance through other organisations might also receive support for the purchase of the required school books and other learning materials.

Classes will partly operate without a fixed curriculum but will be conducted based on students' needs instead. The classes will focus on both homework assistance and on new material that the teacher has determined would be useful for the students, or that the students have requested. These classes will rotate throughout the main Peace Centres and the different local Outreach Centres, so that each subject is available to each centre on a weekly basis, each one afternoon per week.

Assistants will include teachers and talented higher education students from local communities. Dynamics of the tuition groups will be directed towards peer learning, with the eventual goal of creating supervised study groups where students of varying abilities can benefit from learning and working together. Such a group could also serve as a first experience and training for students interested in pursuing a career in teaching and education.

(d) Development and diffusion of life skill training modules

In light of the immense scale of the current refugee crisis, standard educational topics are considered to be insufficient to prepare young people for the challenges of their living conditions and in their personal development. This activity aims at establishing and implementing best practices for a sustainable and holistic education that includes also the acquirement of life skills. Four particular modules for life skill training shall be offered and integrated into all educational activities: non-violent action, computer literacy, hygiene and environmental awareness. They will be part of every course and module offered in the Peace Centres.

This Activity will unfold in three phases; in the first phase, in close cooperation with the house psychologists and with external experts, the life skill training modules will be developed. Training modules for all four areas shall be established and disseminated amongst local partners, schools and civil society organisations. In the second phase, all staff members and local volunteers involved in psychosocial and educational activities will receive a training session for applying the training modules. In the third phase, starting at the end of the first educational term, the training modules will be implemented into all currently running and future courses and groups.

(e) Increasing further education opportunities

Many students will face financial restrictions upon wishing to pursue higher education. R&R Syria wishes to enable as many students as possible to pursue academic goals. By building up relationships with universities and institutions both in Lebanon and abroad, R&R Syria will endeavour to secure scholarships and exchange programmes for beneficiaries. Exchange programmes may include the opportunity for international students to stay and volunteer at a Peace Centre over a period of months. This Activity will be carried out in close co-operation with partner organisations and higher education institutions. It may also include weekend seminars on the premises or in the surroundings of each Peace Centre, dedicated to enhancing knowledge and skills in specialised academic areas, such as archaeology, humanities, sciences or others.

There is also scope within this Activity for online learning opportunities. Through advances in technology it is possible to gain qualifications via distance learning or through online institutions, and R&R Syria endeavours to use such avenues to create more sustainable learning opportunities for students. In this way it may become possible for R&R Syria to facilitate online learning through websites, platforms and online institutions. Students will further be encouraged to create online portfolios in order to increase exposure to the online community. The prospect of online learning will enable a larger number of students to benefit from the resources of R&R Syria.

(f) Establishment of vocational training modules

Beyond school and academic education, R&R Syria also thrives to enhance the livelihood and job opportunities of both Syrian refugee and Lebanese host population. At least two vocational training modules, following the principles of dual vocational education, shall be established and applied in each Peace Centre, open for both Syrian and Lebanese students.

In the first phase, a regional job market assessment shall be carried out that produces research on the current job situation in each of the target areas. Local experts, engaged by the project as short-term consultants, will conduct the assessments. This may also involve collaboration with local municipalities, local branches of the Ministry of Social Affairs and employers as to assess the most

pressing needs in each community. The types of work available will be noted, as will the potential areas for job creation. This information will then be used to carry out the second phase of this activity, that of vocational training. Based on the results arising from the assessment, relevant vocational training modules for adolescents of both host and refugee communities will be conducted, within the premises and the surroundings of the Peace Centres.

Once the training modules have been decided upon, they will be implemented with possible partnership with existing NGOs. External consultants may also be used when needed in order to conduct specific training. The identification of job-market opportunities and the training of skilled workers contributes directly to the improvement of the long-term livelihood of adolescents from refugee and host communities; it also helps to create links with local governmental authorities and the local economy that might contribute to diffuse tensions and to reduce economic competition between refugees and host communities.

(g) Incubation of business development

Recognising the need for Syrian refugees to be able to support themselves independently, as well as the goal of having the Lebanese and Syrian populations cooperate and work together, this Activity aims to stimulate business development for joint start-up companies between Syrians and Lebanese. The first objective is hence to empower refugee and host population to become self-supporting, allowing self-determination and economic independence. Secondly, this Activity aims to benefit from the differences between Syrians and Lebanese in terms of productivity and other factors of production, differences which otherwise are source of tension.

This Activity will be implemented in three steps. First, a low-scale market analysis shall determine the economic sectors in which a joint-venture between Syrians and Lebanese might be most promising, both with regard to the current refugee crisis as for the case of a return of refugees into Syria. Secondly, potential candidates for the start-up of small-scaled business shall be trained in one or several seminars with business consultants for production lines ranging from small handicraft objects to more sophisticated goods or services. The outcome of such seminars shall be a business plan including provisions for capital leverage and merchandising. Thirdly, the business plan(s) shall be implemented over the following year. The international network of R&R Syria may serve as retail and distribution channel for the products of this Activity, in conformity with laws and regulations governing the export/import of charitable or other goods.

VII. Staff Planning

The minimum requirement for carrying out the activities under this Programme Line is the equivalent of one full-time teaching assistant for giving at least one back-to-school foreign language course per day in the premises of one Peace Centre, under the direct supervision of the Field Manager.

However, further teaching assistants shall be employed/engaged as soon as possible per operating Peace Centre for diversifying the course offer in line with Activities (b) and (c). According to the needs and the available funding, these assistants could either work full-time or part-time; some of them shall be long-term international volunteers who shall not exceed more than half of the total staff under this Programme Line. In the budgetary planning, a maximum of 6 full-time teaching assistants and/or international volunteers shall be foreseen for every operating Peace Centre,

summing up to a higher number of employed/engaged persons in the case of part-time assignments. These assignments might cover all Activities enumerated above.

In a third stage, once Activity (e) or (f) are about to start, one full-time educational coordinator shall be employed/engaged, Syrian or Lebanese, to lead the team in a respective Peace Centre under the supervision of the local Field Manager.

External consultants might be engaged at different steps of the Programme Line, according to the specific needs of each Activity. Especially Activities (f) and (g) will require external expertise, as specified in the description above.

VIII. Budget

The Educational Programme Line Lebanon 2013-2015 is one of the three main pillars supporting the overarching peacebuilding activities of R&R Syria AISBL in Lebanon. It is therefore directly linked to the Peacebuilding Programme Line Lebanon 2013-2015 and relies on its basic staff and premises detailed in the budget of the respective programme line.

As defined earlier, the minimum operational costs of this Programme Line is the availability of a minimum funding for the employment/engagement of at least one full-time teaching assistant. The minimum operational costs are hence defined as €700/month. The Board of Directors of R&R Syria has to be immediately consulted if the Treasurer of R&R Syria states in his/her monthly report that no funding is available for covering these minimum operational costs for at least one month, after deduction of Programme Lines with a higher priority. In this case, the Board of Directors must decide how to proceed. If no satisfying solution can be found, the Programme Line must be frozen and all pending contracts or financial obligations have to be dissolved.

AUTHORISED ANNUAL BUDGET

(a) Human Resources

Item	Description	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Educational Coordinator	2 coordinators, 1 in each Peace Centre, full time, including insurance and allowances	€1,000/mth	24,000
Teaching Assistants	12 teaching assistants, 6 in each Peace Centre, full-time, including insurance and allowances	€700/mth	100,800
Subtotal			124,800

(b) Teaching Materials and Consumables

Item	Description	Unit Cost	Total Cost
School books	School books for a maximum of 1000 beneficiaries in both Peace Centres	€50/year	50,000
Equipment	Technical equipment for 2 vocational training courses in each Peace Centre	€500/year	2,000
Stationary	Notebooks, papers, pens, crayons and other materials in each Peace Centre	€400/mth	9,600
Catering	Snacks, water, juices or other refreshments for class breaks in each Peace Centre	€200/mth	4,800
Subtotal			66,400

(c) Services

Item	Description	Unit Cost	Total Cost
Transportation	Transportation for students attending courses in each Peace Centre and for class excursions	€500/mth	12,000
Consultancy	3 consultants for the design of activities (d), (f) and (g) as specified above	€2,000/unit	6,000
Seminars	Accommodation, catering and transportation for 4 specialised seminars per Peace Centre	€2,000/unit	16,000
Training	4 training sessions in each Peace Centre for teachers and local NGO staff in pedagogical methods and life-skill modules	€200/unit	1,600
Subtotal			35,600

TOTAL AUTHORISED COSTS PER YEAR

EUR 226,800