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RESEARCH ON SOCIO-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Middle East and Northern Africa (MENA) Region Final Report

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ACRONYMS

BLP	Better Learning Program
BT	Be There Program
GfP	Generations for Peace
ID	I-Deal Program
INEE	Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies
IRC	International Rescue Committee
KII	Key Informant Interview
LSCE	Life Skills and Citizenship Education
MENA	Middle East/North Africa
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoE	Ministry of Education
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
PSS	Psychosocial Support Services
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
RCT	Randomized Controlled Trial
R&D	Research and Development
SEL	Socio-emotional Learning
SME	Subject Matter Expert
UDL	Universal Design for Learning
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNRWA	United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WBG	West Bank and Gaza

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

International evidence shows that integrating socio-emotional learning (SEL) into educational programming can provide students with the values and skills essential to their future success in school, at work, and in life. It can improve peer relationships by increasing tolerance and a greater sense of community by working on skills such as empathy, communication, and problem solving. Similarly, SEL is a vital process of peacebuilding that teaches people to settle differences nonviolently. It can also improve the ability to regulate one's emotions and increase self-confidence, which has a direct impact on emotional balance, physical health, and future independence. SEL programs can also improve academic performance, grade point averages, and attendance records, leading to decreased dropout rates by working on skills such as self-efficacy, executive function, and study skills.¹

Investing in SEL is especially important for vulnerable learners in emergency contexts.² Recent scientific studies link trauma and chronic stress in children and youth to abnormal neurodevelopment that negatively influences cognitive and emotional processes.³ School age is a crucial developmental period to reverse these negative effects as school may be the only place where conflict-affected children and youth get the support they need to begin the healing process.⁴

PURPOSE

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) commissioned this study to support the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Bureau in identifying promising SEL evidence and models to provide lessons learned and recommendations that could be applied to ongoing USAID education programs in the MENA region. The research questions are as follows:

- 1) What are promising SEL models, focused on the MENA region? The definition of promising models was informed by three criteria: evidence based on positive results, potential for scaling up and potential for replication in other countries in the region (more information in the methodology section).
- 2) What is the empirical basis supporting these models and the conditions for their application?
- 3) What are the recommendations for programming in this area in the Middle East?

METHODOLOGY

The study team used a phased research approach. Data collection began with a desk review of global and MENA-specific SEL approaches. The study team reviewed 35 articles and reports, identified 22 SEL models in the MENA region, and pre-selected seven models based on the availability of recent studies demonstrating positive SEL results. The study team then assessed the literature available on the models, and narrowed the selection to three promising models based on the following criteria:

- 1) the program documented positive SEL results and effects in different subpopulations in the region;
- 2) the program could be or currently is replicated in other countries in the region; and
- 3) the program had potential for scaling up (partially or fully institutionalized by the government).

This was followed by field interviews to verify initial findings and gather relevant and detailed information about each model.

¹ CASEL n.d.

² McNatt, Boothby, Wessells, and Lo 2018

³ Herringa 2017

⁴ Forsbergand Schultz 2022

MAIN FINDINGS

Research Question 1: What are the promising models using SEL in the MENA region?

SEL programs need to be flexible and adaptable to the different needs of sub-populations. The rapid desk review revealed that most SEL programs implemented in the region were implemented in emergency or crisis contexts and, in most cases, targeted refugee or conflict-affected learners. Although women and children with disabilities are often the most vulnerable in emergency contexts, there are very few programs specifically targeting them. Similarly, there are very few interventions that distinguish between the target sub-populations—refugees and host communities, men and women, and young adolescents-older adolescents.

SEL programs in the region are implemented in very different settings (public-private, formal-informal-non-formal) and use different SEL strategies, depending on the needs of the population they serve. Most of the SEL interventions reviewed were implemented in Jordan and Lebanon, followed closely by West Bank and Gaza (WBG), Iraq, and Egypt, and apply an SEL approach based on the specific issues and intended outcomes. For example, if the main challenge is violence in schools, especially among refugee populations and host communities, a SEL program would aim to generate social cohesion, and could work on skills such as empathy, communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork. If the main challenge is related to the post-traumatic stress of war, a SEL program could aim to improve mental health through breathing and concentration techniques in the classroom.

Programs integrated with other education programs are often more successful in reaching intended goals than those that are isolated practices. Although SEL models in the MENA region tend to be integrated into educational programs, they rarely have the objective of improving learning outcomes but are rather aimed at improving children's socio-emotional well-being. Three main types of SEL interventions stand out:

1. Programs focused on training in teaching methodologies and management strategies for teachers;
2. Programs integrated into the school curriculum, mainly focused on the development of life skills and social cohesion;
3. Stand-alone programs, not integrated into the school, and more specialized in mental health in crisis contexts.

SEL programs in MENA can adapt existing frameworks and tools. Due to the large number of SEL strategies, and to assist in program design and planning, the PSS-SEL Toolbox⁵ developed a platform of different SEL instruments, frameworks, and tools used in more than 50 countries, including the MENA region. This platform is a good entry point when designing a SEL program.

The SME gathered specific information on promising practices in the region to deepen and add information on the design, target population, and implementation strategy of the models. Three SEL promising practices were identified in the region: Better Learning (WBG); Nashatati (Jordan); and I-Deal and Be There (Iraq, Jordan, WBG, Syria).

The Better Learning Program (BLP), developed by the Norwegian Refugee Council in WBG, is a program for emergency contexts that can be adapted to the different stages of an emergency. It is currently implemented in six countries in the MENA region and in 20 other countries around the world. BLP consists of three different interventions that cover different needs in an emergency. BLP-2 implemented in WBG is a classroom-based, teacher-led intervention, delivered by teachers who have been trained in BLP-2. The program aims to support well-being and resilience among underachieving learners (ages 6–16) in primary and secondary public schools in Gaza and the West Bank. It focuses on improving student's learning capacity (i.e., executive functioning, time

⁵ <https://inee.org/collections/psychosocial-support-and-social-and-emotional-learning>

management, and homework completion) either for the whole class or in small groups, depending on the context and the state of emergency/trauma. Although the program is designed for all learners (it does not have a specific focus on gender or students with disabilities), it has special relevance in supporting the most vulnerable populations, such as internally displaced persons, refugees, and the most vulnerable learners in host communities.

The Nashatati Program, developed by UNICEF MENA and implemented by UNICEF Jordan and Generations for Peace (GfP), integrates SEL in sports and arts activities. This program aligns with the vision of the Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) framework delivered through a flexible curriculum of activities that aims to increase tolerance, appreciation of diversity, and teamwork to create a shared sense of belonging and cohesion. The LSCE framework is implemented in other countries in the region but is applied from different angles, depending on the country's needs.

Nashatati in Jordan is a teacher-led program within public schools experiencing high rates of violence and bullying. Although the program was designed for all adolescents ages 13–16 (grades 7–10)—it does not specifically focus on gender inclusion or students with disabilities—it aims to support the most vulnerable populations, such as youth from low-income families, youth at risk of dropping out of school, girls at risk of early marriage, refugee adolescents, and students with disabilities. The school-based model was transferred to the Ministry of Education in 2021 and is now an optional program that public schools can implement in extracurricular activities within school hours.

The I-Deal Initiative (IDI) and Be There (BT) initiatives, developed by War Child in Lebanon, are SEL psychosocial support interventions targeting refugee families and learners who are out of school or at risk of dropping out. These non-formal interventions take place in community centers and are led by trained community members. Although both programs target vulnerable populations such as refugees, learners at risk of dropping out of school, and out-of-school learners, they do not provide specific interventions for the inclusion of girls or students with disabilities.

The I-Deal initiative is implemented in Iraq, Jordan, WBG, Syria, and several African countries. The program aims to strengthen learners' resilience by addressing key issues, such as social identity development and management; cognitive and emotional regulation skills; and sense of security and belonging. Lebanon targets two types of learners ages 10–14: 1) refugee and vulnerable Lebanese learners who are at risk of dropping out of public schools, and 2) refugee and vulnerable Lebanese learners who are out of school. The BT initiative is implemented in Colombia, Jordan, Syria, and several African countries. In Lebanon, it targets caregivers of learners (under the age of 12) who are participating in other War Child initiatives (such as the I-Deal initiative) to provide them with effective and positive parenting skills, as well as techniques to improve their personal well-being.

Research Question 2) What is the empirical basis supporting these models and the conditions for their application?

Most SEL programs reviewed do not use academic measurement instruments since these instruments do not measure relevant SEL outcomes. Although most of the SEL models reviewed were embedded in educational programs, their main objectives were to improve student well-being and enhance school cohesion by developing cognitive, social, and emotional skills, as opposed to improving academic achievement. Of the three SEL models identified, only the BLP program in WBG aims to improve both academic and emotional outcomes, and, therefore, is the only program that seeks to measure the academic performance of participating students.

Most of the programs analyzed use internationally recognized psychological instruments to measure the impact of learners' social and emotional learning in accordance with their program objectives. Both the BLP and the ID and BT programs use scientifically accredited instruments to measure the achievement of their SEL goals, such as the Self-Efficacy Questionnaire, the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, the Child Impact of Events Scale-13, the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scales; and the K10 Kessler assessment tool. In some cases, these instruments are adapted to respond to the specificities of the program.

All models researched design their own tools for project monitoring. These tools provide relevant and continuous information on the implementation of the programs and allow the programs to be adapted to the changing needs of the population. Monitoring tools used include: (a) teacher-administered tools to collect information on student well-being (pre- and post-tests; simple student learning checklists about SEL activities); (b) tools to collect information on program implementation and program facilitator knowledge (teacher surveys; classroom observations; training session evaluation sheets; self-reflection instruments); and (c) annual program evaluations that collect information from facilitators or teachers, parents, and learners through focus groups and interviews.

Similarly, the projects use different research approaches for project evaluation: a) participatory evaluations that collect qualitative information from program participants and stakeholders, and b) external evaluations published in scientific journals, through randomized controlled trials (RCTs) that demonstrate the high impact of the projects.

Positive SEL results

BLP WBG has had two major external evaluations⁶ that demonstrated the high impact of the project on learners' well-being and academic functioning: a) improvements in self-regulation, self-efficacy, and executive function/study skills; b) improvements in hope and reduction of stress-related symptoms; c) improvements in both Arabic and mathematics.

Qualitative assessments of the I-Deal model showed improvements in adolescents' social relationships and well-being, however the results of the RCT⁷ showed inconsistent and short effects, suggesting that conflict-affected learners need holistic and continuous support to achieve better outcomes. An RCT conducted in 2022⁸ showed the BT program has led to a reduction in harsh parenting and caregiver distress, allowing parents and caregivers to interact more affectionately with their children and make greater use of positive, nonviolent behavior management strategies.

The Nashatati evaluation⁹ process showed improved peer relationships; increased trust and tolerance; and improved communication and problem-solving skills among participants, as well as a greater sense of community. These results were confirmed after the first and second year of implementation (2018–2019) in comparison with the established baseline. However, it should be noted that these results are self-reported and do not have the robustness of external evaluations.

In terms of conditions for success, the BLP program was related to: (a) the simplicity of the program's content and activities, as well as its clear and flexible structure that allowed teachers and parents to understand and implement the program without major problems; (b) the availability of solid evidence and ongoing research to demonstrate effectiveness; (c) investment in continuous training and coaching to create a well-trained and qualified team to run the program that could provide reliable technical advice; (d) harmonization with other organizations in the sector to avoid duplication and overlap; (e) development of a set of four guidelines for BLP implementation (preparation for BLP programming; capacity building, implementation, and monitoring of BLP programming); and (f) the criteria established for the training of focal points and trainers to ensure quality implementation and support of the program.

The effectiveness of the Nashatati program was related to its flexibility, although currently implemented as an in-school program, this approach was used outside the school context as a stand-alone, after-school activity. It is also worth mentioning its relevance, as there are schools that are implementing the program independently, without training or financial support, simply following the program resources available online because they see the benefits of the program. Similarly, it is culturally relevant, as the community was consulted before activities and materials were designed to ensure that there were no sensitive topics. Finally, for the BT and ID interventions, addressing the

⁶ Forsberg and Schultz 2023

⁷ Miller, Koppenol-Gonzalez, Jawad, SteenSassine, and Jordans 2020.

⁸ Miller, Chen, Koppenol-Gonzalez, Bakonis, Arnous, and others 2022

⁹ Generations for Peace 2019

well-being of parents to ensure the well-being of learners was a key factor for success, as was the integration of SEL support as part of a holistic package, including several interventions that can support various aspects of the lives of the most vulnerable based on their needs.

CONCLUSION

SEL models have a wide variety of formats and strategies, and integrate different types of skills, so there is no one right way to do it. Depending on the context and needs, different SEL programs could be used. To summarize:

- a) SEL interventions can be developed in formal, non-formal, or informal education; and in both development and emergency contexts.
- b) SEL can be directed at overcoming different educational challenges, such as increasing violence in schools, lack of social cohesion, and discriminatory attitudes, but can also be directed at improving school performance and reducing absenteeism or dropout rates. To overcome these challenges, different SEL approaches can be used (i.e., programs for peace and social cohesion, employability, student well-being and mental health, student retention, improving the quality of education through teacher training, etc.).
- c) Depending on the focus and the educational challenge identified, different SEL skills can be developed within the cognitive, emotional, and social areas. There are a variety of SEL frameworks and models already available that can serve as a starting point for work in the region (see the PSS-SEL Toolbox link in the bibliography).
- d) SEL approaches must be adapted to the different subpopulations targeted and to address the specific context of the target region (for example, refugee children may need to work on post-traumatic stress but not host communities; girls may need to work on safety issues but not boys; male teenagers that experience ongoing violence may need to gain more resilience but not girls, and so on). For more information see desk review findings.
- e) SEL can also be implemented using different strategies, but according to the desk review, the most successful ones tend to be when SEL is integrated into other programs. SEL interventions integrated into education systems usually have two strategies. One is to train teachers in the importance of SEL so that their classroom strategies and activities are more inclusive, cooperative, and child-friendly, thus enabling students to develop skills in teamwork, resilience, openness, and so on. Another is to integrate specific SEL activities within classes or schools, offering specific sessions to practice cognitive, social, and emotional skills through a specific subject, art, game, or sport.

Based on the analysis of the three promising models, the success factors of the SEL programs are:

- a) The flexibility and adaptability of the programs through the design of simple manuals and content that can be easily used in schools and homes.
- b) Continued program monitoring and reliable external evaluations to demonstrate impact.
- c) Ensuring a safe and enabling environment for sustainability through the analysis of the:
 1. Political, humanitarian, demographic and social context (What is needed and what already exists to ensure harmonization?)
 2. Educational and legal frameworks (What are the government priorities that can lead to government ownership and institutionalization of the program?)
 3. Leadership and ministerial capacity (Who are the best prepared people? What kind of training and capacity do they have? What support do they need to ensure continuity?)
 4. Public funding and cost-effectiveness (What budget is available for these programs over the long term?)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Research Question 3) What are the recommendations for programming in the Middle East?

1. Assess and design the SEL approach to the unique needs of the context.

The desk review uncovered the complexity and diversity of the SEL models, and the need to assess the environment before designing programs to ensure that the best strategies and interventions are used. Understanding the national context and analyzing political, humanitarian, safety and social needs were critical in the Nashatati and BLP programs to obtain government support. Ensuring sustainability requires adequate government capacity building as well as the selection of a strong team. This was important for BLP, as the selection process for the Ministry's focal points considered the background and experience of the candidates. In program design, it is essential to take advantage of the right political moment and identify existing priorities in the country; for example, the Nashatati program was molded to the country's priorities and shifted from an out-of-school program to an in-school program to align with the government's strategy. Finally, it is important to develop the government handover plan from the beginning. The BLP program planned the exit strategy from the start and designed a roadmap to support the government during this process.

2. Use the PSS-SEL Toolbox

Due to the large number of SEL strategies, and to assist in program design and monitoring, it is recommended to use the PSS-SEL Toolbox, which includes different SEL instruments, frameworks, and tools used in the MENA region. All SEL models in this report are included in the INEE database.

3. Tailor content and teaching approach to the diversity of the target populations

SEL programs should be tailored to the specific needs and learning styles of the target populations. This is especially important in the case of girls and learners with disabilities.

4. Keep content simple and validate content at the community and school level.

The content of the materials must be verified and validated with the community, the school, and the government to ensure that it is culturally appropriate. Materials should also be simple so that it can be easily applied. This is evidenced in the BLP program, as the ease of comprehension increased the use of the materials both outside and inside the school. As with the Nashatati and BT-ID programs, all materials were validated with the community and teachers before use to ensure their relevance.

5. Support SEL approaches for teachers and parents to create a positive environment.

War Child programs as well as BLP have considered the socio-emotional needs of teachers and parents to ensure more positive environments for learners. More positive environments facilitate learning and strengthen learners' life skills.

BACKGROUND

OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study was commissioned by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to support the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Regional Bureau in identifying promising socio-emotional learning (SEL) models that pay particular attention to different vulnerable sub-populations, with the aim of providing lessons learned and recommendations that can be applied to ongoing USAID education programs in the MENA region.

SEL refers to the set of social, emotional, and cognitive domains and the process for developing those skills within the domains through “explicit, active, focused, sequenced instruction that allows [children] to understand and manage their emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions”.¹⁰ This process of learning and acquiring a set of skills is vital to school, work, and life success.

The cognitive domain encompasses essential cognitive skills necessary for directing behavior towards achieving a goal. These skills come into play when engaging in tasks that demand concentration, attention, following instructions, task prioritization, impulse control, goal setting, decision-making based on information, and more. Notable skills within this domain may include attention control; working memory and planning; inhibitory control; cognitive flexibility; and critical thinking.¹¹

The emotion domain encompasses skills that aid in the recognition, expression, and regulation of emotions, as well as understanding and empathy towards others. These skills are crucial not just for managing one's own emotions and behavior, but also for engaging in meaningful interactions and responding to others in a pro-social manner. Specific skills within this domain may include emotion knowledge and expression; emotion and behavior regulation; and empathy and perspective-taking.¹²

The social domain encompasses skills that contribute to accurately interpreting the behavior of others, adeptly navigating social situations, and fostering positive interactions with peers. These skills are crucial for successful collaboration, effective resolution of social problems, establishing healthy relationships, and promoting peaceful coexistence. Specific skills within this domain include understanding social cues; conflict resolution and social problem-solving; and pro-social and cooperative behavior.¹³

Evidence indicates the critical importance of these skills for educational success for all students, as they contribute to enhanced school engagement, reduced disruptive behaviors, improved academic performance, and the ability of students to regulate their emotions and establish positive relationships with others. SEL holds particular relevance in humanitarian crisis contexts because children and youth exposed to adversity and trauma may face long-term challenges in areas including learning, behavior, and both physical and mental health.¹⁴

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this research is to study promising SEL models in formal, informal, or non-formal education that support improved learning and well-being of learners in the MENA region. The research covers both in-school and out-of-school programs in public or private settings with a special focus on programs targeting vulnerable populations (conflict-affected learners, refugees, and internally displaced persons; girls; and learners with disabilities). The study is intended to provide

¹⁰ USAID 2019, p. 2

¹¹ PSS-SEL Frameworks n.d.

¹² Ibid

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ PSS-SEL Frameworks n.d.

detailed information on the identified models (duration, timing, approach, sustainability, and effectiveness) and recommendations to USAID for potential investment in the MENA region.

The main research questions of the study are as follows:

1. What are promising SEL models, focused on the MENA region?
2. What is the empirical basis supporting these models and the conditions for their application?
3. What are the recommendations for programming in this area in the Middle East?

METHODOLOGY

The study team utilized a desk review along with qualitative methods to comprehensively capture, analyze, and compile promising SEL practices in the region. Its aim was to provide practical approaches for incorporating SEL into programs for USAID education staff in the MENA region. Multiple data sources were employed to ensure thorough findings, which, in turn, informed conclusions and recommendations.

DATA COLLECTION

To begin, the desk review phase examined existing documents and previous research literature. This process sought to identify the most promising practices based on predetermined criteria, including positive SEL outcomes and effects on various sub-populations, as well as their potential for scalability and replication. Subsequently, key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted to gather primary data about selected SEL models. Education professionals and government officials possessing intimate knowledge of the identified programs were selected as interviewees to provide in-depth insights.

Convenience sampling was employed to recruit participants, considering their ability to provide detailed information on the models while also being readily available, willing, and easily reachable within a limited timeframe. The study team incorporated both primary and secondary data to triangulate the findings and enhance the validity and credibility of the information.

DESK REVIEW

The desk review approach involved conducting a comprehensive online search of SEL programs implemented in the MENA region using both academic and non-academic search engines. Additionally, website-specific research was conducted across government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other development partners in the education sector within and beyond the MENA region.

Keywords used in the search covered areas such as well-being; mental health and psychological support (HPSS); life skills and interpersonal skills; social protection; conflict-sensitive education; peace education; global citizenship education; and safe learning environments.

The desk review explored numerous agencies and organizations to review education reforms, programs, and initiatives. This included examining the websites of country-specific education ministries, the Psychosocial Support (PSS) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) Toolbox,¹⁵ the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Education Development Center, the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), Plan International, Save the Children, USAID, the World Bank, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

¹⁵ <https://inee.org/pss-sel-toolbox>

Within the SEL pillar, a total of 35 articles and reports were reviewed. From these, 22 SEL programs in the MENA region were identified and further narrowed down to seven SEL models based on recent studies that demonstrated positive SEL outcomes.

The PSS and SEL Toolbox was then utilized to assess each of the seven models and identify three promising SEL models for further research via the field interview stage; the selection of these three models was based on the following criteria:

- a. Documented evidence of positive SEL effects on diverse sub-populations in the MENA region based on robust studies published in scientific journals within the last five years.
- b. Potential for replication in other countries within the region based on the availability of materials adaptable to the local context and available in local languages, and/or evidence of implementation in multiple countries within the region.
- c. Potential for scalability, based on existing support by major donors and/or evidence the program is already partially institutionalized by the government.

Based on these criteria, the team identified the following SEL models: The Healing Classrooms by International Rescue Committee (IRC) (Lebanon), You Create Program by Terre des Hommes (Egypt and Iraq), and the Better Learning Program (BLP) by Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) (West Bank and Gaza [WBG]). However, upon initial email exchanges with the IPs of the three identified models, it was discovered that two of the models could not be pursued for further data collection (see “Limitations” section for details). In light of these challenges, two alternative programs that met two of the three aforementioned criteria were identified. These programs also facilitated convenient communication with key informants within a short timeframe.

The following models were ultimately identified: The Nashatati Program by UNICEF (Jordan), I-Deal (ID) and CSI (renamed to Be There [BT]) by War Child (Lebanon), and the BLP by NRC (WBG).

FIELD INTERVIEWS

The primary research aimed to gather additional information on each of the three promising models. The field research concentrated mainly on five thematic areas—participants, modality, sustainability, evidence base, and effectiveness—to identify success factors, challenges, and opportunities for replication. A set of field interview questions were developed by the study team (see Annex C for more information), based on the initial desk review findings. The field interview questionnaires included general questions for each interview theme and additional probing questions specifically for each pillar and model.

SAMPLING

The study team applied convenience sampling to recruit key informants with whom to conduct the interviews. The choice of participants was based on selecting those who could provide detailed information on the models under investigation and were also available, willing to be interviewed, and easy to contact within a limited time frame.

Collaboration with local researchers through teleconferencing and email exchanges identified contacts and provided advice on the tools used in each country. The key informants included implementers, donors, and government officials. The field research was conducted through a hybrid approach, where local researchers conducted the interview in the field when possible, and international researchers conducted the interview remotely via videoconferencing when a local researcher was not available in the country.

The selection of promising models considered the accessibility of the site as well as the availability of contacts in the region, which limited fieldwork in some cases. For example, the You Create program, which was institutionalized in Egypt and showed promising results in the target population, was not selected due to difficulties in collecting information from the Egyptian Ministry of Education.

Also, the team explored alternatives to Lebanon due to the emergency and teachers' strikes in the country at the time the study was underway.

Researchers conducted a total of eight interviews with donors, local implementers, and government officials (three in Jordan, two in the WBG, and three in Lebanon), of which five were conducted face-to-face by local researchers and three were conducted remotely by international researchers. All information collected by videoconference was recorded with the permission of the participants. All interviews—online and face-to-face—were transcribed and securely stored using Google Docs and Sheets. Content was password protected and only shared with the rest of the team when required.

DATA ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was conducted by identifying patterns across pre-determined evaluation questions and categories to draw conclusions. The study team assembled, classified, simplified, and organized the secondary data from the desk review and the primary data from the interviews in patterns to highlight recurrent associations using a coding spreadsheet in Microsoft Excel. Through this analysis, the team identified enabling factors, barriers, and bottlenecks. Based on the findings, the team drew conclusions and developed recommendations that informed the training modules developed for the workshop held in May and informed the current report.

LIMITATIONS AND MITIGATION

The study team identified several limitations to the study. These limitations are briefly described, and where applicable the steps taken by the team to address or mitigate the impact of the limitations are also described.

First, two of the identified promising practices could not be pursued for further data collection. The first model, the You Create program, was discarded as the Terre des Hommes project delegate in Iraq lacked the necessary information about the project due to their recent arrival in the country. Despite reaching out to the Terre des Hommes regional advisor in the MENA office and the local implementer of the Alta Mane's Foundation, their responses were received after this phase of the research had concluded. The second model, the Healing Classrooms Program, was discarded as IRC had ceased its implementation in Lebanon after the funding ended. IRC had initiated a new partnership with Teach for Lebanon, where they provided only specific elements of the Healing Classrooms training for teachers. This model was deemed inactive within the country and limited to countries outside the MENA region. In light of these challenges, two alternative programs that met two of the three aforementioned criteria were identified and pursued.

Second, the study is not generalizable due to the qualitative methods and the use of convenience sampling necessitated by the short timeframe of the study. However, the team used strategies to ensure that the findings are transferable, such as using a thick description of the context of each promising practice.

The team also acknowledges the likelihood of researcher and participant biases. To minimize the impact of both on the trustworthiness of the findings, the team triangulated the data and employed interview strategies such as probing for clarity.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The design and implementation of this research incorporated ethical considerations to avoid stigmatization and discrimination, ensuring the dignity and well-being of all participants in the study as well as the protection of their rights. In accordance with these guidelines, the consultant articulated and addressed potential ethical issues, such as informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, and conflict of interest throughout all stages of the consultancy:

- Ethical principles of privacy and confidentiality were maintained. Data collected was used exclusively for the purpose of the research. Confidential participant information or data collected was stored securely. This included limiting access to the raw identifying data by password protecting the electronic data and restricting the number of personnel who could access the identifying data.
- Informed consent was sought from all participants in KIs. All participants were informed of the nature of the research as well as the voluntary nature of their participation. The decision to participate, including disagreement or refusal to participate, was respected. Participants were recorded giving their consent to be recorded and interviewed in the online interviews and in the face-to-face interviews, an informed consent form was signed.
- All researchers signed a disclosure and conflict of interest agreements specifying that they had no actual or potential conflicts of interest under the contract, no organizational conflicts of interest, and did not share any sensitive information that could provide an unfair competitive advantage in the pursuit of future contracts.

The team also identified and mitigated risks to the participants and the study team, as presented in Table I.

Table I Risk and Mitigation Measures

Risks and limitations	Mitigation measures
Risks related to conflict-affected countries, fragile states, or countries in emergency situations that may prevent consultants from accessing informants (e.g., return from conflict, humanitarian crisis and displacement, social and economic destabilization, etc.).	Attention was paid to developments in the MENA region, especially in countries implementing the identified promising practices, to move to remote data collection, and if this is not possible, to select an alternative promising model that meets the selection criteria in another country in the region.
Political and reputational risk (e.g., damage to a donor's reputation) when intervening in countries where the appropriateness of the research is questioned or where current relations are strained and/or sensitive.	Before contacting any member of the government, clearance was requested from the USAID bilateral missions.

MAIN FINDINGS

RQ1: WHAT ARE PROMISING EDUCATION MODELS USING SEL IN THE MENA REGION?

The rapid desk review identified 22 SEL programs in the MENA Region, with eight targeting refugees and host communities, 12 targeting vulnerable learners or those affected by conflict, one targeting girls, and one targeting learners with disabilities (refer to Annex A for details). The majority of SEL interventions were found in Jordan and Lebanon, followed by WBG, Egypt, and Iraq, with only one program identified in Morocco, Yemen, and Syria (refer to Annex B).

The rapid review of these 22 SEL programs reveals a diverse range of strategies and approaches employed in the region, addressing specific challenges, such as violence reduction, social cohesion, discriminatory attitudes, academic improvement, absenteeism reduction, and dropout prevention. These programs encompass various themes, including peace and social cohesion, employability, student well-being and mental health, student retention, and teacher training to enhance educational quality. Consequently, the selection of SEL strategies and programs is context-dependent and tailored to specific needs (refer to Annex A for a comprehensive list of identified models from the desk research).

Within the region, three primary types of SEL interventions were identified:

1. Programs focusing on training in teaching methodologies and management strategies, equipping educators with practices to facilitate the implementation of topics such as positive discipline and learner-centered teaching.
2. SEL interventions integrated into education programs, encompassing skills training, social cohesion initiatives, and programs aimed at improving academic achievement.
3. Stand-alone skills training programs specifically addressing behavioral interventions and providing psychosocial support for populations experiencing psychological distress and trauma.

Considering the programs analyzed, interventions integrated into broader programs and offering sustained support demonstrated greater impact compared to stand-alone programs.

To support program design and planning, the INEE, in collaboration with Harvard University, has developed a PSS-SEL Toolbox aiming to enhance coordination and coherence in SEL. The toolkit includes data tools to explore SEL approaches used in over 50 countries, including those in the MENA region. The PSS-SEL Toolbox provides SEL filters for searching and comparing programs and frameworks based on region, country, language, emergency status, and age group.

While most SEL programs reviewed target vulnerable learners, limited information is available regarding programs focused on girls and learners with disabilities in the region. During the desk review phase, only two programs were found: Jordan New Opportunities for Women (NOW), a women's empowerment program with weak effects on SEL outcomes, and the Children with Disabilities program implemented by UNICEF Lebanon for children with disabilities addressing negative social norms without published evaluations yet (see Annex A for details). However, there are promising international SEL models targeting girls and children with disabilities in similar emergency and fragile state contexts in other global regions, such as the Economic Empowerment of Adolescent Girls and Young Women program in Liberia; Girls First in India; the Discover Learning Program in Tanzania and the Youth Development Program in Uganda (see Annex A for details).

The desk review provided valuable and relevant information on the implementation of SEL programs in the region. The major findings are as follows:

1. SEL programs are most effective when integrated into other programs. Social and emotional competencies directly influence other life outcomes, such as school performance, reduction of school absenteeism, or violence reduction. SEL programs are most effective when they seek a balance between different outcomes, such as academic and life skills outcomes.
2. Programs targeting refugees and the host community with the same intervention show different results across sub-populations due to their differing needs. In some cases, programs demonstrate improvements in emotional development outcomes in refugee learners but not in host community learners, and vice versa.
3. Interventions that include parents in program design in areas such as mental health support and positive parenting skills tend to show increased interest in school, decreased risky behavior and improved self-confidence of learners.
4. The active contribution and engagement of youth in SEL programs empowers youth and strengthens their self-perception and self-esteem. This work is essential in guiding adolescents towards vocational choices and career paths, exploring positive relationships, and engaging in non-violent political and social views.
5. SEL interventions that take place in a context of ongoing violence should differentiate programs by age, especially for adolescent boys. The reason for these differences lies in the fact that older adolescents cannot be protected from witnessing or being involved in ongoing violence. Therefore, it is crucial to offer ongoing support to older adolescent boys and to adapt the structure and content of the sessions to their developmental stage and needs.

6. Programs that target both men and women with the same initiative may weaken program effectiveness for girls. It is crucial to consider negative cultural attitudes, such as gender-based violence or early marriage, in the design of programs.
7. Programs that focus on family engagement and community awareness campaigns do better in supporting children and especially children with disabilities in developing SEL skills.

MAIN FINDINGS OF THE THREE SEL MODELS

Three models were identified as promising practices in the region: the BLP in WBG, the Nashatati Program in Jordan, and the BT and ID initiatives in Lebanon. These three SEL interventions encompass many of the points discussed earlier. For a comprehensive overview of these models, please refer to Annex E, which includes a table summarizing their key features.

MODEL I: THE BETTER LEARNING PROGRAM – NRC WBG

The BLP focuses on improving children and youth's learning capacity by integrating techniques for coping with traumatic stress into daily teaching and learning and encouraging pupils' natural recovery. The program was designed by NRC in collaboration with the University of Tromso and University of Auckland.¹⁶ BLP consists of three components of program intervention:

Table 2 Three Components of BLP Program Intervention

Components	Description
BLP-1	A classroom-based psychosocial support approach that targets all children and youth. It is a flexible intervention suitable for different crisis situations and settings. It can be integrated with PSS approaches and is designed to reach many learners. The program focuses on non-specialized interventions based on the five universal principles of recovery in mental health. Teachers receive training on techniques to improve learners' focus, including self-regulation techniques and relaxation exercises. These techniques aim to reduce stress, enhance well-being, and improve concentration and attention in the classroom. ¹⁷
BLP-2	A targeted intervention that supports resilience among underachieving learners. It is designed to provide additional psychosocial and academic support to learners in stable learning conditions, such as non-formal education and formal education programs. The intervention focuses on improving lost learning capacity, including executive functioning, time management, and completing homework. It can be implemented for the entire classroom or in small groups, depending on the context. Participants learn relaxation and self-reflection techniques, study skills, and mindfulness to enhance concentration and study habits. ¹⁸
BLP-3	A specialized psychosocial support approach with small groups that targets nightmares, a chronic symptom of post-traumatic stress in children. This intervention requires prior permission of parents and is conducted by trained counselors and psychologists. ¹⁹ Participants learn self-regulation techniques to manage stress and regain control over their post-traumatic stress symptoms. ²⁰

The division of the BLP program into these three interventions is guided by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies (IASC)²¹ guidelines. BLP-1 and BLP-2 offer services integrated into educational programs delivered by trained teachers. BLP-3 requires qualified staff such as psychologists to ensure safe delivery of services.²²

¹⁶ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

¹⁷ NRC n.d. t

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

²⁰ NRC n.d.

²¹ Inter-Agency Standing Committee on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergencies n.d.

²² NRC n.d.

THE BLP IMPLEMENTATION AROUND THE WORLD

The BLP program is implemented in several countries in the MENA region, including Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, and Syria. The program is also implemented in 20 other countries globally.²³

The BLP model is a program for emergency contexts that is very flexible and can be adapted to different contexts or existing needs. For example, in WBG, the program is implemented within schools. However, it could be implemented in non-formal educational institutions, be a stand-alone program, or be integrated into the curriculum.²⁴ Also, it can be implemented in different stages of an emergency because it has three different stages of implementation. For example, in acute crises, BLP-3 is applicable, while BLP-1 and BLP-2 can be applied in more stable contexts.

THE BLP APPROACH IN WBG

BLP in WBG began in 2011 in response to acute crises in Gaza. BLP-3 was initially piloted in eight United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) schools in Gaza and later expanded to other schools in Gaza and the West Bank.²⁵ After the crisis stabilized, BLP-2 was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Education (MoE) during school hours.

BLP-2 is a cognitive-behavioral therapy program that aims to improve educational outcomes by enhancing study skills, self-efficacy, and teacher understanding of how trauma and stress can impact academic performance. The program targets vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, refugees, and learners from host communities. It focuses on girls and primary and secondary school learners aged 6 to 16 in Gaza and the West Bank. An additional program for 17–24-year-olds is being piloted in the West Bank. Over 12,000 students have been reached so far.²⁶ The program is conducted by trained teachers and uses relaxation techniques, mindfulness, physical exercise, problem-solving strategies, and emotion-focused approaches to reduce stress-related symptoms and address academic underachievement.²⁷

The program consists of two parts: developing SEL skills and study skills. Psychosocial skills, such as breathing exercises, can be done at any time during the school day. Learning exercises can be integrated into specific subjects. BLP-2-trained teachers deliver the program to small groups of about 10 underachieving students over a five-week period. Sessions are structured, following a detailed manual, and last 45 minutes.²⁸ The program allows for flexibility in implementation, with some teachers integrating it into their daily routine and others incorporating it into subject lessons. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online resources were developed by NRC as supplementary materials for use at home with caregiver supervision, but they do not replace face-to-face instruction.²⁹

NRC follows a cascading training strategy, starting with national MoE trainers who train and support teachers for program sustainability.³⁰ NRC's BLP-2 certified master trainers provide a three-day training to MoE school counselors, who then conduct a five-day training for selected teachers.³¹ The support continues through learning circles, coaching visits, and ongoing capacity building.³² The training covers not only the program content but also general SEL frameworks, international best practices, and recommendations for psychological support.³³ Also, there is a self-care component to support teachers and parents in taking care of themselves. This is seen as crucial to ensure ownership and sustainability of the program.³⁴

²³ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Ibid

²⁶ Ibid

²⁷ Forsberg and Schultz 2023

²⁸ Forsberg and Schultz 2023

²⁹ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

³⁰ NRC WBG Office, KII (in person), March 31, 2023

³¹ Ibid

³² Ibid

³³ Ibid

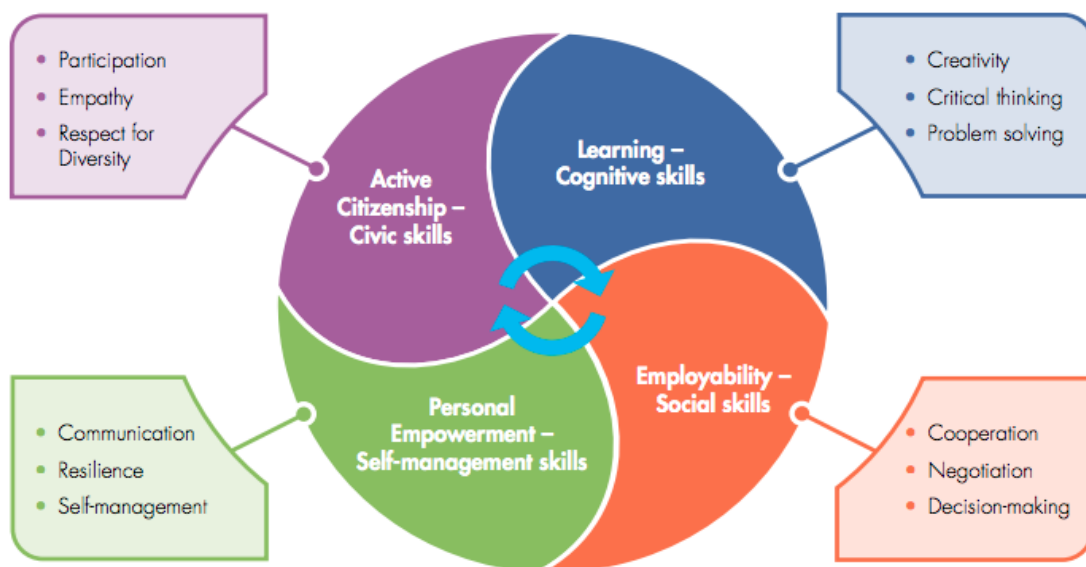
³⁴ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

MODEL 2: NASHATATI PROGRAM – UNICEF JORDAN

The Nashatati model was guided by the Life Skills and Citizenship Education Framework (LSCE) developed by UNICEF MENA. This framework consists of 12 core life skills organized within a four-dimensional learning model: “Learning to Know” (Cognitive Dimension), “Learning to Do” (Instrumental Dimension), “Learning to Be’ (Individual Dimension), and “Learning to Live Together’ (Social Dimension).³⁵ While the Nashatati program adheres to the LSCE framework, it employs a flexible curriculum based on the Sanford Harmony and CASEL approach that teaches SEL through sports and arts activities.³⁶

Figure 1 The Nashatati Framework

The Nashatati Conceptual Model and the 12 Core Life Skills



The Nashatati program was initially launched in 2017 as an after-school initiative for vulnerable students aged 6–16 years with a focus on fostering acceptance between Jordanian and Syrian students. It was a collaborative program developed by UNICEF, Generations for Peace (GfP), and the MoE³⁷ that was implemented in 200 public schools across all governorates.³⁸ Following the success of the after-school program, Nashatati transitioned to an in-school model in 2019, initially piloting the program in 300 schools and later expanding to 1,000 schools. This program was in line with national legislation aimed at allocating 20 percent of school time to extra-curricular activities to promote life skills, social cohesion, tolerance, healthy living, and personal development. Unlike the after-school program, this new format targeted all adolescents between the ages of 13 and 16 (grades 7-10) studying in public schools with high rates of violence. Therefore, the focus of this program was broader than in the previous program, which only focused on fostering acceptance between Jordanian and Syrian students. Due to COVID-19, training materials and activity manuals were digitized and most of the training was delivered online.

The MoE took over the implementation of the in-school model in 2021. Currently, the program reaches approximately 7,000 to 10,000 students in grades 7–10 and has trained 1,000 to 1,500 teachers under the supervision of the Activities and Delivery Department of the MoE.³⁹ During the handover period, GfP shifted from direct follow-up with teachers to training and supervision of MoE

³⁵ UNICEF n.d.

³⁶ Ibid

³⁷ UNICEF MENA 2018

³⁸ Ibid

³⁹ Ministry of Education Jordan, KII (in person), March 19, 2023.

focal points at the directorate level.⁴⁰ Nashatati is now an optional program for schools, raising concerns about commitment and training. In addition, the method and quality of implementation in schools is undocumented, which raises concerns about the quality of the overall program.⁴¹

MODEL 3: ID AND BT INITIATIVES, WAR CHILD LEBANON

The ID Program, implemented since 2008 in Iraq, Jordan, WBG, Syria, and various African countries, targets two participant groups in Lebanon: 1) Syrian refugees and vulnerable Lebanese learners aged 10 to 14 years who are at risk of dropping out of public schools, and 2) out-of-school refugee and vulnerable Lebanese children aged 10 to 14 years. These non-formal educational interventions occur in community centers, outside the traditional school setting.⁴² The ID program is a thematic life skills model designed to enhance learners' resilience by addressing aspects such as social identity development and management, relationships with peers and adults, emotional regulation (including sadness and fear), and future planning.⁴³

The BT Program has been implemented since 2019 in Colombia, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, with plans for expansion into African countries.⁴⁴ BT targets caregivers of refugees and vulnerable caregivers in the host community over the age of 18, with at least one child between the ages of 3 and 12 that participates in another War Child program such as ID. BT aims to strengthen parenting by reducing stress and improving the mental health and psychosocial well-being of participating caregivers.⁴⁵

Both SEL interventions are community-based activities, falling under the second level of the Inter-agency Standing Committee (IASC) pyramid, delivered by trained community-based facilitators.⁴⁶

RQ2: WHAT IS THE EVIDENCE BASE TO SUPPORT THESE MODELS?

To answer the second question, the study team analyzed the information gathered from the desk review and the KIIs to describe the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) tools and SEL results shown for each model. To understand the conditions necessary for implementation, best practices and lessons learned were described for each model.

MODEL 1: BLP – NRC WBG

EVIDENCE BASE

BLP is an extensively researched and tested program. Assessments conducted by the NRC and MoE as well as independently conducted external evaluations demonstrate improved student learning outcomes, as well as improved psychosocial well-being of learners.

According to NRC staff, monitoring and follow-up data is regularly collected and used to continually revise the program design, training strategy, and materials.⁴⁷ The program collects a variety of monitoring and follow up data to serve this role. To check quality and fidelity, each school receives four follow-up visits from MoE counselors and a weekly visit from NRC lead trainers during the five weeks of BLP-2 implementation. Records and fidelity data are tracked by NRC staff and teacher training quality monitoring is collected by MoE counselors using classroom observation tools.⁴⁸

⁴⁰ Generations of Peace Jordan, KII (in person), March 15, 2023.

⁴¹ Integrated International Jordan, online discussions, May 26, 2023

⁴² War Child Lebanon, KII (in person), March 16, 2023.

⁴³ Miller, Koppenol-Gonzalez, Jawad, Steen, Sassine, and Jordans 2020.

⁴⁴ War Child Lebanon, KII (in person), March 16, 2023.

⁴⁵ Miller, Chen, Koppenol-Gonzalez, Bakonis, Arnous, and others 2022)

⁴⁶ War Child Lebanon, KII (in person), March 16, 2023.

⁴⁷ NRC WBG Office, KII (in person), March 31, 2023

⁴⁸ Forsberg and Schultz 2023

At the school level, facilitators (teachers) also administer SEL follow-up tools with the students. Pre- and post-tests are administered by teachers to collect information on learners' well-being.⁴⁹ These tools have been developed by NRC and are simple checklists. In addition, NRC also conducts annual surveys with teachers, parents, and students through focus group discussions.⁵⁰

In relation to evaluation tools, the NRC has a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation toolkit containing teacher surveys; evaluation sheets for training sessions; a self-reflection tool for teachers; and a Student Learning in Emergencies Checklist that includes simple questions that can be administered by teachers to measure impact on both SEL and learning loss.⁵¹

In addition to these NRC and MoE tools and assessments, two major external evaluations using randomized controlled trials (RCTs) have been conducted and published in scientific journals; the results of these studies demonstrate the high impact the project has had on children (Forsberg and Schultz 2023; Shah 2017). Rather than developing new data collection instruments, the RCTs adapted pre-existing SEL and traumatic stress symptom measurement tools to the local context and language and collected academic data to measure changes in stress symptoms and academic performance. In addition, the most recent RCT was conducted during a period of high conflict. According to NRC staff interviewed, the results of these evaluations have informed the program's teaching and learning modalities, resources, and evaluation tools.⁵²

Evidence of positive SEL outcomes

The RCT study investigated the short- and long-term effects of BLP-2 on well-being, self-regulation, self-efficacy, executive function/study skills, hope, stress-related symptoms, self-perceived academic functioning, and academic performance. The study revealed significant improvements in all domains. The improvements were still significant for self-regulation, self-efficacy, and executive function/study skills after five months. The improvements in well-being and academic functioning were reduced after five months but were still significantly higher compared to the pretest. The improvement in hope was diminished after five months. Stress-related symptoms were significantly reduced post-BLP-2, but the symptoms increased again after five months. The grades in both Arabic and math improved in the semester that BLP-2 was implemented compared to the national grade average in the same educational areas.⁵³ There was a medium-size effect in the present study of BLP-2 on reducing stress-related symptoms. However, after five months, the effect size was reduced. This suggests that stress management for children and youth in Gaza needs to be maintained over time when the goal is to reduce stress-related symptoms and PTSD prevalence in the young population.

The youth in this study reported the most improvement in self-regulation, self-efficacy, and executive function/study skills after BLP-2. The students were taught and trained in specific tasks and exercises when addressing these domains. While practicing the tasks, the students experienced a sense of accomplishment as well as showing the ability to take control over, and change difficult situations, both of which are emphasized as key therapeutic factors in dealing with traumatic stress reactions. Hope also improved after BLP-2, but the effect reverted to the previous level after five months. This suggests that teachers and students need to maintain their focus on stimulating hope to obtain long-term improvements in these domains.⁵⁴

BLP-2 also improved academic achievement, as students scored higher in both Arabic and mathematics during the period BLP-2 was implemented. To demonstrate that the positive effect was sustained over time, students' final grades were collected five months after the randomized controlled trial was conducted. The data showed that students who had participated in the BLP had higher academic achievement than before participating in the program, demonstrating a positive long-term impact.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ NRC WBG Office, KII (in person), March 31, 2023

⁵⁰ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

⁵¹ NRC WBG Office, KII (in person), March 31, 2023

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ Forsberg and Schultz 2023

⁵⁵ Ibid

BEST PRACTICES

As articulated by the key informants interviewed, the main ingredients that made this program work were the following:

1. **Simple, clear, and flexible content:** The major enabling factor is simplicity of the program's content and activities as well as its clear and flexible structure. This is especially important when working with teachers who are overwhelmed, so adding another responsibility to their load is often problematic. However, in the BLP, teachers found that including programming did not involve too much added work for them, and they noticed that it helped them personally (in the sense of their own self-care). The simplicity of the content also allowed teachers and parents to understand it and apply it without major problems.
2. **Strong evidence and research:** The program was developed by NRC and the University of Tromsø and was created, reviewed, and adapted based on solid research (NRC owns the copyright to the program). In addition, it had an ongoing M&E process that allowed the program to be modified based on the evidence.
3. **Buy-in before implementation:** Get buy-in from the school and community early on, before implementation begins, to make sure they take ownership.
4. **Contextualization:** It is essential to validate the content thoroughly, as well as to identify needs and capacity within the community, school, and government to ensure sustainability.
5. **Invest in training and coaching:** Create a well-trained and qualified team to run the program that can provide reliable and continuous technical advice. The training approach should allow teachers and facilitators to receive ongoing training.
6. **Harmonization:** Coordinate with other organizations in the sector to avoid repetition and duplication. Also, support community-based organizations and local organizations to strengthen their work and expand the coverage where there is no access.
7. **Guidance Kit:** The guidance provided in this kit is relevant to all BLP programming, including BLP start-ups—for education programs with limited/no BLP experience. It is a set of four guides for BLP implementation throughout the project cycle: programming for wellness and introduction to BLP; preparing for BLP programming; capacity building for BLP programming; and implementing and monitoring BLP programming.
8. **Selection criteria** should be established for the training of focal points and trainers to ensure quality implementation and support of the program.⁵⁶

LESSONS LEARNED

According to the key informants interviewed, the main lessons learned were the following:

1. **Collaborate with other non-governmental organizations.** The NRC ran this program alone for the first 10 years. The organization now intends to collaborate with other organizations or agencies to expand the benefits of the program.
2. **Funding.** Considering that NRC has as its main aim to expand the Global Right to Wellbeing framework and reach half a million children by December 2025, one of the main constraints will be to ensure fundraising to reach the expected outcome. For this reason, they are counting on the participation and funding of other organizations.
3. **Tailor materials by population sub-groups.** BLP has not considered how psychosocial well-being is perceived by gender nor the different challenges faced by learners based on gender. For example, recent studies have shown that boys at younger ages benefit more than girls from these programs, and in adolescence the reverse is true.⁵⁷ This program also does not cater to

⁵⁶ NRC Global, KII (in person), March 22, 2023

⁵⁷ USAID (2021). Social and emotional learning (SEL) systematic review final report.

lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning people, or persons with disabilities. Investment should be made in adding this more inclusive approach.

4. **Program Integration.** The main lessons learned are that BLP should not be used as a stand-alone program unless it is used immediately after a major trauma or crisis. In the long term, to be most effective and sustainable, it should be implemented within an educational structure.

MODEL 2: NASHATATI PROGRAM – UNICEF JORDAN

EVIDENCE BASE

At the strategic level, UNICEF MENA and the World Bank worked with education assessment experts to develop and validate a new instrument to measure life skills within the LSCE framework, to inform education decision-makers and practitioners on potentially useful education interventions to enhance life skills at the school-level within the MENA region.⁵⁸ In addition to this regional, standardized assessment, Nashatati used several types of assessments to measure progress, including pre- and post-evaluations, which provided quantitative measures; participatory evaluations, which gathered qualitative feedback from program participants and stakeholders; and observations conducted during program sessions to measure factors such as facilitation, preparation, inclusion of children with disabilities, and teacher leadership.⁵⁹ Participatory evaluations were conducted annually, engaging teachers and students in focus groups, group discussions, writing prompts, and experience-sharing exercises to measure changes in participants' attitudes in terms of enhanced communication skills, self-esteem, appreciation of diversity, social cohesion, sense of belonging, and hope for the future. The process provided opportunities for all voices to be heard and helped generate a sense of ownership among teachers and students.⁶⁰

Additionally, the evidence base includes continuous monitoring processes. At first, monitoring was carried out exclusively by the national partners (GfP staff) and, at a later stage, program evaluation included a chain of responsibilities by GfP staff and MoE focal points, who provided weekly reports on the schools.⁶¹ In addition, during the last year of implementation, the Nashatati training-of-trainers program lead facilitators assisted in observing the sessions. All the information gathered was used to make improvements based on the feedback received. UNICEF Jordan staff indicated that monitoring data was used to continuously improve activities. In the interviews, staff provided examples of how this was done, ranging from adding topics about child protection and disability issues based on recommendations, adjusting sessions to integrate more sports, arts, and play activities, and including the school principal as the primary supervisor of the program.⁶²

Evidence of positive SEL outcomes

Initial reviews of the program were positive, with anecdotal evidence pointing to increased overall educational performance and better childhood development; however, this is based on self-reported data.⁶³ Data collected through the participatory evaluation previously described showed that schoolteachers and students participating in the program improved peer-to-peer relationships, increased confidence and tolerance, and enhanced communication and problem-solving skills, and felt a greater sense of community.⁶⁴

Program staff who participated in this study emphasized the unique benefits of the program, especially in vulnerable schools with lower academic performance, as it has helped promote social inclusion, fostering collaboration between Jordanian and Syrian students as well as strengthening relationships between them.⁶⁵ This aligns with program evaluation evidence, which found that after

⁵⁸ UNICEF MENA 2018

⁵⁹ Generations of Peace Jordan, KII (in person), March 15, 2023.

⁶⁰ UNICEF MENA 2018.

⁶¹ UNICEF Jordan, KII (in person), March 14, 2023.

⁶² Generations of Peace Jordan, KII (in person), March 15, 2023.

⁶³ UNICEF 2018

⁶⁴ UNICEF MENA 2018

⁶⁵ UNICEF Jordan, KII (in person), March 14, 2023.

one year of implementing the program, students had increased their confidence in speaking in front of others by 20 percent. In addition, 20 percent of students said they would handle confrontations calmly and would not resort to violence; and 21 percent said they were willing to play and work with other students of different ages and nationalities.⁶⁶ In the second year of implementation, the evaluation reconfirmed the benefits of the program with evidence of increased margins of success: 33 percent of the students had increased their confidence in speaking in front of others; 34 percent had managed to express their thoughts and feelings to others, even when they disagreed with them; 33 percent had handled confrontations calmly without resorting to violence; and 26 percent said they were willing to play and work with other students of different ages and nationalities.⁶⁷

In relation to the most vulnerable groups of students, UNICEF staff interviewed have observed improvement among the groups of refugee children and female students along with some success stories for learners with disabilities. This also aligns with the results of the participatory evaluation, where the teachers interviewed discussed the clear improvement in social cohesion between the local community and Syrian refugees in the school, and many friendships were consolidated between Jordanians and Syrians. Many students commented that the program has helped them realize that there was more that united them than differentiated them.⁶⁸

Likewise, girls and women who participated in the program commented on how much it had made them grow in terms of their aspirations and ambitions. Prior to the program, most had no intention of continuing their studies or entering the job market. Instead, they were thinking of getting married. After the program, many report having broadened their horizons. Similarly, women in the target group reported that after the program they felt more comfortable interacting with men and realized that talking to a male colleague or relative does not negatively affect their reputation. Similarly, many male students noted that they had changed their perspective on women after the program, as they previously viewed them as weak and now see them as their equals.⁶⁹

In terms of differences in skill acquisition between sub-groups, female students showed higher levels of self-confidence and communication skills than male students, and overall, Jordanian students progressed more than Syrian students. As explained by GfP staff, differences in results could be due to schools' prior experience in implementing the activities, teachers' facilitation skills, and cultural factors, such as gender norms and social expectations. However, in general, it was found that the introduction of SEL activities in schools in different regions, especially those with limited access to such programs, had a positive impact on students' emotional well-being and social skills.⁷⁰

However, it should be noted that this participatory interview was conducted prior to the transfer of the program to the Jordan Ministry of Education. Other than a GfP report, there is no information on how the change from face-to-face to online was made. There are also no results on the implementation of the program after the transfer to government or after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Best Practices

As articulated by the key informants interviewed, the main elements that contributed to this program's success were the following:

1. **Model flexibility:** Although the Nashatati program is governed by the LSCE framework, it is delivered through a flexible and structured curriculum that combines life skills and social cohesion through sports and arts activities. Program staff said that this flexibility built into the program's curriculum design allowed Nashatati to better address the identified needs of specific groups of students from different grades or schools. For example, this approach can be used outside the school context or within the educational curriculum to complement available school

⁶⁶ Generations for Peace 2019.

⁶⁷ Ibid

⁶⁸ UNICEF Jordan, KII (in person), March 14, 2023.

⁶⁹ Generations for Peace 2019

⁷⁰ Generations of Peace Jordan, KII (in person), March 15, 2023.

time; it can be used for primary or secondary school age children; and it can be used as a stand-alone after-school activity or integrated within a specific class.⁷¹

2. **Ownership at school level:** There are schools that are implementing the program independently, without training or financial support, merely following the program resources available online. The program also has been integrated through government directorates in various regions of the country, without financial support, because it is believed by local officials and school directors that it is important and can help students.⁷²

LESSONS LEARNED

According to the key informants interviewed, the main lessons learned were the following:

1. **Tailor materials by population sub-groups.** Although at the beginning of the program the different needs of the learners had not been considered in the design of materials and activities, through feedback from follow-up visits and recommendations from teachers, activities were adapted to ensure the inclusion of learners with disabilities. For example, the organization included activities such as volleyball played in a seated position, which indirectly teaches teamwork skills, positive leadership, and cooperation.⁷³
2. **Get government buy-in before implementation.** To improve the Nashatati project, especially in terms of SEL, the program should focus more on a younger age group, which is the Ministry's target audience (early grades).
3. **Incentives.** Offering non-monetary incentives, such as certificates of participation or having the training count towards professional development, may help more schools join the program. Some teachers are disengaged because the early childhood training courses are not yet certified.
4. **Community Involvement.** Involving the local community in the program is very helpful as it brings valuable ideas, ensures that the needs of the community are better met, and reinforces the effect of the program. For example, the online program during the pandemic was not as successful as the face-to-face program because parents were not involved and did not understand the importance of the program.
5. **Online materials should be engaging and learner-friendly.** During the pandemic, the students' engagement was lower due to device problems and unengaging activities. This highlights the importance of developing materials that are engaging and age-appropriate regardless of the mode of delivery. In addition, this shows the importance of tailoring the material type to the context to ensure participants can access the program materials.
6. **Financing and availability of human resources.** There are also not enough staff in the directorates to follow up on the implementation of these activities in all schools.
7. **Contextualization.** The implementation of emotional and social programs can carry risks related to fear and rejection, especially if certain topics are not dealt with sensitively. However, in this program these risks were mitigated by collaborating with the educational community to ensure that topics and materials were culturally appropriate.⁷⁴

MODEL 3: ID AND BT INITIATIVES – WAR CHILD LEBANON

EVIDENCE BASE

As explained by War Child Lebanon staff, the organization's research and development (R&D) department aims to make War Child a reference organization in the field of psychosocial welfare models for children and young people affected by war. To this end, many national and regional studies have been carried out on projects, ensuring that the organization has reliable impact data. Thus, the SEL initiatives they implement are subjected to evaluations that adhere to the highest quality standards.⁷⁵

⁷¹ UNICEF n.d.

⁷² UNICEF Jordan, KII (in person), March 14, 2023.

⁷³ Generations of Peace Jordan, KII (in person), March 15, 2023.

⁷⁴ Ibid

⁷⁵ War Child Lebanon, KII (in person), March 16, 2023.

At the monitoring level, in all projects the assessment of the projects is carried out with a pre-post exercise to check the progress of the SEL results. In addition to this, each program has specific tools that measure the expected results for each intervention.

The BT project uses three assessment tools: 1) Warwick Edinburgh, which assesses caregivers' well-being; 2) a tool developed and validated by the War Child R&D team, which assesses caregivers' acquired knowledge and attitude towards parenting; and 3) K10 Kessler, which assesses the level of caregivers' distress after the intervention.

The ID project uses a tool called the "Personal Goal Tool," where the students themselves can identify specific goals and work on them throughout the intervention. The Warwick Edinburgh is also used to assess learners' well-being.⁷⁶

Evidence of positive SEL outcomes

The ID program has undergone many evaluations, but the RCT published in 2020 in Lebanon did not demonstrate its effectiveness in the same way as the other program. The results of this evaluation could not measure the impact of the program in improving wellbeing, reducing distress, or increasing hope among refugee adolescents or their Lebanese peers. Several unpublished qualitative evaluations conducted by the organization through observations, focus groups, and interviews which show how the intervention can strengthen adolescents' social relationships with peers and adults as well as greatly improve their well-being.⁷⁷ This inconsistency is not surprising, given research that shows that interventions aimed at promoting resilience among conflict-affected children have generally shown inconsistent effects due to participants' high resilience prior to the intervention and the stressful environment in which the participants live which can weaken the effects of the intervention.⁷⁸

To address these inconsistencies, the control trial conducted for ID recommended including interventions with parents or other primary caregivers to increase the effect of the intervention among children. This recommendation was integrated into the design of the BT program in 2019, and the ID and BT programs are now implemented together. The extent to which the combined programs have impacted learners' resilience is not known, since an external evaluation of the newly combined program has not yet been conducted.

The BT program was the subject of an RCT in the north of the country, in Beddaoui and Tripoli. The results, published in 2022, showed a reduction in harsh parenting and caregiver distress and demonstrated the value of addressing caregiver well-being as a pathway to strengthening parenting in adversity. These effects were achieved despite a pandemic-related impasse affecting implementation, a severe economic crisis, and widespread social unrest.⁷⁹

The beneficial effect of BT on severe parenting was partially mediated by a reduction in caregiver distress and, to a lesser extent, by an improvement in psychosocial well-being. This finding is consistent with evidence of the critical role of caregiver stress and distress in mediating engaged parenting in adversarial settings. The RCT suggests that, as caregivers become less distressed, they are better able to put preexisting and newly acquired parenting knowledge and skills into practice. In addition, caregivers commented that their improved well-being, defined by them as feeling less distressed and more relaxed, enabled them to interact more affectionately with their children and make greater use of positive, nonviolent behavior management strategies. These findings imply that parenting interventions for caregivers in humanitarian settings can maximize their effects by substantively addressing caregiver well-being, rather than focusing primarily on the acquisition of parenting knowledge and skills.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ Ibid

⁷⁷ Ibid

⁷⁸ Miller, Koppenol-Gonzalez, Jawad, Steen, Sassine, and Jordans 2020.

⁷⁹ Miller, Chen, Koppenol-Gonzalez, Bakonis, Arnous, and others 2022.

⁸⁰ Ibid

BEST PRACTICES

As articulated by the key informants interviewed, the main ingredients needed for these programs to work were the following:

- In ID, art was included as a means of learning emotions and reinforcing teamwork. Since the use of art, the learning, collaboration, and expression of the children and adolescents participating in the programs has improved greatly.
- In the BT program, a component related to parenting adolescents is being developed, as the current program is more focused on younger children and is not as relevant to older populations.
- It is important to consider social-emotional support as part of a holistic package that includes several interventions that support various aspects of the lives of the most vulnerable such as education, protection, health, and other basic needs.

LESSONS LEARNED

According to the key informants interviewed, the main lessons learned were the following:

- Conduct a risk assessment prior to project implementation, especially to measure tensions between Syrians and Lebanese in some communities. If there are tensions, the activities can be carried out separately; if there are no tensions, the activities can be carried out together.
- Due to the current difficulties in the country, the organization believes that it would be necessary to either develop an emergency package to provide basic livelihoods for the most vulnerable population or submit joint proposals with other non-governmental organizations to cover different needs of the population (for example, War Child can help in the area of psychosocial support while another non-governmental organization ensures livelihoods for the same population).

CONCLUSION

A wealth of scientific evidence demonstrates the importance of developing the social and emotional skills of children and adolescents to enable them to succeed in various areas of their lives. Several studies show that SEL can increase the likelihood of educational attainment, career success, positive family and work relationships, improved personal mental health, and reduced violent behaviors, skills that are essential for peacebuilding and, ultimately, developing more inclusive citizens.⁸¹ While these programs are important for all, they are especially relevant for the most vulnerable learners living in crisis-affected countries, as their exposure to adversity and trauma can result in lifelong impairments in areas such as learning, behavior, and physical and mental health (for example, reduced ability to concentrate, remember, regulate negative emotions, and persevere; or increased vulnerability to stress and anxiety). These factors are particularly pertinent for the MENA region, as it faces multiple crises, complex conflicts, displacement, and acute and protracted declared emergencies.⁸²

The rapid desk review revealed that most SEL programs in the MENA region target vulnerable children and youth, especially refugees and conflict-affected learners. Furthermore, although SEL interventions exist in developing countries, such as Egypt and Morocco, most SEL interventions in the region are implemented in crisis or emergency contexts, such as in Iraq, Lebanon, and WBG, or in countries hosting large numbers of refugees as in the case of Jordan. In these contexts, the implementation of SEL programs in schools are the only spaces where children affected by crisis and conflict can develop social and emotional skills.

⁸¹ Casel n.d.

⁸² INEE 2022

Although almost all SEL programs target vulnerable learners, there is very little information in the region related to SEL programs specifically targeting women and learners with disabilities. This is a factor that has been reinforced through the interviews, as all three models refer to the need to improve the gender approach and the inclusion of learners with disabilities in the design and implementation of the programs. Similarly, through the desk review, it was found that adapting SEL programs to the age and type of sub-population they serve can be a determining factor in the program's success. From the information gathered, it was noted that not all students learn SEL skills in the same way or need to develop the same skills. Some of the examples uncovered in the desk review include: refugee boys may need to work on post-traumatic stress, but not boys from host communities; girls may need to work on self-confidence, and self-perceptions skills but not boys; and adolescent boys living in environments of ongoing violence may need to acquire more resilience and anxiety management, but not girls.

This points to the challenge of addressing different needs with the same intervention and the need to choose the type of SEL skills and programs that are most relevant to the needs of the population. Therefore, SEL models have a wide variety of formats and strategies and integrate different types of skills. First, the desk study data showed that there is a wide variety of SEL interventions that take place in formal, non-formal, or informal education programs, as well as in private and public settings. Also, SEL can be implemented using a wide variety of programs that can be tailored to overcome the specific challenges of each population or country (for example, decreasing violence in schools, increasing social cohesion and discriminatory attitudes, improving school performance, reducing absenteeism or dropout rates, and so on). Additionally, very different SEL approaches can be used to overcome the various challenges experienced in the region.

SEL can also be implemented using different strategies, but according to the desk review, the most successful ones tend to be integrated into other programs. SEL interventions integrated into education systems usually have two strategies. One is to train teachers in the importance of SEL, so that their classroom strategies and activities are more inclusive, cooperative, and learner-friendly, thus enabling students to develop skills in teamwork, resilience, openness, and so on. Another is to integrate specific SEL activities within classes or schools, offering specific sessions to practice cognitive, social, and emotional skills through a specific classroom or school-wide practice, a certain academic subject, art, game, or sport.

There are a significant number of SEL frameworks and measurement tools on the [PSS-SEL Toolbox](#) that are contextualized in the region and can be used to develop programs for peace and social cohesion, employability, student well-being and mental health, student retention in school, improving the quality of education through teacher training, and so on. However, further contextualization with local stakeholders is recommended to promote program effectiveness.

Finally, based on the information gathered from the analysis of the three models, several success factors have emerged for SEL programs in the MENA region. These factors include:

Flexibility and adaptability

When working in emergency and crisis contexts, program flexibility and adaptability are essential because circumstances can change rapidly. These characteristics are in all the models studied. The BLP offers three types of interventions for different scenarios; the Nashatati program aligns with the vision of the LSCE framework that is applied in different ways in three other countries in the region; and the ID and BT psychosocial interventions target both out-of-school learners and those at risk of dropping out of school. Flexibility is also demonstrated by the number of countries implementing the same program but adapted to different contexts: BLP is currently implemented in six countries in the MENA region and in 20 other countries around the world, and ID and BT programs are in five other countries in the region.

Strong M&E

Ongoing monitoring using recognized psychological instruments and external evaluations that reliably demonstrate the impact of programs are needed to ensure continuous improvement. Programs that show the best results are those that conduct ongoing M&E. The use of accredited psychological M&E tools to measure child well-being and psychosocial outcomes is key to understanding what works and what does not. In the ID and BT interventions, the sustainability of the programs was related to the continuous flow of information from the M&E process that provided continuous supervision and technical support to local partners to make them self-sufficient. Rigorous external evaluations were used to verify the effects of the programs on the population and demonstrate the high impact on learners' well-being. The results of these evaluations were also used to inform changes to the BLP and ID-BT programs. This was a crucial strategy to deliver strong and robust results in both the programs.

Enabling environment to ensure program sustainability

As seen throughout the analysis, understanding the national context and analyzing political, humanitarian, and social needs were key in both the Nashatati and BLP programs. The theoretical framework used by Nashatati in Jordan is applied by other countries in the region, however, different countries adapt it according to their national needs and priorities. For example, in Morocco, LSCE is applied in schools to strengthen the vocational skills of young people in secondary education; in Egypt, LSCE was introduced into the national curriculum (Education 2.0) to promote innovation and creativity among young people; and in WBG, LSCE was implemented through the design of innovative pedagogical resources to improve teaching methods. Similarly, in Jordan, the Nashatati program evolved to adapt to national needs and policies, as it moved from being an after-school program to an in-school program to align with education policies that included 20 percent of the school curriculum for extracurricular activities to reduce violence and foster social cohesion.

Ensuring an enabling environment also requires ensuring that the government is empowered and prepared to continue the program into the future. However, leadership and ministerial capacity are not enough to ensure sustainability. Adequate funding also needs to be secured. BLP is the program that best planned handover to the government, designing an exit strategy as well as a handover plan from the outset. First, it ensured sustainability in the selection process for government focal points, using sound selection criteria and ongoing training. Second, it carefully planned the handover of the program, including the public funding that the MoE would have to disburse to successfully implement the program independently in the future. Third, it created a committee to support the MoE and ensured a phased handover of the program.

Simplicity of content

Simplicity of content is also essential to ensure the success of the program, because in many contexts, teachers are already overburdened, and their time and knowledge is sometimes limited. When parents and teachers understand the materials, find them relevant, and take ownership of the project, its impact is multiplied. In Nashatati, the program continues to be used in schools, even without government funding, because it helps improve the relationship between students. Moreover, the BLP, ID, and BT programs are easily understood by teachers and community facilitators and do not place an additional burden on their tasks, which increases the likelihood that the materials will be used.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations below are based on the findings of the desk study, as well as best practices and lessons learned from the three models investigated:

- 1) **Create an enabling environment to ensure program sustainability:** As was shown in the analysis, understanding the national context and analyzing political, humanitarian, and social needs were key in both the Nashatati and BLP programs.
 - a) **Analyze and Plan:** Collect and analyze country data to identify constraints and opportunities in SEL implementation. Collecting and analyzing data helps to determine the conditions and extent of SEL availability and gaps that exist in the education system. Before designing a program, ask yourself the following questions:
 - i) What is the problem we want to solve? What are the needs in the target populations (for example, violence in schools, gender disparity, lack of employment, post-traumatic stress, violence among different nationalities, failure to achieve learning, high dropout rates, etc.)?
 - ii) What does the program hope to achieve? What is the focus of the SEL program (for example, social cohesion, employability, well-being, learning outcomes, etc.)?
 - iii) What SEL competencies do we need to address to achieve those outcomes? What are the skills needed (for example, emotion and behavior regulation, empathy, conflict resolution, social problem solving, cooperative behavior, ethical and civic values, critical thinking, etc.)?
 - iv) Who needs to be included in the process of determining those salient competencies/skills?
 - v) What type of intervention would be most effective in achieving the outcomes (for example, formal, non-formal, or informal education)? The rapid review found that SEL programs are more effective when integrated with other programs because social and emotional competencies directly influence other life outcomes (for example, school performance, reduction of truancy, or reduction of violence). Therefore, SEL programs, as reviewed, tend to be most effective when they seek a balance between different outcomes (for example, academic outcomes and SEL; social cohesion and violence reduction; life skills; etc.).
 - b) **Align with national priorities and ensure government support:** To ensure sustainability and government ownership, the model must be aligned with the Ministry of Education's Education Strategic Plan and meet the country's educational needs. It is also necessary to include the government from the beginning of the project design, before it is launched, guaranteeing its training and gradually increasing its responsibilities in the schools.
 - c) **Selection criteria should be established** for the training of focal points and quality trainers to ensure quality implementation and ongoing support of the program as expressed in the BLP program.
 - d) **Include the handover plan and exit strategy from the beginning of the program** so that it aims at the progressive institutionalization of the model, establishing a calendar with a joint work plan with milestones for the transition of functions in terms of personnel and budget.
- 2) **Do not re-invent the wheel:** There are a lot of frameworks and tools available that can be easily adapted to each context:

- a) The program should be designed based on evidence, and if possible, using one of the frameworks already developed and validated internationally. [PSS-SEL Toolbox](#): INEE, in partnership with Harvard University, has recently developed a toolbox with the goal of improving coordination and coherence in the field of PSS/SEL.
 - b) The program should also be monitored and evaluated regularly, using internationally developed and validated measurement and evaluation tools that allow the program to be modified according to the results. [SEL and PSS Measurement and Assessment Tools](#): A mapping of SEL and PSS which covers programmatic measurement approaches, global measurement frameworks, assessment tools, and monitoring and results frameworks.
- 3) Tailor materials to population sub-groups.** SEL materials should consider differences in skill acquisition in different population sub-groups and adapt materials to ensure the inclusion of all. For example, it is crucial to consider negative social norms and cultural attitudes toward learners with disabilities, discrimination against women, gender-based violence, or early marriage in the design to adequately develop the skills of all. Likewise, attention should be paid to access to learners with disabilities and to the different developmental stages of the learners to adapt program content to their level of cognitive, social, and emotional development.
- 4) Get local buy-in prior to implementation.** The implementation of emotional and social programs may entail risks related to fear and rejection, especially if certain issues are not dealt with sensitively. Therefore, it is essential to thoroughly validate content, as well as identify needs and capacity within the community, school, and government to ensure sustainability. Get school and community support early on, before implementation begins, to ensure ownership at the local level. Also, support community and local organizations to strengthen their work and expand the organization's coverage where it does not have access. It is also important to directly involve diverse stakeholders within the area of implementation in the identification of SEL skills to be targeted in the program, to ensure they align with local culture, traditions and social norms.
- 5) Use simple, clear, and flexible SEL content** that allows teachers and parents to understand and integrate SEL at home or at school without difficulty. This helps the implementation at school without overburdening teachers. The flexibility allows it to be used in different contexts and situations (as part of the classroom, outside the classroom, through a sports activity, or as part of a math class).
- 6) Incorporate support for caregivers and teachers in programs, especially in emergency contexts.** The well-being of teachers and caregivers impacts the well-being of students. If their emotional well-being and health are not taken care of, it is difficult for them to help their students or children.

DISSEMINATION OF FINDINGS

The main goal of this research study has been to provide relevant, practical, and up-to-date information to USAID country offices in the MENA region, so that they can use and adapt the latest SEL information and developments in project planning and design in their countries. Therefore, from the beginning, the main objective of this research has been to disseminate information efficiently and meaningfully to the target population.

The dissemination of the desk review results of this research was shared during a USAID MENA Regional Education Workshop which was held from May 1-5, 2023. The material used during the workshop was developed into user-friendly case studies that were used as part of group work on SEL. The findings from this research will be presented to the USAID/MENA Bureau, bi-lateral mission education staff, and staff from the USAID/Education Office.

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ANNEXES

ANNEX A. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Introduction

This annotated bibliography reviews current and past programs on models of socio-emotional learning (SEL) in the Middle East in order to identify successful models for TALEEM.

The desk review approach consisted of an internet-wide search using Google and Google Scholar and website-specific research across government agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and other development partners in the education sector within and beyond the MENA region. Keywords used in the search per theme included the following: well-being; mental health and psychological support; life skills and interpersonal skills; social protection; conflict-sensitive education; peace education; global citizenship education, and safe learning environment.

Education reforms, programs, and initiatives were reviewed by exploring the websites of various agencies and organizations, including country-specific education ministries, UNESCO, UNHCR, UNICEF, Norwegian Refugee Council, implementing partners, DFAT, DFID, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), World Bank, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, etc.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

1. H.A., A'alem, M. A., Shama, H. A., & Sweity, R. A. (2015). *Cultivating inclusive and supportive learning environment program (CISLE): summative evaluation*. USAID.

https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00MDVT.pdf

Description: Queen Rania Teacher Academy (QRTA) implemented the program “Cultivating Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment” (CISLE) in cooperation with the Ministry of Education (MoE) to support MoE’s efforts in ensuring that all children— local residents and Syrian refugees – are afforded an equal opportunity to acquire a purposeful and meaningful education in a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment. The program is supported by USAID.

Evaluation: The CISLE program has been highly effective in building a safe, supportive, and inclusive learning environment in Jordan’s public schools through psycho-social support and interactive pedagogy. Teachers’ skills and application of these principles increased from 68% to 88%. Syrian refugee students indicated improvements in their satisfaction with school (Omari et al., 2015). The differing effects across refugee and host participants in these programs point to the differing needs and perspectives of these groups and the challenge of addressing their unique needs with the same intervention.

2. Al Sager, A., Placido, D., and D. Amso. (2020). *The value of the We Love Reading program for executive functions in Jordanian children*. *Proceedings of the MIT Linc 2019 Conference, EPIC Series in Education Science*, 61–70. <https://doi.org/10.29007/t1p1>

Description: Taghyeer is a Jordanian NGO that operates the “We Love Reading program (WLR)” in various countries of the MENA Region (Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, Yemen, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Egypt)

Evaluation: N/A

3. United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (2021). *Social and emotional learning (SEL) systematic review final report*. <https://www.edu-links.org/resources/social-and-emotional-learning-sel-systematic-review>

Tubbs Dolan, C., Brown, L., Gjicali, K., Borsani, S. Houshaimi, S., & Aber, J.L. (2021). *Supporting Syrian Refugee Children’s Academic and Social-Emotional Learning in National Education Systems: A Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial of Non-formal Remedial Support and Mindfulness Programs in Lebanon*. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/00028312211062911>

Description: Healing Classrooms, delivered by International Rescue Committee, targeted different participants in public schools in Lebanon (Syrian refugee children; Syrian refugee children as well as children from host communities). These programs included diverse strategies to improve students' cognitive and emotional regulation skills, sense of safety and belongingness with very different outcomes.

Evaluation: The Healing Classrooms Framework (International Rescue Committee) delivered after-school programming to support Syrian refugee children's learning outcomes, socio-emotional skills and retention in Lebanese public schools. The IRC delivered two versions of Learning in a Healing Classroom (HC): Version 1 of HC+ Targeted SEL, students and teachers completed short, daily mindfulness exercises in between subject-matter transitions. In Version 2, students played quick "Brain Games" that use movements and playfulness to build cognitive control in between subject-matter transitions. The games were designed to target core executive functioning skills—working memory, flexibility of attention, and inhibitory control—that research indicates provides the foundation for long-term social competence and achievement.

4. Kazandjian, C., Militello, L. K., & Doumit, R. (2019). *Sex differences on quality of life and mental health outcomes when using a brief cognitive-behavioral skill building intervention with adolescent Syrian refugees: A secondary analysis*. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 56, 157-164.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10597-019-00453-1>

Description: Creating Opportunities for Patient Empowerment (COPE) was a cognitive behavioral skills-building intervention consisting of group sessions with Syrian refugee adolescents ages 13 to 17 in Lebanon and Jordan.

Evaluation: Creating Opportunities for Patient Empowerment (COPE). A pre-experimental study design showed that the intervention had different effects for male and female participants. Male participants showed significant improvement in quality-of-life scores and significant decreases in depression and anxiety; however, female participants showed no improvement at all. The authors discussed that this may indicate that quality of life for displaced Syrian adolescents differs based on gender, that the intervention may not have been as applicable for females, and/or that the measure did not accurately track their progress. Differences may be due to heightened vulnerability of displaced young women and cultural attitudes that could lead to isolation, GBV, or early marriage (Kazandjian et al., 2019)

5. Center for Systems Awareness – *Transforming Refugee Education towards Excellence (TREE)* (n.d.) Retrieved on March 15, 2023, from <https://systemsawareness.org/project/transforming-refugee-education-towards-excellence/>

Description: This program is a teacher professional development model to support educators' and learners' well-being. This framework offers models of thinking and teaching that combine SEL, systems thinking, and compassion. It establishes a set of practices that help educators and learners apply these skills to important issues inside and beyond the classroom. Although the program was originally designed to train educators in person, Save the Children and its partners have developed online learning resources that focus on online meetings with educators, principals, and counselors, with a focus on enabling and equipping educators with tools and resources to use online and distance learning with their learners and community.

Evaluation: Although there is no evidence yet on the impact of the program, it would be worth finding out more from the field because this is one of the few examples of online SEL programs addressing refugee children in emergency contexts.

6. United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF). (2019.) *Let's Live in Harmony (multimedia educational materials and teaching aids)*. Final evaluation report.

<https://www.unicef.org/jordan/press-releases/lets-live-harmony-multimedia-project-concludes-award-ceremony-educators>

Description: The 'Let's Live in Harmony' provides quality, inclusive education for all children in Jordan. Implemented by Integrated International, it was developed to provide an innovative approach to the educational needs children aged 5-10, with a focus on instilling social values and improving social cohesion through multimedia learning. The platform uses Android open-source technology accessed through tablets provided to schools and assets are also available offline, making them available to all.

Evaluation: An initial assessment has demonstrated that the 'Let's Live in Harmony' multimedia project resulted in an increase in literacy performance, awareness of social cohesion vocabulary, and an increase in social and collaborative behavior among Syrians and Jordanians children attending double-shifted schools

7. Metzler, J., Atrooshi, A., Khudeda, E., Ali, D., & Ager, A. (2014). *Evaluation of Child Friendly Spaces Iraq field study report: A MoLSA-Implemented CFS in Domiz Refugee Camp*. Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health, UNICEF, and World Vision. http://www.cpcnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Iraq-CFS-Evaluation-Field-Study-Report_0.pdf

Metzler, J., Ishaq, M., Hermosilla, S. Mumba, E., & Ager, A. (2015). *Evaluation of Child Friendly Spaces Jordan field study report: A CFS implemented by World Vision and partners in Zarqa, Jordan*. World Vision. <https://www.wvi.org/united-nations-and-global-engagement/publication/evaluation-child-friendly-spaces-jordan-field-study>

Description: The UNICEF Child Friendly Space (CFS) initiative creates safe spaces where children are protected from danger and have opportunities to learn and play, often with the intention of improving their emotional and social well-being.

Evaluation: "Different studies on CFS across multiple conflict-affected and displacement settings (Jordan and Iraq), showed small but significant positive effects on psychosocial outcomes among children and youth. Younger children tended to have better outcomes than older children, and girls tended to have better outcomes than boys. Safety and protection were significant concerns for CFS participants, particularly among older youth, though they differed by gender according to the context. While the studies below highlight the role of CFS for supporting protection and well-being outcomes in children, they also point to important considerations for adolescents and caregivers.

A CFS for Syrian refugee children in the Domiz refugee camp in Iraq found that female youth reported higher protection concerns. Youth and caregivers of young children attending the CFS also reported higher concerns about verbal sexual harassment than the comparison group. Authors suggest that this may be due to children and youth traveling across the camp to attend the CFS (Metzler et al., 2014). A subsequent quantitative study of a CFS implemented by the same partners in a different area of the Domiz refugee camp found that older children and caregivers of young, female children reported increases in fearful thoughts and feelings (Lilley et al., 2014).

Finally, a quantitative study of CFS in Jordan that included Syrian refugees and Jordanian host community children had mixed results. The findings indicated modest improvements in well-being and resilience for young children, but null or even negative effects for older children and caregivers (Metzler et al., 2015). However, the program had positive outcomes for linking children to protective mechanisms in the community."

8. Lee, L., Currie, V., Saied, N., & Wright, L. (2020). *Journey to hope, self-expression and community engagement: Youth-led arts-based participatory action research*. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 109. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chilyouth.2019.104581>

Description: A youth-led arts-based pilot project provided a space for Egyptian and Iraqi youth, who had experienced migration and adversity, to enhance their experience of

meaningful participation in society through youth-led psychosocial arts and community change projects.

Evaluation: Evaluation findings showed that art-action activities contributed to the well-being and meaningful participation of displaced youth in society. The research revealed that at a personal level, youth gained a sense of purpose and hope that supported them to envision a future, as well as developed artistic skills, life skills and a sense of self-discovery. Youth found new ways to express themselves, and the confidence to engage with their peers and fellow community members. Youth gained social respect from members of their family, community and from their peers, and social cohesion increased as they learned how to create communities inclusive of gender and ethnicity.

9. *St. Andrew's Refugee Services (StARS) (n.d.) Unaccompanied Children and Youth Program. Retrieved on March 15, 2023, from <https://stars-egypt.org/lucyd>*

Description: Unaccompanied Children and Youth program offers: (1) information and support to access medical services, housing, practical assistance, and community links; (2) guidance and information about UNHCR and service providers in Cairo; (3) psychosocial and emotional support; (4) sports and social activities; (5) specialized education programs; and (6) employment and/or professional development opportunities for aged-out unaccompanied youth.

Evaluation: N/A

10. *Right to Play. (n.d.). Right to Play in Jordan. Retrieved on March 15, 2023, from <https://www.righttoplayusa.org/en/countries/jordan/>; Right to Play. (n.d.). Right to Play in Jordan. Retrieved on March 15, 2023, from <https://www.righttoplay.nl/nl/countries/lebanon/>; Right to Play. (n.d.). Right to Play in Jordan. Retrieved on March 15, 2023, from <https://www.righttoplayusa.org/en/countries/palestinian-territories/>*

Description: Right to Play (RTP) has been working in partnership with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) supporting at-risk children and youth in Lebanon, Jordan and the West Bank and Gaza by promoting positive educational outcomes (formal and informal education), psychosocial well-being, physical health, and critical life skills. The NGO also works with civil society organizations and grassroots youth groups using different forms of play to foster collaboration and non-violent conflict resolution skills. During the pandemic, RTP developed a game database - Play @ home - with lessons and activities focusing on their framework of skills. Play @ home used a variety of modalities to reach a wide audience (infographics shared via social media; content converted into videos and leaflets for distribution; messages delivered through radio and television; and in WBG, it has been converted into e-cards that parents can download from the Internet). RTP has worked in Jordan since 2006, providing opportunities to unemployed Jordanian, Palestinian, and Syrian youth through life skills training at the community level. The program teaches life skills like leadership, cooperation, critical thinking, and problem-solving, and puts a particular emphasis on opportunities for girls and young women. RTP has worked in Lebanon since 2006, building leadership and employment skills to Palestinian and Syrian refugees and Lebanese youth. The program equips at-risk Lebanese, Syrian, and Palestinian youth with practical skills to enter the job market by helping them better understand how their competencies align with employment opportunities, providing career counselling, and helping them develop social and emotional skills that help to increase resilience and self-confidence. RTP began working in the West Bank and Gaza in 2003, promoting the psychosocial well-being and leadership of girls and boys through structured play in schools and communities.

Evaluation: As stated in the RTP annual reports, these programs showed positive changes within and outside the school: teachers have shown improvements in their teaching abilities to apply child-centered approaches in the classroom; children, especially girls, have demonstrated enhanced life skills in both their commitment to learning and social

competencies as well as social-emotional skills; the number of parents punishing their children have significantly decreased making children feel safer; and the overall learning environment has improved upon application of positive learning environment principles. Impact of the implementation of the online resource is not yet available.

11. Amal Alliance (22 February 2022). *Amal Alliance fulfills its pledges and remains committed to the psychosocial well-being of children*. <https://globalcompactrefugees.org/news-stories/amal-alliance-fulfills-its-pledges-and-remains-committed-psychosocial-well> (accessed March 15, 2023)

Description: Amal Alliance implements a social and emotional learning (SEL) program that provides psychosocial support (PSS) in Education in Emergencies (EiE). Rainbow of Education Toolkit & Colors of Kindness uses six colors of the rainbow to address different themes each month. Each color corresponds to a different theme that links to a social-emotional competency that can be introduced to cultivate and nourish a child's early childhood development. "We Are in This Together," a podcast series was produced, addressing the needs of children during the onset of the pandemic, provided simple, but meaningful activities that reinforce emotional wellbeing. The podcasts provide suggestions for daily activities that caregivers can use to enhance self-resilience and explore possibilities to support themselves and children of all age groups and learning stages.

Evaluation: N/A

12. Ferguson, S. (2019). *UNICEF and the LEGO Foundation team up to build better futures for children*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/unicefusa/2019/02/27/creative-play-can-help-build-childrens-futures/?sh=6aea70254c3c>; Parker, R., Thomsen, B.S. (2019). *Learning through play at school: A study of playful integrated pedagogies that foster children's holistic skills development in the primary school classroom*. LEGO Foundation. https://research.acer.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1023&context=learning_processes

Description: Learning through Play promotes learning and provides psychosocial support for vulnerable children by engaging them in play-based activities that will develop their resilience and coping skills.

Evaluation: Study confirmed that learning through integrated pedagogies - namely active learning, collaborative and cooperative learning, experiential learning, guided discovery learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning - can positively affect student learning across social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive domains. Research found that these pedagogies can altogether create learning experiences for children that are meaningful, actively engaging, socially interactive and joyful.

13. Tutapona. (2020). *Summary report: We will be healed*. <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5757215459827e49522c00fd/t/60146944a2cca627fb6f75e811611950438814/Tutapona+Summary+Report+2020.pdf>

Description: The Heroes Journey Program is a post-traumatic growth program that provides mental health support services to children affected by war and conflict. It is a two-week curriculum led by professionals that guide the participants into nine sessions of interactive activities that aim to improve their mental, emotional and spiritual wellbeing. The program utilizes elements of the Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and mindfulness to empower them to develop positive coping skills.

Evaluation: More than half of the participants in the program showed an increase in positive changes of their selves and showed lesser symptoms of post-traumatic stress. The program was adapted to be facilitated in the homes of the participants. This change has created more personal and intimate sessions between the staff and the families, allowing more openness in the questions and more personal support for their challenges.

14. Khamis, V., Macy, R., & Coignez, V. (2004). *The impact of the Classroom/Community/Camp-Based Intervention (CBI) program on Palestinian children*. Save the Children USA.
https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/Pnadj085.pdf

Description: The CBI program, designed and developed by the Boston Center for Trauma Psychology, is a psychosocial integration and recovery program for children, adolescents and their adult caregivers who are exposed to psychological trauma. Through highly structured expressive-behavioral group activities, CBI is designed to (1) reduce potentially harmful traumatic stress reactions, such as fear and depressed moods; and (2) to increase children's ability to solve problems, maintain pro-social attitudes, and sustain self-esteem as well as hope for the future. The CBI program was introduced in the West Bank and Gaza in 2003 by Save the Children USA as a core component of their Community Psychosocial Support Program (CPSP), funded by the USAID Mission to the West Bank and Gaza (USAID/WBG). The program was introduced in response to the reported increase in stress and trauma amongst Palestinian children and youth following the escalation of the conflict situation in Spring 2002. Feelings of danger or insecurity, as well as pessimism regarding the future, were found to be widespread amongst children and youth.

Evaluation: The CBI Program produced a number of distinctive positive psychological changes in young Palestinian boys and girls (aged 6-11 years) as well as in adolescent girls (aged 12-16 years) participating in the study. While distinctive positive psychological changes were found among young boys, no important gains were observed amongst adolescent boys, aged 12-16 years. In fact, a few negative effects were found, including an increased sense of impact of difficult circumstances, and an increased tendency to avoid cognition of and/or feelings about difficult life experiences. Several factors appear to come into play: the intervention takes place against a background of continuing violence and trauma; older boys do not have the same level of protection against witnessing or being involved in the ongoing violence as do their younger counterparts; the length of the psychosocial intervention is too short, and the content not adapted to the socio-cultural and emotional developmental stage of Palestinian male adolescents. These findings provide a solid basis and a wealth of useful information for the continued roll-out of CBI intervention in the West Bank and Gaza, with appropriate adjustments. Modifications are most required for the group of male adolescents, especially the 15- to 16-year-olds. Also, the assessment appears to support the general view that it is crucial to reach children when they are young, in order to sustain their existing resilience, strengthen their coping capabilities.

15. *Sesame Workshop and the International Rescue Committee. (n.d.) Ahlan Simsim*. Retrieved on March 15, 2023, from <https://www.sesameworkshop.org/what-we-do/shows/ahlan-simsim>

Description: Ahlan Simsim is part of a broader humanitarian program of the same name—a partnership between Sesame Workshop and the International Rescue Committee (IRC) — that aims to address the devastating impacts of crisis and displacement by delivering early learning and nurturing care to children and caregivers affected by the Syrian refugee crisis. Through the TV show and in-person services featuring storybooks, educational materials, and caregiver-facing programming across Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria, Ahlan Simsim reaches families wherever they are—from classrooms and health clinics to TV and mobile devices—with the vital educational resources and playful learning that they need to thrive.

Evaluation: There is no evidence available yet, but over the course of 2023, independent evaluators will measure Ahlan Simsim's impact on children's social and emotional skills as well as the impact on caregivers.

16. Shah, R. (2017). *Improving children's well-being: An evaluation of an NRC's Better Learning Programme in Palestine*. Norwegian Refugee Council. <https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/evaluations/nrc-blp-palestine-full-report.pdf>.

Description: The Better Learning Program (BLP) aims to improve learning conditions for children exposed to war and conflict. The program reaches out to all learners and provides

psychoeducation and coping skills by training and supporting educators to deliver a contextually relevant curriculum. The psychosocial support (PSS) offered by the BLP aims to provide participants with a sense of safety and stability and a capacity for self-regulation and self-efficacy. The program also works to strengthen collaboration between educators and parents around supporting learners' well-being. While the program was originally designed to be delivered in person, NRC has created online self-directed learning materials and online activities such as mobile application to train educators and caregivers to enhance the well-being of their students and children and youth. The application can be accessed offline through Android devices, phones, and tablets, in Arabic and English. The mobile app provides content on the basic principles of the BLP and includes interactive videos for educators, caregivers, and children.

Evaluation: While there is no evidence about the adaptations of the BLP for the COVID-19 response, there are findings from a 2017 evaluation include that show demonstrable impacts on: improving the well-being of participating children by equipping them with skills for coping with the fear, stress, and anxiety of living in a context of continual conflict; supporting conditions for children to better succeed in school by improving their ability to focus/concentrate in class; and strengthening the home and school environment for students by improving the capacity of duty bearers to acknowledge, respond to, and address the symptoms of traumatic stress.

17. Bruno, W., Kitamura, A., Najjar, S., Seita, A., Al-Delaimy, W.K. (2019). *Assessment of mental health and psycho-social support pilot program's effect on intended stigmatizing behavior at the Saftawi Health Center, Gaza: A cross-sectional study.* *Journal of Mental Health.*
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/333221618_Assessment_of_mental_health_and_psycho-social_support_pilot_program%27s_effect_on_intended_stigmatizing_behavior_at_the_Saftawi_Health_Center_Gaza_a_cross-sectional_study

Description: The Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support Pilot (MHPSS) is a pilot program launched by UNRWA in Northern Gaza with the goal of integrating mental health treatment and psycho-social support services for refugees in Gaza strip.

Evaluation: The implementation of the UNRWA mental health and psycho-social program at Saftawi Health Center showed an increase in the likelihood of reducing stigmatizing behaviors towards Palestinian refugees residing in health centers and may be an effective intervention to combat stigmatization in the refugee population.

18. Groh, M., Krishnan, N., McKenzie, D., & Vishwanath, T. (2012). *Soft skills or hard cash? The impact of training and wage subsidy programs on female youth employment in Jordan.* *World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 6141.* <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/654491468271825136/Soft-skills-or-hard-cash-the-impact-of-training-and-wage-subsidy-programs-on-female-youth-employment-in-Jordan>

Description: So far, there is no relevant information in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region related to SEL targeting women and adolescents programs in sexual and reproductive health, gender attitudes or workforce development. There is only one example of a women empowerment program with limited employment and soft skills outcomes. The Jordan New Opportunities for Women (Jordan NOW), a soft skills training and workforce development program targeted female community college graduates.

Evaluation: None of the courses led to long-term employment. However, the soft skills program did have weak effects on employment outside of Amman, reduced depression and improved life outlook. Additional follow-up surveys showed that the soft skills intervention did not lead to long-term employment outcomes, although it did have weak effects on girls' perceived sense of mobility or their ability to travel alone (Groh et al., 2016).

19. UNICEF. (December 2017). *Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE)*.

<https://www.unicef.org/mena/reports/life-skills-and-citizenship-education-mena-countries>

Description: Guided by the Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) Framework, the UNICEF MENA Regional Office supports country offices in promoting life skills and citizenship education through a holistic approach to transformation of education. This requires reform of learning contents and teaching methods, curriculum, delivery and assessment systems, as well as the institutional environment in which learning takes place. Engagement with this framework may be approached from a different angle in different countries.

- In the case of Morocco, the focus of LSCE framework has been on strengthening young people's skills in schools and providing them with support for their personal and professional development, including life skills education, career guidance and support for their transition from school to work. To this end, the Ministry of Education (MOE), in collaboration with UNICEF and national partners, has been working on a number of education interventions focusing on secondary schools that support and encourage children and youth in a journey of personal empowerment. These interventions enable a constructive transition from childhood to adulthood, and from school to work. A successful example that combines life skills development with career guidance is the Personal Project program. The Personal Project consists of 10 extracurricular activities for students at grade 6 (last grade of primary school) that promote core life skills such as creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, self-management and decision making along with promoting responsibility and a desire to self-learn. Each student's journey continues in secondary school through the adoption of a student 'Portfolio' promoting vocational disciplines by providing support in developing vocational projects based on local market needs. After the successful piloting of the model, the Personal Project is now being updated and expanded to cover one earlier grade (grade 5). A larger-scale pilot experience has been launched in 2018, covering 300 schools across Morocco for a total of 36,000 children benefiting from the program.
- In the case of Egypt, the entry point for engagement on the LSCE agenda has been the reform of the education curriculum for general education (pre-school to secondary education) that the government embarked on in 2017. With a vision to ensure quality and relevant education for all Egyptian children and youth, the ministry introduced a new stream called Education 2.0. The new stream promotes a vision of 'learning, thinking, innovating', where education is the means to create curious learners, open-minded communicators, and creative innovators to compete in national and international markets. As a result of extensive upstream engagement within the framework of the Education 2.0, a new curriculum framework has been developed mainstreaming the twelve core life skills identified by the LSCE initiative, in addition to 'accountability' and 'productivity.' Starting with the early grades in 2017-2019, the new curriculum is being gradually rolled out up to upper secondary education. By 2030, Education 2.0 will be the only operating education system in Egypt.
- In the case of Jordan, the Nashatati program focuses on fostering life skills and wellbeing of vulnerable school-age children aged 6 to 16. This program is aligned with the vision of the LSCE agenda, aiming to increase access to quality after-school activities leading to greater tolerance and appreciation of diversity, inter-personal acceptance, team-work, and shared sense of belonging.
- In the case of WBG, the focus has been on transforming the way the curriculum is transmitted, through the learning and teaching process, using learning objects. With the aim of providing practical support for teachers in shifting towards more learner-centered approaches for effective integration of life skills it was developed the 'Experiential Learning Objects Bank' (xLOBs). The Learning Objects are a set of innovative pedagogical activities and resources used to enhance teaching methods within classrooms and to improve students' life skills and learning outcomes. Each Learning Object is designed to

stimulate active learning and develop core life skills such as critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving. Currently, an additional Learning Objects are under development to reach up to 400 teachers and 10,000 students for grades 2 and 4 across the West Bank. The aim is to eventually have a virtual resource bank available to all teachers, designed to mainstream modern educational paradigms producing learning outcomes more closely aligned to the challenges and opportunities of the 21st century.

Evaluation:

- Morocco: The program has demonstrated significant results for children in terms of the acquisition of life skills and ability to make informed career decisions, but also an impact in terms of increasing school participation, reduction in school drop-out rates, particularly among disadvantaged children, as well as improving learning outcomes. An evaluation conducted in 2016 among 150 students who benefited from the program in vulnerable rural areas highlighted how 63 percent of targeted children were able to define future professional development and adopt new vocational pathways.
- Egypt: While the reform process is still ongoing few lessons could be drawn to inform similar processes in other countries: the consultative and upstream engagement adopted as part of the LSCE framework has proved effective in agreeing on definitions and adapting to social and cultural contexts of Egypt; the technical support provided by experts showed the need for adopting a country specific focus relying on Arabic-speaking curriculum engineers; the rolling out of the curriculum reform required a phased approach with the adoption of large-scale teacher development programs; the transformation of classroom teaching and learning practices required changing of contents, assessment methods as well as competency frameworks of teachers and teacher training programs; resistance at community level among teachers and parents needs to be addressed through participatory awareness and communication campaigns to avoid a backlash on the new curriculum.
- Jordan: A participatory evaluation approach was taken to measure changes in participants' attitudes in terms of enhanced communication skills, self-esteem, appreciation of diversity, social cohesion, sense of belonging and hope for the future. The results from the participatory evaluation demonstrated that schoolteachers and students participating in the program improved peer-to-peer relationships, increased confidence and tolerance, and enhanced communication and problem-solving skills and a greater sense of community.
- WBG: An initial evaluation by Birzeit University, indicates that teachers using the xLOBS appeared to be more motivated, self-confident and cooperative with students. The program also indicated a positive impact on students, pupils appeared more motivated to learn and were more involved in the educational process.

20. USAID. (25 May 2018). *Jordan Workforce Development Project: Final Report*. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00T71R.pdf; Education Development Center. (April 2022). *Higher Education Capacity Development Program: Semi-annual progress report*. USAID. https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00ZDQT.pdf

Description: The Work Ready Now (WRN) framework consists of modules focusing on the soft skills, behaviors or attitudes needed to succeed in the workplace. The framework serves as a work readiness program to prepare the youth when they start looking for jobs.

Evaluation: The Workforce Development Project (WFD) in Jordan adapted the Education Development Center's (EDC) "Work Ready Now" framework by delivering a training-of-trainers program that will provide soft skills training to jobseekers. Report from the WFD project showed a high number of job placement for both Syrians and Jordanians. In Lebanon, the Work Ready Now framework was used to conduct a training-of-trainers workshop as part of the Higher Education Capacity Development Program. As a result, Lebanese students became more prepared and enthusiastic for the job market and the number of students interested in taking the WRN course have significantly increased.

21. Center for Research and Educational Development. (n.d.) Retrieved March 15, 2023, from <https://www.crdp.org/project-details/33493>

Description: The Center for Research and Educational Development (CRDP), under the Ministry of Higher Education, developed a pilot project in the summer school (2021-2022) in order to ensure a safe and healthy return to the classroom after the health, social and economic crisis experienced in the country. The project aims to provide support to students in the socio-emotional area through the development of artistic and sports activities for students from 1st to 6th grade of primary school.

Evaluation: N/A

22. Harvard University and Global TIES for Children at New York University (TISE/NYU) Retrieved March 15, 2023, from <https://easel.gse.harvard.edu/lebanon-sel-framework-mapping-project>

Description: Harvard University worked with Global TIES for Children at New York University (TIES/NYU) and Government of Lebanon (GoL) staff to identify frameworks for inclusion, focusing on five frameworks that are currently used by GoL departments (e.g., research, curriculum, teacher training) to guide their SEL work. The Lebanon Social and Emotional (SEL) Framework Mapping Project conducted a mapping exercise to identify similarities, differences, and gaps in competencies included in SEL-related frameworks used to date in Lebanon.

The objectives of the project were to: (1) train Lebanese government staff on the coding system and mapping methodology; (2) identify and code SEL frameworks being used by the Lebanon Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) and the Center for Educational Research and Development (CERD); (3) create a suite of online interactive data-based tools to support a better understanding of the similarities, differences, and gaps in the SEL skills being targeted by different frameworks and departments within MEHE and CERD; and (4) support a consensus process toward identifying priority SEL competences for Lebanon.

Evaluation: N/A

ANNEX B. SEL MODELS IDENTIFIED IN THE MENA REGION

Target Group	Programs	JORDAN	LEBANON	EGYPT	WEST BANK/ GAZA	IRAQ	MOROCCO	YEMEN	SYRIA
REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES	Cultivating Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment- Queen Rania Teacher Academy with the support of Unesco & USAID								
	We Love Reading program (WLR)- Taghyeer NGO								
	Healing Classrooms-International Rescue Committee								
	I-Deal & Caregiver Support Intervention-War Child								
	Creating Opportunities for Patient Empowerment (COPE)								
	Transforming refugee education towards excellence (TREE) program developed by Save the Children that uses Compassionate Systems Framework								
	The 'Let's Live in Harmony' multimedia project supported by UNICEF and implemented by Integrated								
UNICEF Child Friendly Spaces									
CONFLICT AFFECTED AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN	You Create designed by the International Institute for Child Rights and Development and Terre des hommes								
	Unaccompanied Children and Youth program, STAR Egypt NGO- UNHCR Framework								

	Play @ home Right to Play programs-UNHCR Framework								
	Rainbow of Education Toolkit & Are in This Together programs developed by Amal Alliance-UNHCR Framework								
	Learning Through Play developed by Lego Foundation								
	Heroes Journey Program developed by Tutapona NGO								
	Classroom-Based Intervention (CBI) Program, Save the Children								
	Ahlan Simsim developed by Sesame Workshop and IRC								
	Better Learning Program, NRC								
	The MHPSS program, UNRWA								
	Nashatati-Citizenship Education Framework, UNICEF MENA Regional Office								
	Work Ready Now! developed by the Education Development Center								
WOMEN AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES	Jordan New Opportunities for Women (Jordan NOW)								
	Children with Disabilities (CWDs) UNICEF Lebanon								

*Programs highlighted in green refer to promising models that have recent studies to support positive SEL results

ANNEX C. KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Theme	Questions
Participants	Context of model (conflict? Formal/non-formal? Preschool/primary, etc.)
	Type of participant targeted (refugee, IDP, girls, etc.)
	target age of students/ caregivers
	Number of students & caregivers reached
	Other participants (teachers, school leadership, parents, community members, etc.)
	Number of other participants reached
	What contexts and participants is the model recommended for?
	Could it be replicated for others? Are there limitations to generalization?
	Were the results of the SEL initiative similar in the different target populations? How and why?
	What could have been done differently to ensure that the model was more inclusive?
	Could this model be effective in targeting other vulnerable groups in other contexts? Which ones and why?
Modality	How is/was the model delivered?
	Who delivered (teachers, project staff, community members, parents, youth, etc.)?
	Where: classrooms, community centers, homes, etc.?
	When: during school, after school, during school holidays or breaks, weekends, etc.
	By what means: instruction by a teacher/facilitator, online digital device, offline digital device, other technology (radio, tv, e-reader, etc.), blended?
	Is it integrated with the curriculum or is it a standalone intervention?
	What did/did not work in the chosen modality/delivery method to achieve SEL outcomes?
	What should be included or done differently in future interventions to ensure better SEL outcomes?
Sustainability	To what extent, if at all, is this model integrated into the education system?
	What stakeholders were involved in the design of the model? How?
	What stakeholders were involved in the implementation of the model? How?
	What stakeholders were involved in monitoring the model? How?
	Is there government willingness to sustain the intervention?
	If yes, is it likely that it will be sustained? What makes you say that?
	If no, what are the hurdles to sustaining this? Would you say it is more about political will, availability of resources, or evidence of outcomes of the model?
	After donor funding ends, are the positive results likely to be maintained? If so, how?
	What is the capacity and the commitment of other stakeholder groups to maintain the model and continue to achieve positive results?
	What are the potential risks associated with the implementation of SEL models in the country/region?
	What is the exit strategy of the SEL project to ensure the continuation of positive effects in the target audience?
	To what extent does the intervention fit with other similar interventions in the country/sector (harmonization with other interventions; avoidance of duplication of programs)?
Were the project services/products delivered at an acceptable cost, compared to alternative approaches?	
Evidence base	Are there assessments demonstrating improved student learning outcomes, demonstrating that this model is better than the status quo?
	What assessments have been used?
	Are the assessments aligned to the curriculum?

	Who administers the learning assessments?
	What other evidence has been gathered through monitoring? (participation, attendance, cost, etc.)
	What tools were used?
	How has data been disaggregated?
	Does the disaggregation show particular benefits (or lack thereof) for certain groups?
	How are monitoring data used?
	Has the project taken corrective actions based on what has been learned through monitoring? Do you have an example of that?
	Are there assessments demonstrating improved SEL outcomes in target audiences?
	What SEL assessments have been used? Were these tools useful for measuring SEL outcomes? How?
	What other tools would have been effective to measure SEL outcomes?
	Who administers the SEL assessments? Are they trained for this purpose?
	What are the main lessons learned regarding the measurement of SEL results? What should be done differently?
Effectiveness of approach	What are lessons learned through the implementation of this model?
	Did you stop doing some aspect of the original design? Or add in another aspect to the original design? Why?
	If not, is there something you would want to consider in a future iteration?
	What would you say are the essential ingredients to making this model work?
	Which factors were decisive in achieving planned SEL results?
	Were there any unintended effects? which ones and how were they solved?

ANNEX D. MAIN FEATURES OF PROMISING MODELS

	Better Learning	Nashatati	I-Deal and Be There
Intro info	<p>The Better Learning Program (BLP) was designed by NRC and focuses on improving children and youth's learning capacity by integrating techniques for coping with traumatic stress into daily teaching and learning and encouraging pupils' natural recovery. It is a flexible program that has 3 different modalities based on different phases of an emergency. It can be used in formal, non-formal or informal education settings. Currently it is use in public schools.</p>	<p>Nashatati Program was designed by UNICEF and focuses specifically on fostering social cohesion, tolerance, healthy living and personal development of participating students and their communities through art and sport activities. It started as an after-school program but over the years evolved into an in-school program aligned with the national extracurricular policy.</p>	<p>The I-Deal and Be There interventions were designed by WarChild. The first is a thematic life skills model that aims to strengthen children's resilience. It targets children at risk of dropping out and out of school children. For children within the education system, it offers school support and socio-emotional support classes to help school retention. For children outside the educational system, it provides basic literacy and numeracy activities and social-emotional support. The second intervention aims at supporting the mental health of caregivers, while also teaching more positive parenting techniques to ensure their wellbeing as well as their children's wellbeing. These are non-formal educational interventions that take place outside school (in community centers).</p>
Participants	<p>The program in WBG currently targets both primary and secondary school children (ages 6 to 16) from various vulnerable groups such as internally displaced persons, refugees and the most vulnerable children from host communities (from poor families, children with disabilities, etc.) in Gaza and the West Bank. However, in 20123 NRC introduced another program for 17-24-year-old which is currently being piloted in the West Bank.</p>	<p>The after-school program targeted vulnerable school-aged children aged 6-16 years (grades 1-10) and was focused on building cohesion and acceptance among Jordanian and Syrian students.</p> <p>The in-school program targeted vulnerable boys and girls in grades 7 to 10 (ages 13 to 16) based on criteria such as high rates of school violence, cases of bullying, youth from low-income families, youth at risk of dropping out of school specially girls at risk of early marriage, refugee adolescents and students with disabilities.</p>	<p>I-Deal targets Syrian refugee and vulnerable Lebanese children aged 10 to 14 years old, enrolled in public schools but at risk of dropping out, or out of school and out of the education system.</p> <p>Be There targets caregivers of refugees and vulnerable caregivers in the host community, over the age of 18, with at least one child between the ages of 3 and 12 that participates in another War Child program such as I-Deal.</p>

	Better Learning	Nashatati	I-Deal and Be There
		Since the MoE institutionalized the in-school program it targets all boys and girls in grades 7 to 10 (ages 13 to 16).	
Modality	The Better Learning Program (BLP-2) in WBG is a cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)-based psychosocial program that aims to reinforce the following educational outcomes: (1) improve pedagogical study skills, (2) improve academic and general self-efficacy, and (3) modify the role of the teacher by understanding how traumatic and cumulative stress can cause academic underachievement through strategies such as (a) normalizing stress reactions; (b) relaxation; (c) improving coping skills; (d) obtaining social support; and (e) parental involvement. This specific program is implemented in schools (formal education) through teachers during school hours.	The Nashatati conceptual model in Jordan is guided by the Life Skills and Citizenship Education (LSCE) developed by UNICEF MENA that comprises a set of twelve core life skills using a four-dimensional learning model: ‘Learning to Know’ (Cognitive Dimension), ‘Learning to Do’ (Instrumental Dimension), ‘Learning to Be’ (Individual Dimension), and ‘Learning to Live Together’ (Social Dimension). Although the Nashatati program is governed by the LSCE framework it is delivered through a flexible curriculum following the CASEL/Sanford Harmonys’ approach that combines life skills and SEL learning through sports and arts activities.	I-Deal is a thematic life skills model that aims to strengthen children's resilience by addressing key issues such as social identity development and management; relationships with peers and adults; managing emotions, including sadness and fear; and planning for the future. Be There (BT) aims to strengthen parenting by reducing stress and strengthening the mental health and psychosocial well-being of caregivers of children participating in other programs offered by the organization (e.g., the I-Deal program), while increasing knowledge and skills related to positive parenting.
Sustainability	The program is structured to be channeled through the education system, implemented by teachers in schools. Various MoE departments have been fully involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring of the program from the beginning (e.g., the Gaza toolkit was developed entirely with the MoE; national focal points are MoE counselors who train teachers and supervise the work in schools; etc.). The program has an institutionalization plan initiated in 2019 and a new technical committee was established to oversee the transition with the support of UNICEF.	Involvement and support of the Ministry of Education from the beginning of the program. The positive achievements of the program in the early stages (after-school program) revealed the potential scalability of the initiative and its possible integration within school activities. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with its partners, gradually integrated the program within the school schedule allocated for after-school activities in schools. During the implementation of the program, UNICEF and GfP supported and strengthened the capacity of Jordanian national institutions, ensuring cost-effectiveness and long-term sustainability.	War Child develops the competencies of its partners through continuous training, providing ongoing supervision and technical support to local partners to make them as self-sufficient as possible in the implementation of initiatives. As part of the monitoring and evaluation system, the development of the activities is monitored, and the programs are evaluated annually to adapt the interventions according to the needs and problems detected. The biggest challenge for the sustainability of these projects lies in funding to maintain the interventions in the long term and in obtaining funds to expand support to more areas.

	Better Learning	Nashatati	I-Deal and Be There
	<p>A plan for capacity building of all teachers in Gaza and the Occupied Territories will be implemented, to be led by the supervisors of the Ministry of Education as responsible for the training of teachers and supervisors of the daily activities of the schools.</p> <p>The MOE national strategy included budget for the program review, sustainable resources, a roadmap.</p>	<p>This initiative is now in line with the National Human Resources Development Strategy, the Ministry of Education's Strategic Plan and is in line with the ECA strategy. Prior to the handover process UNICEF and GfP provided the MoE with all the teaching and learning resources of the program (hard and soft copies) a 'handover booklet', a procedural manual, and a list of trainers who are available to answer teachers' queries through the MoE's online platform. UNICEF continues to provide advice and technical support to the MOE through regular meetings and whenever annual program evaluations are conducted.</p>	<p>Despite the difficulties in financing the projects, the cost of implementation is low because the training material is already developed, and the projects are implemented in community centers at no cost.</p> <p>However, the greatest risk to the sustainability of these programs is the lack of government ownership. WarChild works directly with local implementers.</p>
Evidence base	<p>The RCT study revealed significant improvements for self-regulation, self-efficacy, and executive function/study skills after five months. The improvements in well-being and academic functioning were significantly higher compared to the pretest. The improvement in hope and stress-related symptoms were significantly reduced post-BLP-2, but the symptoms increased again after five months. The grades in both Arabic and math improved. The youths in this study reported most improvement in self-regulation, self-efficacy, and executive functions/study skills after BLP-2.</p>	<p>The participatory evaluations of the program showed that teachers and students that participated in the program improved peer relations, increased trust and tolerance, improved communication and problem-solving skills, and demonstrated a greater sense of community. The program showed unique benefits, especially in vulnerable schools with lower academic performance, as it has helped promote social inclusion, fostering collaboration between Jordanian and Syrian students as well as strengthening relationships between them. Likewise, girls and women participants in the program commented on how much it had made them grow in terms of their aspirations and ambitions.</p> <p>Although data has not been disaggregated regarding students with disabilities who participated in the program, in both the interview with UNICEF and GfP, both acknowledge that it had a positive impact for children with disabilities</p>	<p>Several unpublished qualitative evaluations showed how the Ideal intervention strengthened adolescents' social relationships with peers and adults as well as greatly improved their well-being.</p> <p>However, the interventions aimed at promoting resilience among conflict-affected children have generally shown inconsistent effects. According to some scientific studies, the limited effects on these populations are related to the continuous stressful environments in which refugee populations and other conflict-affected children live. Consequently, it was recommended including interventions with parents or other primary caregivers to increase the effect of the intervention among children. This recommendation has been implemented through the design of the Be There program since 2019.</p>

	Better Learning	Nashatati	I-Deal and Be There
		and have success stories in several schools in areas such as improved academic outcomes and self-confidence.	The Be There program has been the subject of a randomized controlled trial (RCT). Results from a study published in 2022 showed a reduction in hard parenting and caregiver distress and demonstrated the value of addressing caregiver well-being as a pathway to strengthening parenting in adversity. Caregivers commented that their improved well-being (e.g., feeling less distressed and more relaxed) enabled them to interact more affectionately with their children and make greater use of positive, nonviolent behavior management strategies.
Effectiveness	<p>Simple, clear and flexible content: The major enabling factor is simplicity of the program's content and activities as well as its clear and flexible structure. This is especially important when working with teachers who are overwhelmed, so adding another responsibility to their load is often problematic. However, in the case of the BLP the teachers found that including programming did not involve too much added work for them, and at the same time they noticed how it helped them personally (in the sense of self-care) for them and for the students. The simplicity also allowed teachers and parents to understand it and apply it without major problems.</p> <p>Strong evidence and research. The program has been developed by NRC and the University of Tromso and is a program that was created, reviewed, and adapted based on solid research (NRC owns the copyright to the program). In addition, it had an ongoing M&E</p>	<p>Model flexibility: Although the Nashatati program is governed by the LSCE framework it is delivered through a flexible and structured curriculum that combines life skills and social cohesion through sports and arts activities. This flexibility built into the program's curriculum design allowed Nashatati to better address the identified needs of specific groups of students from different grades or schools. For example, this approach can be used outside the school context or within the educational curriculum to complement available school time; it can be used for primary or secondary school age children; it can be used as a stand-alone after-school activity or integrated within a specific class.</p> <p>Ownership at school level: There are schools that are implementing the program independently, without training or financial support, merely following the program resources available online. Also, the program has been integrated through government directorates in various regions of the</p>	<p>Including art as a mean to develop skills: In the case of I-DEAL, art was included as a means of learning emotions and reinforcing teamwork. Since the use of art, the learning, collaboration and expression of the children and adolescents participating in the programs has improved greatly.</p> <p>In emergency contexts addressing parents' wellbeing is key to ensure program sustainability and children's wellbeing.</p> <p>Social-emotional support as part of a holistic package that includes several interventions that support various aspects of the lives of the most vulnerable such as education, protection, health and other basic needs.</p> <p>Adapt program to specific community needs: Measure tensions between Syrians and Lebanese in some communities. If there are</p>

	Better Learning	Nashatati	I-Deal and Be There
	<p>process that allowed the program to be modified based on the evidence.</p> <p>Investment in training and coaching. Create a well-trained and qualified team to run the program that can provide reliable and continuous technical advice. The training approach that allows teachers and facilitators to receive ongoing training.</p> <p>Harmonization. Coordinate with other organizations in the sector to avoid overlap, repetition and duplication. Also, support community-based organizations and local organizations to strengthen their work and expand the organization's coverage where it does not have access.</p> <p>Guidance Kit. The guidance provided in this kit is relevant to all BLP programming, including BLP start-up - for education programs with limited/no BLP experience. It is a set of four guides for BLP implementation throughout the project cycle: Programming for Wellness and Introduction to BLP; preparing for BLP Programming; capacity Building for BLP Programming; & Implementing and Monitoring BLP Programming.</p>	<p>country, without financial support, because it is believed that it is important and can help students.</p> <p>Incentives. Offering non-monetary incentives such as certificates of participation or having the training count towards professional development may help more schools join the program. Some teachers are disengaged because ECA training courses are not yet certified, which could limit their level of engagement.</p> <p>Community Involvement. Involving the local community in the program is very helpful as it brings valuable ideas, ensures that the needs of the community are better met and reinforces the effect of the program. For example, the online program during the pandemic was not as successful as the face-to-face program because parents were not involved nor understand the importance of the program.</p> <p>Contextualization. The implementation of emotional and social programs can carry risks related to fear and rejection, especially if certain topics are not dealt with sensitively. However, in this program there were no such risks because the topics were culturally appropriate, and the educational community was consulted before approving the materials.</p>	<p>tensions, the activities can be carried out separately, and if there are no tensions, the activities can be carried out together.</p>