



# **DRAFT INCEPTION REPORT: Evaluation of the UNICEF support to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Lebanon on the Inclusive Education Programme scaling up in public schools**

**MAY 2024**

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## GLOSSARY

TERM	DEFINITION
Children with Disabilities	UNICEF uses the term ‘disability’ in line with the definition provided in the CRPD (Article 1): “Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.” <sup>1</sup>
Inclusive Education	<p>Inclusive education means “all children in the same classrooms, in the same schools. It means real learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded – not only children with disabilities, but speakers of minority languages too. It allows students of all backgrounds to learn and grow side by side, to the benefit of all.</p> <p>At the school level, teachers must be trained, buildings must be refurbished and students must receive accessible learning materials. At the community level, stigma and discrimination must be tackled and individuals need to be educated on the benefit of inclusive education. At the national level, Governments must align laws and policies with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and regularly collect and analyse data to ensure children are reached with effective services.”<sup>2</sup></p>
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (2006)	The purpose of the Convention is to promote, protect, and ensure the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and to promote respect for their inherent dignity. Article 24 is the Right to Inclusive Education. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/lac/en/children-and-adolescents-disabilities#:~:text=UNICEF%20uses%20the%20term%20'disability,participation%20in%20society%20on%20an>

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/education/inclusive-education>

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Optional Protocol, 2006 (Retrieved from: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AAP	Accountability to Affected Populations
CERD	Centre for Educational Research and Development
COVID19	CoronaVirus Disease 2019
CRC	Convention on the Rights of Children
CwD	Children with Disabilities
DOPS	Department d'Orientation et Pédagogie Scolaire
EU	European Union
EUTF	EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HI	Handicap International
IE	Inclusive Education
IEP	Inclusive Education Programme
IP	Implementing Partner
KfW	Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau
KII	Key Informant Interview
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
MOSA	Ministry of Social Affairs
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Support
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development - Development Assistance Committee
RTI	Response to Intervention
ToR	Terms of Reference
TREF	Transition and Resilience Education Fund
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VASYR	Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Objectives

The overall goal of this evaluation is to assess the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, coherence and sustainability of the Inclusive Education programme, using the OECD/DAC evaluation criteria, as well as cross-cutting issues such as gender, disability, and child rights. This can be broken down into four objectives:

1. **provide an independent assessment of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of UNICEF support to inclusive education in Lebanon**, against its original design and objectives, its implementation, collaboration processes with main partners, and results achievement with a particular emphasis on its contribution to promote the right to education for all;
2. **analyse the factors that facilitated or affected implementation and progress toward results**, to capture challenges, lessons learned, and success factors;
3. **provide strategic learning and recommendations aimed at optimisation of the model for the efficient and effective scaling up across all public schools, and sustainability**. In addition, provide MEHE with adequate evidence on inclusive education practice to inform an inclusive education policy implementation and resource allocations;
4. **objectively document the implementation of the upscale phase of the inclusive education programme, lessons learnt, innovations, best practices notably at school-level etc.**, to clearly communicate to MEHE and donors the efficiency of the current model.

## 1.2 Scope

This evaluation covers a period of three academic years –with a focus on the upscale phase covering 2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24 school years, and will consider interventions implemented in all the schools targeted by the intervention in the nine governorates of the country.

The primary target audience of this evaluation will be the European Union and the government of Canada, as well as UNICEF Lebanon and the Ministry of Education and Higher Education of Lebanon to improve programmatic responses, add to institutional learning, specifically for inclusive education programming and implementation in Lebanon. It will also add relevant knowledge to policy and strategic areas relevant to inclusive programming at the national level as the Inclusive Education policy is currently being finalised.

## 1.3 Deliverables

**Table 1: Deliverables of the evaluation and description**

PHASE	DELIVERABLES
PHASE 1: INCEPTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draft Inception Report</li> <li>- Final Inception Report</li> </ul>
PHASE 2: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Post data collection debrief</li> </ul>
PHASE 3: REPORTING AND VALIDATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Validation and restitution workshop and presentation to collect feedback from stakeholders</li> <li>- Draft Final Report</li> <li>- Final Report</li> </ul>

<b>PHASE 4: DISSEMINATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External dissemination workshop</li> <li>- Policy brief and poster</li> </ul>
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## 2. UNDERSTANDING THE PROGRAMME

### 2.1 Contextual overview

#### Lebanon's compounding crisis on the Education sector

Lebanon is currently facing a multi-faceted and rapidly evolving crisis affecting its long-standing vulnerabilities, undoing progress made in development, and leading to urgent humanitarian needs for the most vulnerable groups.<sup>4</sup> Since 2019, the country has been grappling with a challenging economic and financial situation, worsened by political deadlock, social instability, and various internal and external shocks. This crisis has deeply affected all aspects of society, pushing many people into dire conditions, relying on remittances from abroad for their basic needs, highlighting Lebanon's dependence on external support. The country's currency has experienced a sharp decline, causing high inflation and affecting the prices and availability of essential imports like food and fuel. Unemployment rates have soared, particularly among women and youth, with many facing barriers to finding work. This has resulted in a sharp drop in the well-being of the people, severely affecting the country's progress towards the 2030 Agenda.<sup>5</sup>

Compounding events like the Beirut port explosions in 2020, the fuel crisis in summer 2021, and a recent cholera outbreak have highlighted the depth of the crisis and increased the demand for assistance. Additionally, Lebanon continues to manage the fallout from the Syrian crisis and hosts a large number of refugees per capita, approximately 1,5 million Syrian refugees. Despite welcoming Syrian communities, there's been growing tension regarding refugees, putting more strain on resources. Indeed, growing competition for services has heightened social tensions within the community, with 29.6% of Lebanese and 33% of Syrians expressing competition for essential services and utilities. Among these instances, 7% of reported service-related incidents were specifically linked to education.<sup>6</sup>

In that context, the education sector has been particularly affected, with over 1.2 million school-aged children affected by school closures and disruptions caused by both the COVID-19 pandemic and the country's crises in the years 2020 and 2021. In 2022, Humanity and Inclusion reported that nearly 45% of 2 million school aged children in Lebanon were out of school.<sup>7</sup>

The closure of schools, coupled with economic hardships, has widened learning inequalities, disproportionately affecting vulnerable Lebanese and refugee children, specifically those relying on the public education system. The number of out-of-school Syrian and Lebanese children has increased significantly, with economic barriers and negative coping mechanisms like child labour and early marriage further hindering access to education.

#### Disability Prevalence and Inclusive Education

Children with disabilities are among the most marginalised groups in Lebanon. Although the Law 220/2000 on Rights of Persons with Disabilities addresses the rights of people with disabilities to proper education, rehabilitation services, employment, medical services, sports and access to public transport and other facilities, and stresses the right to participation, most of its provisions are not being implemented due to a lack of investment as well as prevailing social barriers and norms.

In 2023, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reported that in Lebanon, around 300,000 children aged 0-17 live with disabilities, representing a total of 13% of this age group.<sup>8</sup> Of children with disabilities, 52.2% are Lebanese, 33.8% are Syrian, 3.2% are Palestinian and 10.8% are from other nationalities (including migrants). Despite these staggering numbers, only 1% of school-aged children with disabilities are enrolled in mainstream public schools in which access to inclusive education thus far remains limited.<sup>9</sup> Around 72% of displaced Syrian children with disabilities are not attending school while 29% of Palestinian refugee children with disabilities are not enrolled in any kind of education.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2025: Lebanon, April 2022.

<sup>5</sup> United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023-2025: Lebanon, April 2022.

<sup>6</sup> OCHA, Escalating Needs Lebanon, May 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Handicap International Middle East, Disability-Inclusive Education in Lebanon, September 2023.

<sup>8</sup> OCHA, Escalating Needs Lebanon, May 2023.

<sup>9</sup> OCHA, Escalating Needs Lebanon, May 2023.

<sup>10</sup> OCHA, Escalating Needs Lebanon, May 2023.

According to UNESCO, nearly half of children with disabilities who receive a disability card from the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) are also not enrolled in formal or accredited education.<sup>11</sup> Lebanese children with severe disabilities mainly attend specialised institutions contracted by MOSA, while some private mainstream schools also admit children with disabilities on a case-by-case basis. A 2017 survey by UNICEF revealed that 70% of Lebanese respondents believed that children with physical disabilities should be included in society, whereas only 25% thought the same about children with intellectual disabilities.<sup>12</sup>

In the emergency context of Lebanon, the specific needs of refugee children with disabilities have been largely neglected. Refugee children and young people with disabilities have extremely limited access to services, and there are no systematic interventions to address their needs. According to the Vulnerability Assessment for Syrian Refugees in Lebanon (VASR) 2019, 56% of Syrian children with disabilities aged 6-14 were not enrolled in school, compared to 31% of those without disabilities.<sup>13</sup> Special institutions under MOSA do not admit Syrian children with disabilities free of charge, in a logic of prioritising nationals.

Finally, access to disaggregated data regarding CwD is a significant challenge hindering the implementation of inclusive education in Lebanon. Indeed, existing data sets are available from various sources, including MEHE and MOSA. However, most data sets are inconsistent and cannot be cross-referenced due to a lack of cross-sectoral cooperation in data collection. This is being palliated partially through a unified framework for information management, aimed at streamlining the system and enhancing the efficiency of education data collection and analysis: MEHE's Student Information Management System (SIMS). Supported by the IEP, this has served as the primary source of educational information for the 2021-2022 school year and beyond. This transition is expected to improve system efficiency, support evidence-based policy formulation, and facilitate consolidated reporting for schools.<sup>14</sup>

## Understanding of Inclusive Education within the programme

Key premises of inclusive education include recognising it as a fundamental right, as stated in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD), and acknowledging the educational benefits for all children inherent in inclusive schooling.

As underscored above, children with disabilities (CwD) - encompassing physical, intellectual, hearing, visual, or speech impairments - are particularly vulnerable to increased marginalisation and encounter added difficulties in Lebanon, where substantial hurdles to inclusive education persist. These challenges are compounded for CwD due the absence of adequate accommodations for their needs. These shortcomings encompass a deficiency in technology and rehabilitation services, inadequately trained education personnel, absence of inclusive curriculum and teaching methods (especially evident during COVID-19), and high costs associated with adaptive equipment. The inability of the public education system to adequately cater to their needs, thus denying them their fundamental right to equitable education, sets the stage for the Inclusive Education Programme.

Inclusive education encompasses a paradigm shift from traditional approaches of segregating or integrating children with disabilities to creating environments that accommodate and celebrate diversity within schools.<sup>15</sup> It involves transforming the cultures, policies, and practices of educational institutions to recognise and address the individual needs of all students while removing barriers to their participation.<sup>16</sup>

As evidenced by the figure below,<sup>17</sup> Inclusive Education is a human-rights based approach which is coupled with the key right of education both as an endogenous social process, impacting both CwD and other children, and a necessity to develop competencies for future opportunities.

### **Figure 1: Inclusive Education as a human-rights based approach**

<sup>11</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Programme Proposal - EU Amendment N1\_Description of Action\_Without track changes, October 2023. *(Shared Internally)*.

<sup>12</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Programme Proposal - EU Amendment N1\_Description of Action\_Without track changes, October 2023. *(Shared Internally)*.

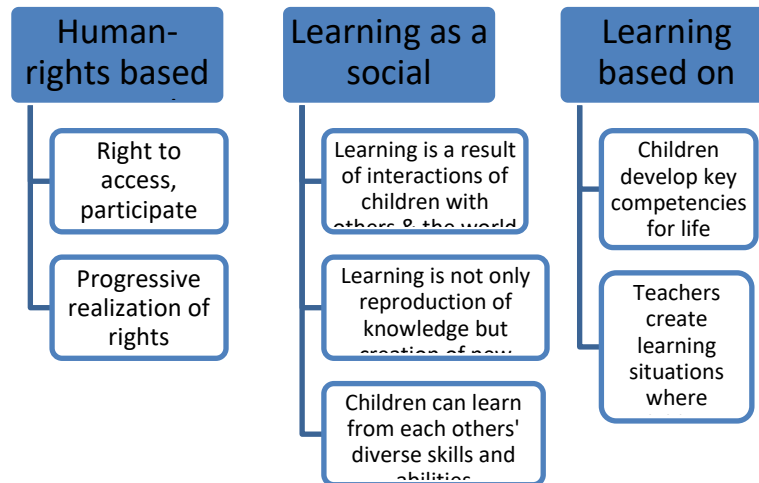
<sup>13</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Programme Proposal - EU Amendment N1\_Description of Action\_Without track changes, October 2023. *(shared internally)*.

<sup>14</sup> UNICEF, Beyond Education, Inclusive Education Policy Development - Lebanon, April 2022.

<sup>15</sup> UNESCO, Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Inclusion and education: All means all, 2020.

<sup>16</sup> UNESCO, Global Education Monitoring Report 2020: Inclusion and education: All means all, 2020.

<sup>17</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, IE Programme presentation, n.d. *(shared internally)*



This transition is grounded in changing perceptions on intelligence and disability, aiming to optimise every student's capabilities by reducing environmental obstacles and emphasising facilitators to ensure their engagement. It entails customising content, methods and frameworks to cater to the varying requirements of all learners, guided by a shared objective of delivering education to all children within the suitable age bracket and grade. The underlying principle is that inclusive education fosters enhanced academic achievements and behaviours among children with disabilities, along with fostering positive shifts in attitudes toward diversity within schools and communities.

## National Framework on Inclusive Education

Lebanon, despite being an early signatory to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) in 2007, has yet to ratify it, however, progress has been made, with the Lebanese Parliament passing a law on March 29, 2022, authorising the government to proceed with ratification.<sup>18</sup> This step represents a significant advancement towards applying human rights standards to promote accessibility and inclusion, particularly for individuals with disabilities. In Lebanon, inclusive education for children with disabilities has emerged as a priority for the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). This commitment is underscored by the recent enactment of the National Policy on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs (published in June 2023) and the draft Reform Roadmap 2025. These initiatives align with global treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of Children (CRC) and the UNCRPD, as well as General Comment No. 4 of the CRPD.<sup>19</sup> MEHE is currently finalising the roadmap for implementation of this policy, with the support of UNICEF.

The National Framework on the inclusion of persons with disabilities in education is also supported by numerous key documents and national initiatives such as:<sup>20</sup>

- **The Lebanese Constitution**, which guarantees free education for all;
- **Decrees and laws establishing committees and mechanisms for the education of children with disabilities**, such as Decree No. 11853 forming a national committee for this purpose;
- **Laws ensuring equal opportunities for education for all disabled persons**, such as Law 220, which mandates access to education for individuals with disabilities;
- **Decisions and decrees promoting inclusion and recognition of children with special needs**, including assigning a national day for the inclusion of children with special needs and exempting certain learners from exams based on their needs.

## 2.2 Inclusive Education programme response

### 2.2.1 Programmatic Overview

In light of the challenges highlighted in the above section, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) launched a five-year General Education Plan and introduced the Transition and Resilience Education Fund (TREF) in 2021 to address the deepening crisis in education. TREF aims to support the implementation of MEHE's plan and shift towards a system-wide approach, emphasising inclusion, equity, and vulnerability. Operating through a partnership between UNICEF, MEHE,

<sup>18</sup> MEHE, National Policy on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Lebanon, June 2023.

<sup>19</sup> General comment No. 4 on Article 24 - the right to inclusive education - CRPD/C/GC/4, 25 November 2016.

<sup>20</sup> MEHE, National Policy on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Lebanon, June 2023.

and contributing partners like the European Union and Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), TREF focuses on joint planning, decision-making, and reporting. It provides funding and support to teachers and schools, promotes governance features for accountability, and invests in capacity building and system strengthening.

In that context, UNICEF Lebanon launched the Inclusive Education Programme, as a part of an overall programme aiming to strengthen the public education system in Lebanon to deliver inclusive and quality education for vulnerable school-aged children - including Syrian refugees - ensuring their full access and retention.

The funding base is the EU Regional Trust Fund in Response to the Syrian Crisis (EUTF) with a total contribution of USD 69,812,019.38, with an EU contribution of € 57.5 million estimated to be USD 67,010,849.93.

UNICEF Lebanon country programme (2023-2025) has a twin-track approach to disability-inclusion **across programme outcomes to gather robust data and mainstream the needs of children and youth with disabilities and plan evidence-based specific interventions to address their needs". This ensures that the country office mainstreams CwD in all regular programmes while offering targeted programming with and for CwD.**

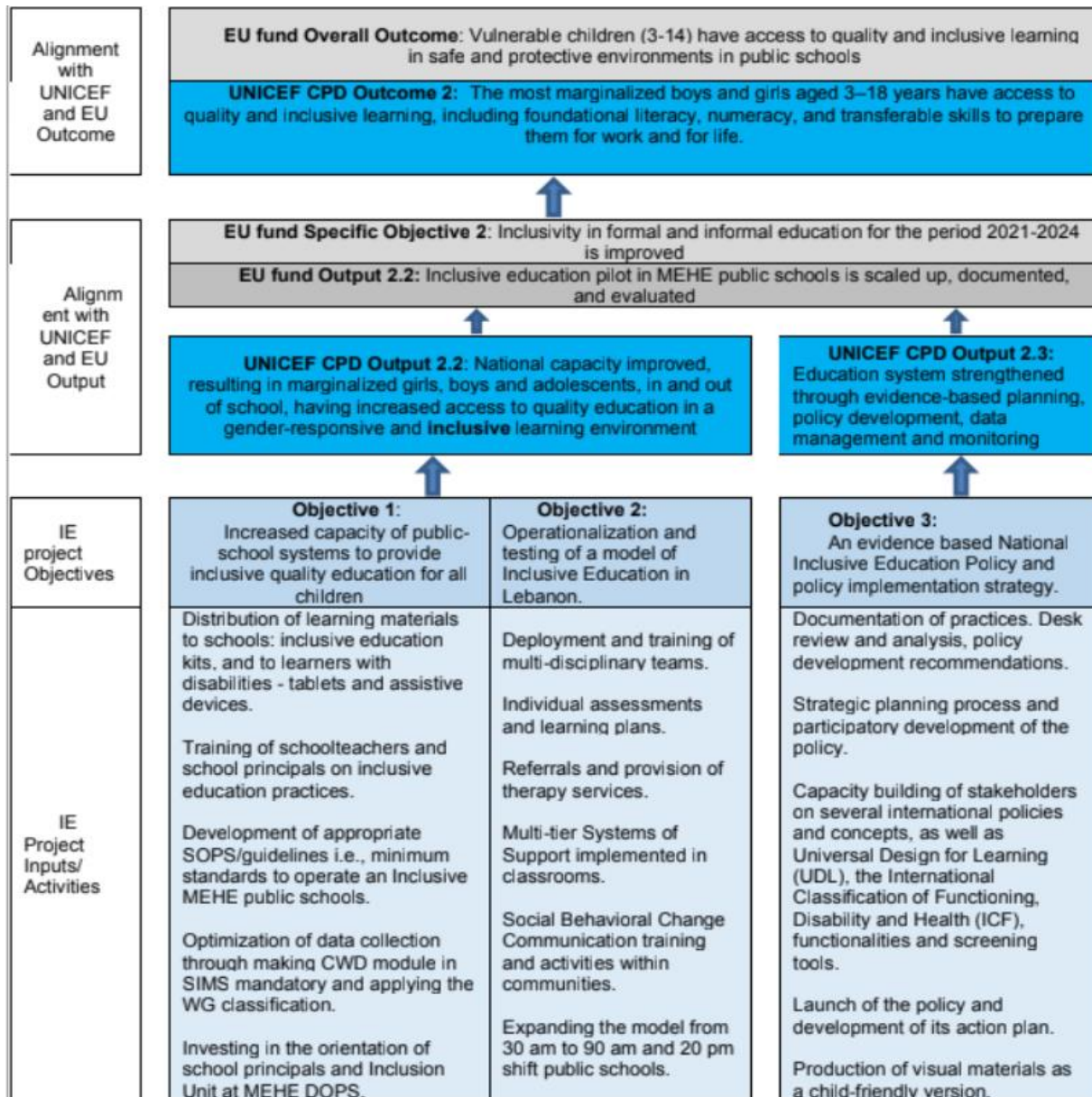
The IEP is a targeted programme that aims to build the education system capacity to offer equitable and rights-based education to children with disabilities. UNICEF Lebanon and MEHE are collaborating with two key Implementing Partners (IP): Humanity and Inclusion (HI) and Mouvement Social.

## 2.2.2 Inclusive Education Programme activities

***Graph 1: IEP activities/outputs, objectives and alignment with EU and UNICEF output and outcome<sup>21</sup>***

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<sup>21</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, IE Programme presentation, n.d. (shared internally)



As evidenced in the graph above, the IEP has three objectives:

1. Increased capacity of public school systems to provide inclusive quality education for all children
2. Operationalisation and testing of a model of Inclusive Education in Lebanon
3. An evidence based National Inclusive Education Policy and policy implementation strategy

### Increased capacity of public school systems to provide inclusive quality education for all children

UNICEF developed and implemented a comprehensive approach in 2019 to actively include and retain children with disabilities in formal education programmes. This approach includes capacity building for teachers, provision of additional human resources such as special educators and paraprofessionals, and support for specialised services and supplies. The training aims to enhance the capacity of school directors and teachers in identifying children with disabilities, managing inclusive classrooms, and creating differentiated lesson plans. Funding is provided for the positions of special educators and for specialised services like speech therapy and o assistive devices.

To create a more inclusive community environment, UNICEF also conducted community engagement activities aimed at disability inclusion. These activities involve supporting local committees on inclusion, conducting community engagement sessions to identify children with disabilities and spread awareness, organising awareness and empowerment sessions for parents, and holding community events focused on social inclusion.

Additionally, UNICEF ensures that children with disabilities are referred to appropriate education, health, and protection programs. Inclusion case workers contact families whose children are reported to be out of school due to disability, conduct needs assessments, and refer children to the necessary services.

## Operationalisation and testing of a model of Inclusive Education in Lebanon

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) of Lebanon, in collaboration with UNICEF, implemented in 2019 a pilot programme in 30 public schools across all governorates, aiming at fostering inclusive education and ensuring quality education for all children. The pilot was organised through the assignment of 30 special educators, one for each school, focusing on Kindergarten to Grade 3.

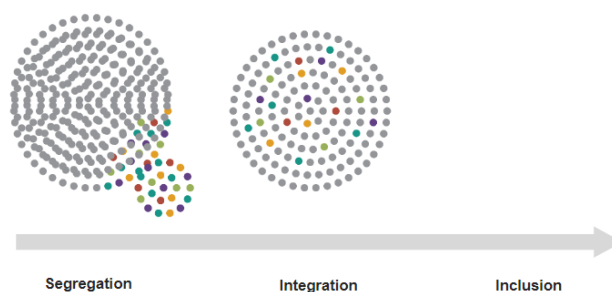
The schools were grouped into six clusters, with each cluster served by a mobile team of professionals including a psychologist, psychomotor therapist, speech therapist aiming to reach all students with learning and motor difficulties in grades KG to 6 within the targeted schools, with additional provisions for children with visual, hearing, and mild intellectual disabilities in the selected schools.<sup>22</sup>

The second phase of the programme consisted of a scale-up adding 60 additional first-shift (AM schools) and 20 second-shift schools (PM schools), totaling 110 inclusive public schools. The second batch of schools, selected in 2022, commenced operations in November of the same year, while those chosen in the third batch in December 2022 began functioning by March 2023. The expansion to these new schools began with the training of school staff and the recruitment of paraprofessional teams and special educators.

By June 2023, 236 specialists had been recruited, including 89 psychologists, 44 psychomotor therapists, 71 speech therapists, and 32 special educators.<sup>23</sup>

The conceptual framework of the programme, jointly developed by MEHE-DOPS, CERD-PITB, and UNICEF, adopted UNESCO's definition of inclusion as a continual process of addressing the diverse needs of all learners, reducing exclusion, and fostering a learning environment that embraces differences.

**Figure 2: Road to inclusion<sup>24</sup>**



The overall programme is guided by the use of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), aligning with a human rights perspective and viewing learning as a social process, with the aim of ensuring high-quality instruction for all students while providing targeted interventions or intensive support for those in need. This is achieved through a multi-tiered approach to identify and support students with learning and behaviour needs. The MTSS begins with universal screening and high-quality classroom instruction, followed by tiered interventions tailored to individual student requirements to ensure that no child is left behind.

RTI involves parent involvement and progresses through three tiers of increasing intensity:

- Tier 1 (Universal Core Instruction),
- Tier 2 (Targeted Group), and
- Tier 3 (Individualised Intervention), based on ongoing monitoring and modification to develop effective Individualised Education Plans (IEPs) for students with diverse needs.

<sup>22</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Programme Proposal - EU Amendment N1\_Description of Action\_Without track changes, October 2023. (shared internally).

<sup>23</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Programme Proposal - EU Amendment N1\_Description of Action\_Without track changes, October 2023. (shared internally).

<sup>24</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Inclusion Presentation 2019-2020, n.d. (shared internally)

## An evidence based National Inclusive Education Policy and policy implementation strategy

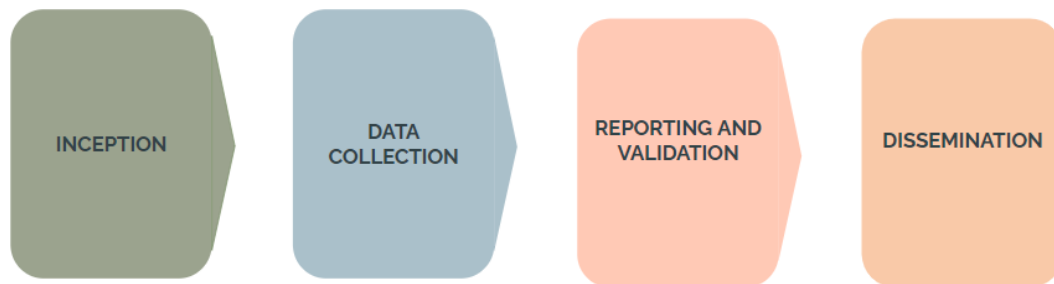
One of the main objectives of the Inclusive Education programme is also to strengthen Lebanon’s policy agenda and subsequent legal framework around access in education for CwD. To this aim, in June 2023, MEHE, in collaboration with CERD, launched in partnership with UNICEF, the **National Policy on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs in Lebanon**. This policy provides a national framework for an inclusive education implementation in Lebanon, based on the lessons learned from the Inclusive Education Programme and international best practices.

In addition, a roadmap is currently being drafted for validation, as an action plan for implementing the Policy, to be finalised by DOPS and CERD within this current school year (2023 - 2024), which will be complemented by a handbook with guidelines for school principals.<sup>25</sup>

These outputs will allow to organise and prepare for future potential exit strategies and sustainable practices to retain the achievements of the Inclusive Education programme and to ensure full ownership of this programme by the MEHE, and the counterparts involved in the public education sector at all levels.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the overall methods for the evaluation, including research approach, questions, sampling tools and plans for data analysis. It builds on the methods laid out in the technical proposal, incorporating feedback and insights from the preliminary desk review and ongoing consultations with UNICEF. The evaluation will take place in four phases:



#### 3.1. Evaluation framework and Evaluation Questions

The OECD-DAC evaluation criteria will be utilised as a lens to ensure a comprehensive and cohesive assessment. The proposed evaluation questions cover 5 of the 6 criteria – Relevance, Coherence, Effectiveness, Efficiency, and Sustainability, and will be refined during the inception phase by the evaluation team and in conjunction with UNICEF Lebanon. These highlighted criteria best respond to the evaluation purpose and objectives, furthermore a gender equity lens shall be applied across all themes and criteria (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Selected OECD-DAC evaluation criteria**

<sup>25</sup> UNICEF Lebanon, Programme Proposal - EU Amendment N1\_Description of Action\_Without track changes, October 2023. *(shared internally)*.



The following evaluation questions and sub-questions are proposed for the evaluation. These questions are aligned with the original set in the evaluation ToR, which has been further refined by the evaluation team to ensure the necessary analytical depth, in line with discussions around research scope and focus.

**Table 2: Evaluation Questions and Sub-questions according to each criteria**

Note that some evaluation questions from different criteria intersect, as they bring complementary perspectives on one subject.

CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS
<b>RELEVANCE:</b>  Is the Inclusive Education programme doing the right things?	EQ1.1 To what extent was the IE intervention designed and implemented to respond to needs of vulnerable children and of CWD in Lebanon?
	EQ1.2. In what way does the IE intervention with the UNICEF mandate, core commitments to children, children’s right to education, child protection?
	EQ1.3 In what way does the IE intervention align with the country's context and government priorities, notably the MEHE IE policy, the 5-year general education sector plan, and the draft 2025 reform roadmap?
	EQ1.4. How adequate/accurate is the selection of IE schools under the programme and its extension phases?
	EQ1.5. How relevant is the process of identification of children with disabilities <i>e.g. What categories are used, who identifies CWD, where is this data recorded etc.?</i>
	EQ1.6. How relevant was UNICEF’s selection of implementing partners for referral, SBC and other activities?
<b>COHERENCE:</b>  How well does the Inclusive	EQ2.1 To what extent does the IE intervention fit with or complement other initiatives to improve access to quality and inclusive learning in safe and protective environments in public schools ( <i>e.g. other programmes on child protection, cash for education, access to education (coverage of enrolment fees), school rehabilitation (inclusivity) etc.</i> )?

<p><b>Education programme fit the context?</b></p>	<p>EQ2.2. Has beneficiary feedback through AAP, complaints and feedback mechanism and safe programming provisions been continuously incorporated to improve design and delivery of the IE interventions?</p>
	<p>EQ2.3. What is the ownership of schools, regional education offices and the Ministry of Education on the programme?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. To what degree is the IE policy disseminated and known in schools and local administrations?</li> </ol>
	<p>EQ2.4. To what extent are social and gender disaggregated data collected and monitored during programming?</p>
	<p>EQ2.5. To what extent has UNICEF been able to adapt this intervention to changes in needs and priorities caused by changing in-country context, Covid-19, and socio-economic and financial crisis?</p>
<p><b>EFFECTIVENESS:</b></p> <p><b>Has the Inclusive Education programme achieved its objectives?</b></p>	<p>EQ3.1. In the current implementation context, is there evidence that the planned activities lead to the desired outputs and outcomes, as per the project's TOC? To what extent was UNICEF's support effective in achieving its planned results of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Building the capacity of the public school system to provide quality education for all children,</li> <li>b. Operationalizing and testing the model of inclusive education in Lebanon,</li> <li>c. Informing policy development and implementation in inclusive education.</li> </ol>
	<p>EQ3.2. To what extent did the programme reach out to the targeted populations (children's families, communities), ensure enrolment of CWDs in IE schools (trends in figures), retain them and improve their learning outcomes?</p>
	<p>EQ3.3. To what extent was MEHE role effective in designing and implementing the IE project to achieve its results? What are the main areas of improvement?</p>
	<p>EQ3.4. To which extent were the IE intervention selection criteria and targeting processes effective in achieving the planned results? Did UNICEF respond to equity-based challenges?</p>
	<p>EQ3.5. How effective were implementing strategies used, especially system strengthening, strategic partnerships, evidence generation, and advocacy?</p>
	<p>EQ3.6. What are the main challenges, lessons learned, and success factors during IE project implementation to date?</p>
	<p>EQ3.7. To what extent were UNICEF interventions effective in enhancing the partnership and capacity of parents, communities and service providers for the communication and advocacy of inclusive education for all?</p>
	<p>EQ3.8. Have there been any unintended positive or negative consequences or effects of the IE initiative?</p>

	<p>EQ3.9. To what degree has the UNICEF IE intervention followed an equity-based approach to ensure the inclusion of the most vulnerable children and the reduction of disparities?</p>
	<p>EQ3.10. Does UNICEF IE programming actively contribute to the promotion of the right to education and education outcomes, especially for the most vulnerable and girls with disabilities?</p> <p>a. What entry points have emerged for the intervention to be gender-responsive?</p>
	<p>EQ3.11. What is the quality of the partnership put in place between the implementing partners and UNICEF, and between UNICEF implementing partners and the MEHE?</p>
<p><b>EFFICIENCY:</b></p> <p>How well were the Inclusive Education programme resources used?</p>	<p>EQ4.1. To what extent were UNICEF activities delivered in a timely and organised manner, within the planned monetary resources allocated?</p>
	<p>EQ4.2 How efficient was the intervention design (amount, methods of payment, targeting) in achieving its planned results?</p>
	<p>EQ4.3 How cost-efficient is the IE school model (admin, finance, human resources)?</p> <p>a. How appropriate are the structures and resources in place (technical and financial) to deliver this intervention, notably in terms of monitoring and financial accountability?</p> <p>b. What are the limitations in terms of resources/capacity of the current model, and how are they/can they be addressed?</p>
	<p>EQ4.4. To what extent was UNICEF able to leverage existing partnerships in order to maximise efficiency for programme strengthening?</p>
	<p>EQ4.5. To what extent did UNICEF leverage available platforms and resources for its activities (<i>e.g. service, community, and media delivery platforms</i>)?</p>
	<p>EQ4.6. Were there any challenges in the engagement of MEHE and how did they impact the efficient implementation of the programme?</p>
	<p>EQ4.7. To what extent did UNICEF support its Implementing Partners in overcoming difficulties?</p> <p>a. What kind of difficulties have been faced by UNICEF Implementing partners, and how do they work in overcoming them?</p>
<p><b>SUSTAINABILITY:</b></p> <p>Will the benefits of the Inclusive Education programme last?</p>	<p>EQ5.1. What are the key barriers and bottlenecks towards achieving sustainability of UNICEF IE interventions?</p>
	<p>EQ5.2. What are the main constraints that require attention to improve prospects of sustainability of results in the...</p> <p>a. Short term,</p> <p>b. Mid-term,</p>

	c. Long-term.
	EQ5.3. What actionable measures can be envisioned to insert the program in a sustainable logic in the... a. Short term, b. Mid-term, c. Long-term.
	EQ5.4. What measures have been put in place by MEHE/UNICEF, if any, to ensure the embedding of IE in the schools' organisational fabric?
	EQ5.5. What is the mobilisation of public resources for the project versus the contribution from UNICEF/EU?
	EQ5.6. What are the critical lessons learned from the implementation of the programme especially in regards to system strengthening, strategic partnerships, evidence generation and advocacy?

### 3.2. Methodology and tools

The overall study design for the evaluation will be **theory-based**, in that it will empirically test the ToC underlying the programme, but will be principally driven by specific evaluation questions and focus on producing recommendations to improve future programmes, to aim at optimisation of the model for efficient and effective scaling up across all public schools, to ensure sustainability, specifically of MEHE, and subsequent actors involved at all levels.

To do this, the first step in designing the evaluation, the Samuel Hall team will collaborate with UNICEF Lebanon to **understand the ToC and intervention logic for the Inclusive Education programme**. This will be achieved through a review of programme documents and discussions with Inclusive Education programme and evaluation staff. We will then assess the theory of change to ensure it accurately captures the aims and objectives of the programme, as understood by programme staff, and that it is internally coherent.

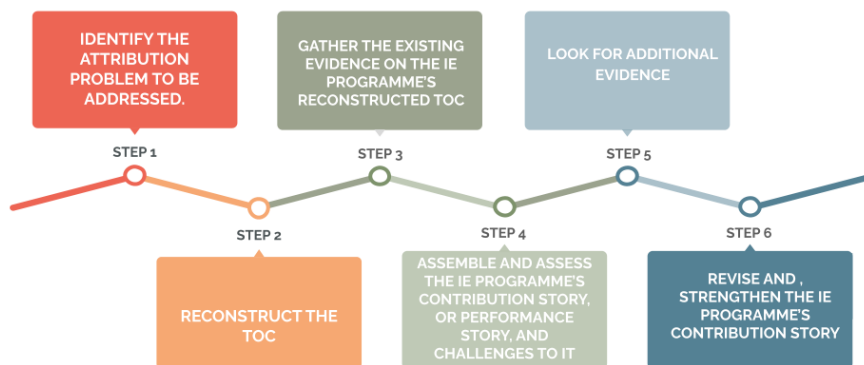
We also propose to adopt a **process evaluation approach**. This means the evaluation will seek to understand:

- how the programme has been implemented in practice, including any challenges and the reasons for any differences from initial programme design;
- whether programme activities appear to be leading to expected outputs and outcomes i.e. whether the causal mechanisms and other assumptions appear to be holding;
- and the role of contextual factors in the delivery and effectiveness of the programmes.

Finally, the evaluation team will also draw on **contribution analysis** to understand how UNICEF Lebanon's Inclusive Education Programme contributed to any observed programme outcomes. A full contribution analysis is a lengthy process, involving six steps (see Figure 4).

We propose to adapt this methodology to work within the evaluation methodology proposed in the ToR that is interested in a wider set of questions that only contribute to outcomes. Nevertheless, through our theory-based approach, we will seek to develop a 'contribution story' about how the project contributed to the outcomes (see Step 4 in Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Steps of the Contribution Analysis**



### 3.3.1 Desk and literature review

The in-depth desk and literature review will provide an understanding of areas relevant to the Inclusive Education programme. Collected literature and data is being organised and systematically categorised for the assessment using a desk review matrix. The scope of documentation includes but is not limited to

- Key programmatic documentation and secondary data (proposals, plans, donor reports, partnership agreements, and training reports, field monitoring reports, financial records, UNICEF programme performance as well as other evaluative and program monitoring data that might be available);
- Grey literature (reports and data collected by international organisations – published and unpublished);
- State-of-the-art academic literature / external reports related to the programme;

The development of this inception report is informed by initial documents shared by UNICEF, as well as inception KIIs.

### 3.3.2. Key informant interviews (KIIs)

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) will be conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire. Interviews will last a maximum of one hour and will be focused on a variety of research questions about the programme’s relevance, coherence, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability. They will be conducted both in-person and online in accordance with feasibility, and will target stakeholders including (contingent upon the lists provided by UNICEF):

- UNICEF Lebanon staff;
- National stakeholders specifically from the MEHE, as well as other governmental stakeholders;
- Donor counterparts, Implementing Partners and partner UN organisations.

### 3.3.3. Focus group discussions (FGDs)

FGDs will be conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire. Interviews will last a maximum of one hour and a half to two hours. They will be conducted in-person and will target:

- **School teachers**
- **Parents/caregivers (TBC):** This tool will be a backup option in case the data collection is delayed due to ethics approval processes for the children's consultation time or unforeseen logistical issues. As a reminder, data collection in schools will need to be conducted before the end of May (*i.e. prior to students’ exam period and schools summer closure*).

FGDs will be based on an open-ended questionnaire, and conducted by enumerators. FGDs will be taking place in the selected schools, and respondents’ transportation costs will be compensated by Samuel Hall. Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed, where consent is provided by the participant, otherwise detailed notes will be taken by a dedicated note-taker.

### 3.3.4 Site visits

Team members will carry out eighteen site observations in schools selected in accordance with the UNICEF programme team. Two site visits will be conducted per province, with the aim of covering schools in both urban and rural settings.

Site visits will include two different activities:

- First, the enumerators will complete a comprehensive observation checklist for internal and external facilities, including school materials, accessibility, etc;
- Second, the enumerators will observe classrooms to ensure that teachers are integrating inclusive education processes. This will also take into account the impact of inclusive education on children without disabilities.

These site visits will be complemented by pictures and videos, excluding any recognisable face of non-consenting adults or children.

#### **School selection**

The pre-selection of school sites for data collection has been done using a list of public inclusive schools shared by UNICEF. The research team prioritised the selection of schools from each scale up group (first and second), active in both AM and PM shifts, in order to observe the degree of embeddedness of inclusive education activities depending on the duration of implementation with both vulnerable/Lebanese children and Syrian children.

The main limitation of this list is that it contains 3 boys' schools but no girls' schools practising Inclusive Education, as the existing ones were either previously evaluated as part of the pilot case study, or did not include PM shifts.

**Table 3: List of schools selected for site visits and approved by MEHE**

Governorate	Schools	Location	Scale up	Shift included in IE programme	Comments
Beirut	Ras Beirut First Mixed Public School (maybe Jaber Ahmad Al soba7)	Ras Beyrouth fonciere	Pilot School	1st shift - 2nd shift	
	Uruguay First Achrafieh Public School for Boys	Achrafieh fonciere	Pilot School	1st shift - 2nd shift	<i>Note that the "inclusive in (active shift)"<sup>26</sup> cell shows it's an AM shift only school whereas the "PM teacher's" cell suggests there are 51 PM teachers.</i>
Akkar	El Rama Wadi Khaled Mixed public school	Aamayer	1st scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	<i>Note that the "inclusive in (active shift)" cell shows it's an AM shift only school whereas the "PM teachers" cell suggests there are 35 PM teachers.</i>
	Bebnine public school for Boys	Bebnine	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	
Nabatieh	Zebdine Intermediate Public School	Zibdine En-Nabatiyeh	1st scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	
	Ali Hussein Abdullah Intermediate Public School (Khyam PS)	Khiyam Marjaayoun	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	<i>Note that the "inclusive in (active shift)" cell shows it is an AM shift only school whereas the "PM teachers" cell suggests there are 56 PM teachers.</i>
Mount Lebanon	Broumana Mixed Intermediate	Broumana	1st scale up	1st shift - 2nd	

<sup>26</sup> This refers to the list of 110 public schools operating under the Inclusive Education programme shared by UNICEF with the research team.

	Public School	El-Matn		shift	
	Baaklin Mixed Intermediate Public School	Baaqline	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	
<b>Baalbek-Hermel</b>	Salim Haidar intermediate public school	Qsarnaba	Pilot School	1st shift - 2nd shift	
	Al Kaa intermediate public school	Qaa Baalbek	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	<i>Note that the "inclusive in (active shift)" cell shows it is an AM shift only school whereas the "PM teachers" cell suggests there are 28 PM teachers.</i>
<b>North Lebanon</b>	Dahr El Ain Mixed Public School	Ras Masqa	Pilot School	1st shift - 2nd shift	
	Deir Emar public school for Boys (Abad El Hadi Al Dehaybi)	Deir Aammam	1st scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	
<b>South Lebanon</b>	Al Ghazieh Mixed Intermediate Public School	Ghaziye	1st scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	<i>Note that the "inclusive in (active shift)" cell shows it is an AM shift only school whereas the "PM teachers" cell suggests there are 66 PM teachers.</i>
	Al Ghassaniyeh Intermediate Public school	Ghassaniye	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	<i>Note that the "inclusive in (active shift)" cell shows it is an AM shift only school whereas the "PM teachers" cell suggests there are 41 PM teachers.</i>
<b>Beqaa</b>	El Marj intermediate public school	Joubb Jannine	Pilot school	1st shift - 2nd shift	
	Kherbet Rouha intermediate public school	Khirbet Rouha	1st scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	
<b>Keserwan - Jbeil</b>	Aamshit Mixed Intermediate Public School	Aamchit	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	
	Iskandar Rizk public school - Ashkout	Aachqout	2nd scale up	1st shift - 2nd shift	

### 3.3.5 Children Consultation

To ensure the participation and involvement of CWD in this evaluation, they will be consulted in "moving debate".

Children will be given colourful sticky dots with a specific colour for each child. First, the enumerator will present the first statement to children, and will then ask them to pick an emoji based on how they feel about the statement and use a colourful sticky dot to validate their position on the emoji scale. Once all children have put their sticky dot on the scale, facilitators should ask them to justify why they picked this position and take note of the justifications provided. Then, the facilitator can capture the position of children by taking a photo of the scale (make sure you write which statement was covered before taking the picture) before removing the stickers and moving on to the next statement. The question will ensure to capture the impact of the programme at multiple levels:

- specifically on CWD; and

specifically on potential gender-related obstacles in inclusive education by addressing variances underscored in both the desk review and the preliminary Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), notably the persistence of gender biases in educational materials and societal norms, which perpetuates limitations for girls, hindering their advancement. For girls with disabilities, this intersection of gender and disability creates double marginalisation. For all locations, 4-6 children with (of

different ages/class levels) disabilities will be identified. Parental and children informed consents will be sought out before the start of the data collection.

## 3.4. Fieldwork

### 3.4.1 Tools Translation

Ensuring that tools are fit for purpose in the language of the research is a vital component of our tool design process. During this phase, tools are translated into the target languages – in this case, Arabic as well as French – and reviewed by a senior translator, as well as undergoing back-translation to confirm that meaning and relevance are maintained. The tools will then be reviewed during training by the experienced team of enumerators for appropriateness, clarity, and any other language or translation concerns, including feedback on participants' understanding during the pilot. Where necessary, complex concepts are workshopped with the project and translation team. These elements will feed into a reviewed and finalised set of tools used in the field.

### 3.4.2 Team Structure

Samuel Hall will lead the in-person data collection and coordinate and supervise data collection in each location. Enumerators will be recruited to collect primary data and provide accurate, translated transcriptions to Samuel Hall researchers for analysis. The field team will be drawn from Samuel Hall's pool of experienced local enumerators who have previously collected high-quality electronic quantitative and qualitative data. The team will include both male and female enumerators.

### 3.4.3 Enumerator training and pilot

The data collection training for field team leads, and enumerators will cover all elements of fieldwork. The training session will take place in person over one day, led by Samuel Hall team remotely.

The training will include the following components:

1. Understanding and context of the project and timeline
2. Organisational structure and reporting mechanisms of the field team
3. In-depth review and practice on each tool
4. Expectations around data collection, data standards and child safeguarding policy
5. Safeguarding and ethics module aligned with UNICEF norms and standards.

The training will have a question-and-answer session to address any concerns and questions that field enumerators may have. It will also include a review of the translation of the tools, which will have been previously translated and back translated to ensure accuracy.

## 3.5 Sampling

The proposed sample size for each of the qualitative data collection methods are listed below:

**Table 4: Sampling of quantitative and qualitative tools**

Phase	Tool	Target Population	Sampling	Total
Phase 1: Inception	KIIs	UNICEF Lebanon staff, MEHE staff	5	5
Phase 2: Data Collection and Analysis	KIIs	UNICEF Lebanon staff	6	25
		MEHE staff and other government stakeholders	5	
		Other stakeholders (HI, Mouvement Social, donors, UN agencies)	3-5	
		School principals	3	
		DOPS coaches	3-4	
		Paraprofessionals/special educators	3-4	
	FGDs	Teachers	2 per governorate (9), 5-7 participants per FGD	18 (up to 126 individuals)
	Site Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observation of school facilities</li> <li>- Class observation (AM / PM shift)</li> </ul>	2 per governorate	18
Children Consultation <i>(Moving Debate)</i>	Children will be identified by school teachers, taking into account various disabilities and of different ages/class levels.	2 groups of 4-6 children (one group in the AM shift and one group in the PM shift) per school (18)	36 (between 144 to 180 children)	
<b><u>TOTAL SAMPLE:</u></b> up to 331 individuals interviewed				

UNICEF Lebanon programme staff will provide the contact details of all participants. UNICEF will also provide supporting statements or emails to schools to ensure that they preemptively agree with the site observation and are prepared to receive the data collection team. The Ministry of Education and Higher Education will also validate the selected schools prior to the visits.

### 3.5 Ethics and Safeguarding

Ethical clearance will be sought and validated before any data collection activity commences. Among the numerous ethical issues relevant to undertaking research in challenging contexts with children and vulnerable populations as in the context of this evaluation study three critical risk areas are identified as detailed in the table below:

**Table 5: Critical risks for this research**

Area of Concern	Description of Risk	Mitigation
Research with children	Research with children involves engaging with minors requiring additional safeguarding measures.	All research activities will be designed considering Samuel Hall’s Safeguarding Policy, which can be shared on request, as well as UNICEF guidance on research involving children. Research activities undertaken with children will in all cases be adapted to the specific age group of those being interviewed. For all interviews with children, the informed consent of adult parents or guardians will be required prior to the interview, as will the assent of children themselves. Identifying information will not be shared and will be used only for verification purposes and deleted after the data collection. Data security protocols will be applied during and after data collection. The enumerators and teams collecting data will be thoroughly trained not only on the tool but appropriate safeguarding measures for research with children. Children identified as facing protection or other risks will be referred to UNICEF for further support.
Research with vulnerable participants	Research with vulnerable participants may present risk of re-traumatisation, generate additional burdens on participants (time or financial), or result in backlash in some scenarios.	In all cases, informed consent must be given prior to participation. Identifying information will not be shared and will be used only for verification purposes. Data security protocols will be applied during and after data collection. Research will take place in safe, private and accessible locations, and will be conducted with the approval of UNICEF and local authorities. Food and drink will be provided for longer research sessions. The training offered prior to research to the enumerators will cover how to appropriately pose research questions, and ensure respondents are able to stop the interviews at any point in time.
Gender sensitivity	Due to sensitivities related to gender in the current context of Lebanon, issues may arise during the data collection phase in relation to gender of participants and enumerators/interviewers.	Samuel Hall has an excellent track record in conducting research, including evaluation studies, in Afghanistan and other contexts where gender sensitivity may be of concern. Our experienced field coordinators will take this into consideration while selecting and training enumerators/interviewers as well as recruiting participants and during the data collection phase.

These represent critical areas for research to address through design, methodology and implementation. As noted above, not only have these ethical considerations informed the design of research, but, as the following section outlines, they will be addressed through a comprehensive internal risk assessment prior to fieldwork.

#### 3.5.1 Risk Assessment

Samuel Hall has a full internal risk management process and policy implemented across all projects and applying to fieldwork components, which assesses risk at various levels and for all actors involved, both research participants and research staff. Prior to the data collection beginning, Samuel Hall will ensure that risks have been considered and appropriate mitigation strategies designed. The table below presents an overview of the key risks and related mitigation measures considered.

**Table 6: Risk matrix**

Risk	Mitigation Strategies	
Organisational Risks		
Security situation deteriorates	1	A security assessment is conducted daily
	2	SH teams maintain low profile
	3	SH teams ensure local authorities' permission are received prior to any data collection
Research authorisations are lengthy and delay fieldwork	1	Samuel Hall will reach out to the internal UNICEF coordination team to discuss and decide unanimously on potential solutions such as revision of the workplan or deadlines.
Fieldwork presents risk to research participants	1	Research is conducted only in locations identified to be safe and private.
	2	Informed consent including the purpose of research is required for all participants, and participants may at any time choose not to participate
	3	Field staff are trained to minimise risk to participants in terms of sensitivity in interviewing, working with children and vulnerable people
	4	Safeguarding protocols are fully developed and employed to minimise any risk to children
	5	Use of PPE are integrated into all elements of field research – research will not be conducted when this is not possible
Targeted population is impossible / hard to locate	1	Fieldwork is comprehensively prepared by testing participant lists to be provided with UNICEF prior to the start of data collection and liaising with local contacts around the non-participant data collection if waitlists are not made available.
	2	Partner governmental and NGO relationships are leveraged to facilitate the identification of appropriate research participants
Targeted population does not want to work with SH and partners	1	Additional training is given to enumerators to explain how the project can benefit communities and children
	2	UNICEF could conduct some brief sensitisation via text message to participants to support their willingness to engage.
Data is stolen, lost, or damaged	1	SH test material before the FW with pilots (surveys, material, phones, etc.)
	2	SH store data securely
	3	Daily back-ups are done during FW
	4	Phones and computers used are emptied of sensitive information (contacts, info, locations, security info, etc) minimising risk to staff or participants if lost or stolen

Local population or targeted population is displeased with researcher or UNICEF work	1	Staff are trained to act professionally and respectfully; staff are trained for child safeguarding practices; staff behaves culturally appropriately,
	2	Goal and outcome of the study are carefully explained to potential research participants and community members
Individual Risks		
Illness or injury of staff	1	Staff are careful and carry first aid equipment and medication
Staff cannot access research locations	1	Staff has shared details including location, route and car details with UNICEF to gain access permissions in advance of field research.

### 3.5.2 Confidentiality and Data Security

Samuel Hall will apply its data standard to the management and storage of data collected during the study. As per its internal data collection policy, data which is provided to Samuel Hall will be used in accordance with Data Protection legislation. This principle means that Samuel Hall staff and research participants will know who is collecting the research data, where it will be kept, and what will be done with it. Privacy notices will be included on consent forms or associated documents so all parties are aware of how data will be processed. Data will be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures ('integrity and confidentiality'). Personal data will be kept securely so that no unauthorised access can occur. To ensure the security and quality of its data, Samuel Hall utilises a dedicated data management system (DMS) on its own proprietary cloud, hosted on Google's cloud architecture. All Samuel Hall software and collected data reside in Frankfurt, Germany, subject to German and EU privacy laws. The DMS will remain isolated from all other Samuel Hall systems by default. Samuel Hall's Data Protection Policy is provided (see Annex 5). Protocols to the data collection include:

- Password protection of data collection tablets or phones
- Regular deletion of survey data from phones during fieldwork (once uploaded)
- Backing up of data
- Secure storage (physical or digital) of data collected, esp. where identifying information is included.

### 3.5.3. Safeguarding Processes

The evaluation team shall follow United Nations Evaluation Group (UNEG) norms and standards for evaluation to ensure ethical conduct during and after the evaluation. As informed by UNICEF during the inception phase, it is critical that data collection must not commence until the relevant approvals from IRB and the government have been obtained. We will also adhere to Samuel Hall's internal ethics and safeguarding policies as extracted below.

Samuel Hall has developed a full set of contextualised safeguarding protocols governing not only research with children but including organisational level code of conduct and framework (see Annex 4). These include guidelines for hiring, for interaction with children, and for mechanisms to ensure adherence and to support referrals as needed and involve training of all necessary staff including elements in training for research enumerators.

As part of this research, children (defined here as those under 18) will be interviewed to gather information about their lives. Samuel Hall follows the ethical principles and considerations highlighted by UNICEF in its working paper '*What We Know about Ethical Research Involving Children in Humanitarian Settings: An overview of principles, the literature and case studies*'.

### Samuel Hall & Child Safeguarding

Ensuring that the best interest of the child remains at the core of research conducted with children has been insufficiently acknowledged in the past, particularly in humanitarian contexts. A growing movement pushes for improved safeguarding processes in research. We have aligned our approach with the highest levels on this front. In 2019, Samuel Hall went through a full safeguarding assessment, supported by Child Safe Horizons, based on which we revised internal processes and policies, including around whistleblowing, hiring, risk management, governance and accountability, child-specific organisational safeguarding, and Code of Conduct (available on request). All staff are trained on this policy. We have committed to ongoing learning and monitoring specific to child safeguarding in projects, and our organisation as a whole.

**Samuel Hall's policy on interviewing children:** Samuel Hall's core activity is research. We are committed to allowing children's voices to be heard through our research, and to ensure that they have the opportunity to input into the approaches taken to hearing and presenting their voices. We will consistently ensure space is provided for children's input during the pilot and data collection of our research, and when logistically possible organise restitution sessions. This will include input into potential child protection risks from the research. These risks will be included in our project and, when appropriate, broader risk management strategies for monitoring and mitigation. We have specific procedures in place for all our research and associated events that involve children. These include parental consent and child assent forms for research and photo, child safe recruitment and training of personnel, risk assessments for each project, the allocation of Child Safeguarding Focal Points, reporting mechanism for children, and their communities.

- **Research ethics on recordings:** Samuel Hall suggests that the following procedure be used for recording qualitative data collection: 1) Participants will be asked for consent to audio record them during interviews; 2) In cases where all participants consent, audio will be recorded and full transcripts provided; 3) Should participants not consent to audio recording, they will be asked if they consent to participate and have their inputs recorded by enumerator notetakers in the room; and 4) In case where not all participants consent to audio recording but agree to have notes taken and participate in the research, notes will be taken by the enumerators and full notes provided.

## 3.6 Data analysis

After completion of the data collection, the Samuel Hall team will analyse and triangulate the diverse data collected from all tools and methods. We will disaggregate and analyse all data, as well as seek insights specific to gender, age, and particular locations or centres.

### 3.6.1 Qualitative Analysis

Samuel Hall will use manual coding, with an inductive qualitative analysis approach to draw findings from collected data using thematic coding. Based on the research questions, using the pilot data and subject to refinement as results come in, the research team will develop and internally pilot a codebook (including sub-codes for each research question) to ensure the relevance of the coding structure and consistent code application by the analysts. This codebook will be developed internally and will be used during the pilot phase. The data collected will be shared with the ERG who will be able to comment on the codebook and observe its results through a small sample. This will allow the research team to have a final version of the codebook ready to use once the analysis phase starts.

Upon the end of the data collection phase and the subsequent completion of the analysis phase, the research team will draft a first version of the draft final evaluation report on the basis of the outline approved by the ERG during the Inception phase and submit it for the ERG review and inputs. The evaluation team will then undertake the revision and finalisation of the final evaluation report.

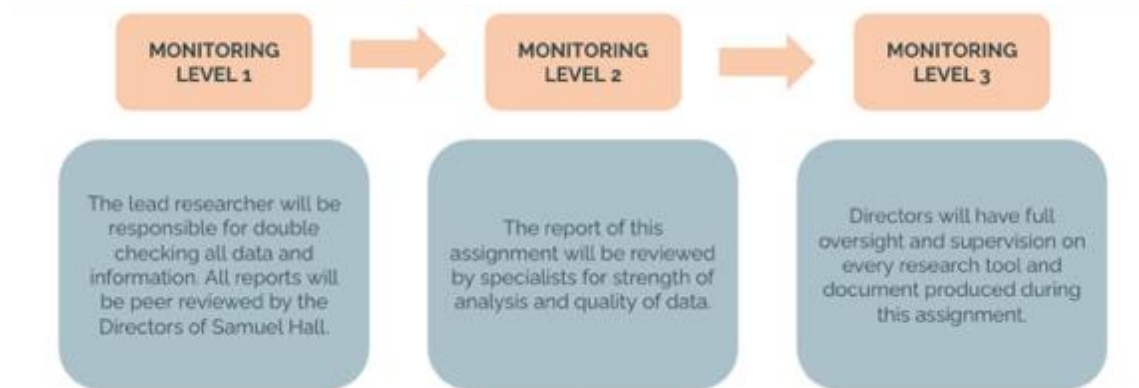
The codebook development for the qualitative analysis can also be done in collaboration with the ERG, to ensure that analysis is aligned with programmatic objectives and is actionable and targeted to the purposes of the evaluation. This codebook can then be added to with additional parent codes and child codes developed as part of the inductive / deductive coding process.

## 3.7 Quality Assurance

The evaluation has a number of quality assurance mechanisms and processes to ensure that it meets the needs and expectations of UNICEF and is aligned with UNICEF'S norms and standards for evaluations and Global Evaluation Reports Oversight System (GEROS). These include the evaluation being overseen by an evaluation reference group (ERG) which will guide the evaluation, including the endorsement of the inception and final reports. The following details Samuel Hall's standard Quality Assurance approach, however Quality Assurance mechanisms can be added to or adapted depending on

context, data collection methods or the needs of the client based on individual projects to ensure that data quality is consistently high, and the data produced is reliable, actionable and relevant.

These measures can include:



- Additional data monitoring through dedicated staffing or development of project-specific data management databases, particularly for high-volume data collection
- The addition of further verification mechanisms such as call-backs in cases where data collection methods require an added level of triangulation.
- Peer review or added rounds of client review, and internal review of data, as needed.

The figure above gives an overview of the way we employ our monitoring and quality assurance processes to all our assignments. In our numerous years of operation, we have always successfully produced quality reports based on this step-by-step approach, to the satisfaction of all our partners.



## 4. WORK PLAN AND TIMELINE

The evaluation will be undertaken in a matter of 16 consecutive weeks. During the inception phase, the team will finalise the literature review, field plans and research tools in collaboration with UNICEF. Samuel Hall will then conduct the qualitative data collection. The field supervisors will promptly share any issues that may arise in the field during enumeration with field managers and researchers at Samuel Hall, and the client will be informed of any significant complications.

Weekly written updates will be provided to the UNICEF Focal Point summarising ongoing work and progress. Additional updates or meetings can be conducted based on the evaluation's timeline and progress.

The primary contact for UNICEF from Samuel Hall will be the Project Lead, Kenza Bensaid.

Timelines may be adjusted based on an agreement between UNICEF and Samuel Hall during different research phases, where additional or fewer meetings may be more beneficial to facilitate work on the evaluation.

UNICEF responsiveness in terms of feedback and other required support to Samuel Hall is requested, especially as data collection in schools will need to be prepared and conducted in a short time period - before the end of May 2024 (*i.e. prior to students' exam period and schools summer closure*).

### 4.1 Project timeline

Written deliverables, including the Inception Report, Fieldwork Research Tools, and the Final Report will be submitted to UNICEF for their feedback in draft form. After a round of feedback (preferably lasting a week to be in accordance with the timeline), Samuel Hall will update deliverables based on UNICEF comments and submit an updated Final version of the deliverable.

All updates to the project timeline will be included as part of the weekly updates provided to UNICEF. The timelines for these reviews will be communicated to UNICEF upon submission of deliverables. It should be noted that more extended review periods or a second round of review will cause delays. Samuel Hall will require written approval of submitted deliverables at the end of each research phase to proceed with the following research phase.

Inclusive Education Programme Evaluation proposed timeline																
Week	Wk of 22/04	Wk of 29/04	Wk of 06/05	Wk of 13/05	Wk of 20/05	Wk of 27/05	Wk of 03/06	Wk of 10/06	Wk of 17/06	Wk of 24/06	Wk of 01/07	Wk of 08/07	Wk of 15/07	Wk of 22/07	Wk of 29/07	Wk of 05/08
<b>INCEPTION</b>	<b>4 weeks</b>															
Desk Review and KIIs																
Draft Inception report and tools																
UNICEF feedback and integration by SH																
Finalised Inception Report																
<b>DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS</b>	<b>6 weeks</b>															
Enumerator training																
Data collection																
Data quality checks and analysis																
Bilateral post data																



## 4.2 Staffing

*Table 7: Team composition, roles and responsibilities*

Team Member	Role
Sinmi Akin-Aina	Project Director
Chloe Maillard	Research Manager
Juliette Samman	Technical Support
Kenza Bensaïd	Project Lead
Marion Tolboom	Research Assistant
<b>Steering Committee To Be Constituted</b>	Technical Experts on Inclusive Education

## 5. PROPOSED OUTLINE OF FINAL REPORT

The following outline is proposed for the final report.

1. Executive Summary
2. Object of the Evaluation
  - a. Background and Context
3. Evaluation Purpose, Objectives and Scope
4. Evaluation Methodologies
  - a. Detailed Methodological Framework
  - b. Limitations
  - c. Ethical considerations
5. Evaluation findings
  - a. Relevance
  - b. Coherence
  - c. Effectiveness
  - d. Efficiency
  - e. Sustainability
6. Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations
7. Annexes, including terms of reference, evaluation tools, and records of data collection.

## ANNEX 1: TOOLS

Submitted in a [separate document](#).

## ANNEX 2: SAMUEL HALL CODE OF CONDUCT STATEMENT OF ETHICS

Samuel Hall is committed to carrying out its research and analysis services within a comprehensive ethical framework and our values reflect this commitment. We value freedom to push the frontiers of knowledge forward, within an ethical framework, for the global good of humankind. The underpinning principle for any ethical review should be to ensure that in undertaking any research project, Samuel Hall strives to do positive good and strictly abides by the 'Do No Harm' principle of humanitarian action and the ten key principles of ethical research and action outlined below.

All Samuel Hall staff are aware of ethical considerations and ensure that they act in an ethical manner and conduct their projects to the highest ethical standards, both in and out of the field.

### Ethics in Research

- Integrity: Studies and research are designed, reviewed and undertaken to ensure integrity, quality and transparency.
- Quality Control and Review Process: All tools and methods, reports and outputs go through a multi-layered quality control and review process.
- Scientific Validity: All research is founded on strong scientific validity.
- Availability of Knowledge: Whenever possible, research will be widely disseminated on a variety of platforms.
- Capacity Building: During the course of each research project, capacities of those involved will be strengthened to pursue excellence in research.

### Ethics in Action

- Independence: The independence of the research is made clear, and any conflicts of interest or partiality is made explicit.
- Do No Harm Policy: Participants are fully informed about the research or study they are invited to participate in and their consent to take part is made voluntarily, freely and without any coercion.
- Cultural Sensitivity: Researchers will be sensitive to cultural norms in the field and area of operation and will always adhere to local norms of decency and good behaviour.
- Low Profile: We will maintain a low profile in the field and disassociate ourselves from politicised groups unless strictly required for research.
- AGDM Approach: Team compositions are based on an AGDM approach (Age, Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming), notably through our recruitment.

The same high ethical standards apply in all locations in which the research is undertaken. Samuel Hall meets these principles by communicating its standards and policies to staff through education and training and through the publication of these policies and procedures.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

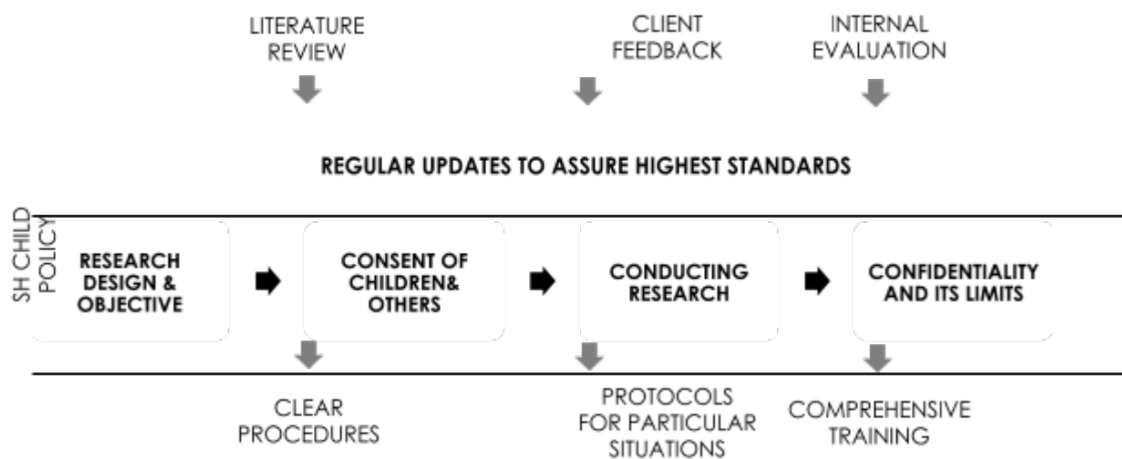
It is crucial for us to ensure that the conduct of all people connected or associated with our work is in line with the organisation's beliefs, values and aims.

- We uphold the integrity and reputation of Samuel Hall by ensuring that our professional and personal conduct is demonstrably consistent with our values and standards.
- We treat all people with respect and dignity and challenge any form of harassment, discrimination, intimidation or exploitation.
- We avoid any possible conflict of interest with our work and shun corruption and other illegal practices.
- We are responsible for the use of information, equipment, money and resources to which we have access.
- We protect the health, safety, security and welfare of all Samuel Hall employees, volunteers and advisors.
- We promote human rights, protect the environment and oppose criminal or unethical activities.

## ANNEX 3: SAMUEL HALL CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Samuel Hall is committed to carrying out its research and consultancy services within a comprehensive ethical framework. This framework rests on the basic principles of respect and non-discrimination, and we make every effort to ensure that cultural norms and codes of conduct, sensitivity to gender, human rights and minors' rights are respected throughout our work processes. In addition to our conducts for ethical research, Samuel Hall commits to the highest standards possible for research projects about and with children in regard to their protection from any forms of harm and in regard to additional safeguarding measurements. For every project that either directly or indirectly involves the participation of children (defined here as those under 18) in any form, Samuel Hall, its staff, trustees, and representatives, as well as all its external partners, commit to the procedures and policies outlined below.

### IMPLEMENTING THE SH CHILD POLICY IN OUR RESEARCH



### RESEARCH DESIGN & OBJECTIVE

The protection and well-being of children involved in our research is the first priority in any related projects.

- When designing specific research questions and tools, we commit to ensuring that potential answers by children and other data gathered in the field (e.g., site observations) will not put any children at risk – this includes potential repercussions by others and/or psychological distress.
  - We will undertake a comprehensive analysis of potential risks for children that can emerge from answers and general research topics in the specific (cultural) contexts.
  - Particular care and consideration for our research design and its tools will be taken, when the children involved are particularly vulnerable (e.g., unaccompanied or orphaned unaccompanied children; children with disabilities; children affected/ infected with HIV/AIDS)
  - Should a particular research project, its tools and/or its questions still contain some, yet minimised, risks for children, the research will only be conducted if a project specific protocol for response has been developed and if the potential benefits from the research outcome for the children justify the remaining risks.
- In the case of unexpected risks for children arising during the research process, we will suspend the research indefinitely until the issue has been addressed and resolved as thoroughly as possible.
- Our research with children should ideally create benefits for them, “even if it is simply the satisfaction of improving the situation of other children.” Without neglecting scientific standards any information-gathering with children must be at least partially, aimed at the improvement or securing of children’s well-being.
- When conducting research with or about children in highly vulnerable or precarious situations (e.g., unaccompanied children or cases of trauma), we shall only proceed if the potential positive outcome of the project justifies potential risks of distress for the child.
- We will never promise potential benefits and outcomes to a child (and its parents/guardians) that cannot be guaranteed. We will always be clear on what the research project can and cannot deliver; this includes, for example, possible effects of the research on help they already receive from a client organisation.

## RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN – RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



### CONSENT OF CHILDREN AND OTHERS

The participation of children in our research will always be voluntary and informed.

- Each interaction with children through our research must begin by getting said children’s consent.
- For children to comprehend what is being asked of them, all information will be communicated in a fashion adapted to the understanding of the children under concern so that they can give true consent; this information will include “what the research involves, what is going to happen and for how long” as well as “what will be expected of them, the consequences and possible risks of taking part, what will happen to the data and how the results will be used.”
  - This includes, but is not limited to, child-friendly language by the researcher/ enumerator and child-friendly information leaflets. Additionally, and as part of the consent conversation, we encourage children to actively ask questions and summarise what they have been told.
- We will ensure that, at the beginning and throughout the research process, participating children are fully aware that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw / stop at any time and without any consequences for them or others.
- In cases where the participation of a child entails more than a single interaction, the child’s consent will be explicitly requested for each interaction.
- One of our main principles is to be sure that a child’s consent is genuinely voluntary and not influenced by external factors or by others; this includes situations where peer-pressure might have an effect or where parents/guardians are influencing the child’s consent. In addition, and in regard to the power inequality between the researcher/enumerator and the child, the child’s consent shall not be influenced by a feeling of ‘having to do it’. If any verbal and non-verbal indications that voluntary consent of a child is not guaranteed (e.g., clear interference from others or hesitant behaviour) are noticed, we will not proceed with the research.
- The consent of children will be documented in a context-appropriate fashion; depending on age, cognitive abilities and/or educational level, this can include written forms, verbal forms (recorded or just in presence of a witness), and others.
- For research projects with children, we will, in most cases, get the additional informed consent of a responsible adult, who can decide if the children will be given the choice to participate. These third persons should be as far as possible parents and/or other guardians (e.g., teachers). However, the need for consent of a third person only applies for age groups that require such according to national and/or local law.
- We will always consider cultural contexts when conducting research with children, as such could require further consent by others (e.g., community leaders or elders).

### CONDUCTING RESEARCH

Throughout the research process every child has to be and feel safe from any form of harm or distress – respect and equality are mandatory.

- When actively conducting research with children, we are committed to doing so in a space and atmosphere in which the child can feel free and is shielded from as many risks as possible.

- Throughout the active research (e.g., interviews) all of our researchers/enumerators will be sensitive also to nonverbal communications of children that might imply signs of distress and/or the wish to end the research.
- We are fully aware of the inherent imbalance of power between an adult researcher and a child in research situations. Hence, to at least partially overcome its implications, we are particularly careful to:
  1. Always show the highest respect towards children and their views,
  2. Actively include children and their views into the overall research process, and
  3. Critically reflect on cultural contexts and situations when children might tend to conform to the researcher as an authority figure.
- During research with children, we will try to ensure the highest level of privacy as possible. However, research situations where the researcher/enumerator is completely alone with one child in a closed room are against our policy and recommendations, as it is not applicable for many cultural contexts and can cause misunderstandings. Additionally, we always respect and follow a child's wish for the presence and/or absence of (particular) persons.

## CONFIDENTIALITY AND ITS LIMITS

Only the highest of ethical standards are enough to protect the identity and well-being of children; however, confidentiality has its limits in cases where children may be at risk.

- For every research project, and especially for the ones including children, we will ensure that the identities of participants are completely protected. To achieve high levels of identity protection, we commit to store data only in secure places and, if possible, only in forms that hide single identities, and ensure that in any public research does not permit for the identification of specific cases cited within them.
- Our commitment to confidentiality with children also includes all other third parties; information received from children will not be shared with parents / guardians, short of situations where the child is at risk.
- The only situations where this confidentiality might be breached is where the child's well-being is at risk, specifically, if "the researcher suspects child abuse, has concerns for the child or another person's safety, or has a communicable or sexually transmitted disease which is required by law to be notified." Under such circumstances we encourage the child to communicate such issues to guardians and/or authorities, but we are also committed to communicate these ourselves. In such cases we act according to national and/or local law as well as to cultural contexts. In addition, such communication requires a critical reflexion about the ideal contacts for such information according to each situation (e.g., in cases of child abuse by parents/guardians).
- The above-mentioned limits of confidentiality must be addressed prior to the actual research, and clear procedures will be laid out for the enumerators to follow should they encounter any children in these situations. In cases where a breach of confidentiality is deemed necessary, the child must be informed about it as well prior to the communication to others.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS POLICY AND ITS PROCEDURES

The protection of children in research processes is dynamic – we will employ a learning approach to ensure that policies, procedures and protocols are consistently up-to-date and appropriate.

To ensure that the standards and procedures outlined above are effectively implemented into our research with children we commit to the following:

- All staff and external enumerators for research projects with children will be trained prior to each project about child policy elements and procedures. These trainings will be led by experienced Samuel Hall officials from its Children & Youth Pillar, and they will highlight in particular behavioural standards to which all enumerators and staff will be held for the project as well as the procedure for consent and for potential breaches of confidentiality.
  - This training will highlight the specific procedures to follow in the case of situations of children at risk being identified.
- Every researcher, enumerator and any other staff involved in research with or about children at Samuel Hall is obliged to read and commit to this policy and its procedures for every research project. This has to be confirmed by signature.
- Additionally, every researcher, enumerator and any other staff involved in research with or about children at Samuel Hall has to confirm by signature that they have not been convicted of a crime of moral turpitude in the past. Without such confirmation they will not be used for any research tasks with or about children.
- To constantly increase our ethical standards for research with children, we are committed to developing both general and specific protocols for such research projects "to clarify aims and procedures for collecting, analysing, and using the information to which all partners agree." These protocols will be particularly aimed to "address issues such as what to do if a child becomes visibly distressed; how to detect indirect signs of distress; how to decide when immediate support is required (including health services), or what to do if risk of serious harm is disclosed."

- These protocols as well as the overall policy and its general procedures will be critically evaluated and updated on a regular basis to further ensure the highest standards for the protection of children before, during and after research projects of Samuel Hall.

## GENERAL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Samuel Hall commits to the five following statements, not only to ensure the protection and well-being of children throughout every step of our research projects, but also to generate and share knowledge and create solutions that improve lives – the lives of children, of their families and of their communities. The protection and well-being of children involved in our research is the first priority in any related projects. The participation of children in our research will always be voluntary and informed. Throughout the research process every child has to be and feel safe from any form of harm or distress – respect and equality are mandatory. Only the highest of ethical standards are enough to protect the identity and well-being of children; however, confidentiality has its limits in cases where children may be at risk. The protection of children in research processes is dynamic – we will employ a learning approach to ensure that policies, procedures, and protocols are consistently up-to-date and appropriate.

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## ANNEX 4: SAMUEL HALL DATA PROTECTION POLICY

### Lawful Data Collection

Samuel Hall-collected data will be collected and used in accordance with Data Protection legislation. This principle means that Samuel Hall staff and research participants will know who is collecting the research data, where it will be kept, and what will be done with it. Samuel Hall will thus include privacy notices on consent forms or associated documents so all parties are aware of how data will be processed.

Important sections of Data Protection Legislation for research include:

- six data protection principles that govern how personal data should be processed
- the lawful bases under which research data can be processed

Samuel Hall establishes a lawful basis for collecting research data through:

- Consent of participants, which must be unambiguous and can be withdrawn at any time;
- Contracts, which applies while conducting work with another organisation.

### Secure Data Management Practices

Samuel Hall-collected data will be processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of the personal data, including protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures ('integrity and confidentiality'). Personal data will be kept securely so that no unauthorised access can occur.

Paper/hard media will be:

- Kept in lockable cabinets/cupboards when not in use.
- Kept in lockable offices if possible.
- Not left unattended for a considerable period.

Electronic data will:

- Be displayed where third parties cannot inadvertently see it.
- Not be shared with third parties electronically.
- Be kept on secure network drives or password protected/encrypted removable media.
- Be stored according to the data management system as described below.

When data is shared externally, further anonymisation exercises will be conducted, in particular for children (e.g., names removed, etc).

### Samuel Hall Data Management System

To ensure the security and quality of its data, Samuel Hall utilises a dedicated data management system (DMS) on its own proprietary cloud, hosted on Google's cloud architecture. All Samuel Hall software and collected data reside in Frankfurt, Germany, subject to German and EU privacy laws. The DMS will further remain isolated from all other Samuel Hall systems by default.

The system is composed of four parts:

1. Data collection nodes
2. Data aggregation node
3. Control and analytics engine
4. Data visualisation and distribution

The collection nodes are of two types: mobile and browser based. Mobile data is collected in the field using Android phones running ODK Collect, the industry standard in open-source mobile data collection. In addition to question responses, the software collects additional data, such as GPS location, beginning and ending times, and IMEI numbers, to assist in data quality monitoring. Kobo stores survey data on phones until a network connection allows data to be uploaded to the aggregation node in Germany. Data collected via phone interviews can be recorded on mobile phones or through any standard browser, should that prove more efficient. Browser based submissions are made through the Enketo platform, also based on Kobo and ODK standards. Enketo functions even in the absence of a reliable internet connection, by storing responses in the browser until the connection is restored.

The data aggregation node is a server running Kobo Toolbox, an open source-based submission server which distributes the survey tools to the collection nodes and accepts and stores corresponding data submissions over the course of the data collection. All data transmissions are encrypted end to end using SSL. By using a dedicated server, the DMS can issue

individual credentials to every enumerator and mobile device, thus rendering suspicious or anomalous submissions fully traceable, and enforcing a high degree of data security.

The control and analytics engine performs three tasks: It performs automated administrative tasks on the aggregation nodes, such as adding or deleting enumerator credentials and adding or updating tool files; it maintains an up-to-date relational database of all submissions from all tools; and it performs periodic analyses of incremental and aggregate submissions, testing for suspicious or anomalous trends.

Data is distributed for analysis from a central database node running PostgreSQL. Data analytics can be performed directly on the database server through the PGAdmin front end, plugged into any SQL compatible analytics package, such as Google Data Studio or RStudio, or downloaded in csv format if necessary.

## ABOUT SAMUEL HALL

Samuel Hall is a social enterprise that conducts research in countries affected by issues of migration and displacement. Our mandate is to produce research that delivers a contribution to knowledge with an impact on policies, programmes and people. With a rigorous approach and the inclusion of academic experts, field practitioners, and a vast network of national researchers, we access complex settings and gather accurate data.

**Our research connects the voices of communities to change-makers for more inclusive societies.** Samuel Hall has offices in Afghanistan, Kenya, Germany and Tunisia and a presence in Somalia, Ethiopia and the United Arab Emirates. For more information, please visit [www.samuelhall.org](http://www.samuelhall.org)



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