

Funding Proposal
on
Girl's Education in Lebanon

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Rationale

Quantitatively, girl's education seems not to be a priority in Lebanon, as national school enrollment rates for boys and girls do not reflect any marked differences. In fact, Lebanon ranks among the pioneer countries in the region to have encouraged girls to be educated. Yet, the outcomes and impact of this education are not that impressive. Females tend to assume domestic roles and when employed, the jobs acquired are low paying ones, resulting in high development cost in terms of lost returns on the investment in their education. Furthermore, females have limited involvement in national, community and family decisions and rarely have a role in setting policy, even in areas that may directly affect them. This reflects gender bias in cultural values and a traditional inter-generational female stereotyping. School, on the other hand, and particularly at the basic education levels, is the common social and cultural context where values are shared by students. Curricula in its content and methodology are the traditional sources of information on social norms and projections of future roles. In Lebanon, the current curricula reform process presents the necessary opportunity to influence students role modeling and intellect and to improve the outcomes and impact of the educational teaching/learning process in relation to gender issues.

Background

Lebanon is a small country of 10452 sq/km overlooking the Mediterranean. It has a population of around 3.1 million and a child population of around one million between 0-15 years. Emerging out of 16 years of civil war that has destroyed its economy and its infrastructure, the country has embarked on a process of healing and reconstruction. Despite a tangible revival of the national economy, the sequels of this civil war are, unfortunately, still perceptible and the costs of living are on the rise. Twenty-eight percent of families, in fact, live under the poverty line; 75 percent of these are found in the rural and peri-urban areas. Some 450,000 people are still displaced, living under hard conditions and being deprived of many basic needs. Moreover, the preliminary figures of the UNFPA survey reflect that 14% of the households are headed by females, while female participation in the workforce is only 21%.

Though data reflect no gender disparities in enrollment rates on a national scale, enrollment rates in the public sector tend to be more in favor of girls than for boys, indicating that parents send their daughters to schools where education is financially less constraining, although it may reflect poorer facilities, less competent and motivated teachers and in general lower quality, eventually resulting in inadequate learning levels. It also indicates that the public sector provides the necessary vehicle for promoting girls' education. Compulsory education is not enforced in Lebanon. There are

progressive efforts done towards achieving this objective, but these are still scheduled for legislation. The majority of the teachers are females, while 60.5% of the school principals are males¹. The same study reflects an illiteracy rate of 12.5% among women whose children are in the 4th primary grade, while it is 6.7% among fathers of the same sample. Results of the LAP 95 further indicate no discrepancy in learning competencies at the national level. Yet, the same data reflects better achievement levels in favor of boys in mathematics nationally and in sciences in certain regions.

The curriculum with which students start at the primary level is discriminatory against girls. Locally developed Lebanese textbooks often portray women in passive and powerless roles, thus reinforcing negative stereotypes. Most of these textbooks focus on references and illustrations of men and boys. Also, most of the textbooks contain images of males in heroic roles. The most common female images are of women and girls in domestic roles or in teaching. In few illustrations, females were even depicted as destroyers of the environment, i.e. throwing garbage in the wrong places and out of windows. Women, also, are never portrayed as professionals, scientists or prominent figures. When there is a need to mention a certain occupation, then it would be portrayed by a male. When a good deed is needed to be illustrated, usually a boy would be depicted. Thus, conditioning to this negative female image and heroic role modeling of males start from the early stages of education.

All of the above justifies the need to improve attitudes towards females through a project that will foster the right teaching/learning methods and content in education. This will contribute to the overall social development of the country and higher economical returns since education is the cornerstone of such development and its foundation.

Constraints

The implementation of the proposed project may be hindered by :

- Lack of a governmental agenda on gender issues.
- Cultural norms and traditions due to misconceptions and misinterpretation of common doctrines.
- Lack of adequate qualified expertise nationally.
 - The declining interest of international donors in development projects in Lebanon

Opportunities

The implementation of this project may be enhanced by the following considerations:

¹ Learning Achievement Project 95 (LAP 95).

- Both the CRC and CEDAW have been ratified by the Lebanese government.
- The time is just right to build on the momentum of national efforts to reform the curriculum within the MOE/CERD five year plan.
- The majority of the teachers are females, thus they could act as agents of change, should the right sensitization and training be provided.
- Interagency collaboration is particularly active which, will helps in focussing efforts on common aims.
- It is relatively easy to build on the previous successful cooperation within the Global Education Initiative.

Objective of the Project

To enhance the emotional well-being and intellectual growth of girls to become productive and responsible adults in their future within a learning environment that fosters no bias in attitudes toward the role of the female in the society.

Specific Objectives

- To carry out a comprehensive analysis of the educational situation of girls and women while including a gender analysis of the curricula in its content and methodology
- To extend, within the formal and non-formal curricula, gender sensitive activity modules that foster positive attitudes to women's role within basic life skills and learning competencies with assessment and evaluation techniques.
- To improve the attitudes of 1500 educators toward gender sensitive issues while promoting the relevant articles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) with respect to girls rights.
- To involve 60,000 basic education level students in curricula and extra-curricula activities that aim at greater empowerment of females while encouraging the participation of parents and the community.

Duration, Geographical Coverage and Beneficiaries of the Project

The Project will last for a period of four years. Beneficiaries will be 60,000 students between the age of 5 to 15 years in addition to their parents, especially illiterate women in underserved areas. The activities will involve 1,500 educators including teachers, school counselors, principals and social workers. The first year of the project will be spent in analysis, building a data base and planning while the remaining three years will be spent in developing materials for each one of the three cycles of the basic education level (primary-one, primary-two and intermediate) and implementing these materials in 150 schools. Thus, three student activity files, three training manuals and three teachers guides will be developed and will be implemented in 150 schools of the basic education level.

Activities

Planning and Advocacy

In order to support advocacy efforts and decision makers in their planning efforts, a gender analysis of the situation of girls at the basic education level will be conducted in the first year of the project covering in- and out-of-school girls. Rates of completion, retention, repetition, attendance and dropout will be surveyed on a continuous basis and in complementary effort to the Education Management Information System (SIMS) project within the 1997-2001 Programme of Cooperation. The comprehensive analysis in the first year will target the curricula as well as assess how messages about the role of girls and women in society are conveyed to students. The analysis will explore female social stereotyping, aptitudes, social roles and participation in development. Teachers will act as field administrators by providing the necessary data input to this analysis. The output of these studies will be used in advocacy efforts to sensitize decision makers to gender issues and perception of the important role of women in society and development. CRC and human rights issues will be the entry point to the advocacy efforts through all educational and communication channels. Communication materials will be produced to raise public awareness and support advocacy efforts. Variety, quality and quantity of these materials will be evaluated on a continuous basis in relation to the time spent by users on these materials.

Service delivery

In collaboration with the private sector, other UN agencies and universities, UNICEF will support the MOE and CERD in improving the content of the educational materials regarding the image and role of females in the basic education level curricula. Activities will aim at enhancing the female self esteem, cooperative behavior of girls and boys as well as respect for gender equity. Assessment and evaluation techniques that will desegregate data per gender will be included as an on-going process of the teaching/learning activity modules. Each year one trainers manual, one teachers guide and one student activity file per grade will be developed to provide materials covering in total 9 years of the basic education level. The results of the curricula analysis to be conducted within the first year of this 4-year project will indicate the scope of work needed to develop gender sensitive materials. Female role models will be included in the textbooks to reach a balance with the current male oriented curricula. Active and proactive women will be portrayed in a wide variety of occupations, particularly modern settings, both in text and illustrations. The availability of these materials with the users, i.e. manuals for trainers, guides for teachers and activity files for students, will be monitored. The frequency of usage and time put by trainers, teachers and students on

these activities will be assessed. Pre- and post- tests will focus on finding about attitude changes in boys and girls involved in these activities.

Empowerment of Beneficiaries

In collaboration with MOE, the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) and active NGOs, curricular and extra-curricular activities and other extension programmes, including literacy classes within non-formal channels of learning, will be planned and will promote, through the formula of school clubs, the participation and involvement of parents and other community members. Clubs will provide the forum where girls, youth, teachers and other members of the community will share experiences. Activities will include sports, debates / theatrical performances by the children, carrying gender sensitive messages. Focused interventions such as the child-to-child approach will involve out-of-school girls in an effort to encourage their participation in education whether formal or non-formal. Pre- and post- assessment techniques will be used to evaluate the impact of these interventions. Each year, theatrical performances by boys and girls, debates and fairs will be organized in 50 schools to reach 20,000 children for a total of 60,000 so that 150 schools, at the end of the three years, will have been involved. Girls and boys will be expected to perform together and participate in gender sensitive activities. KAP studies will be conducted as pre- and post- assessments to find out and measure the possible attitude change and future outlook of these children who will be expected to identify, analyze and criticize gender biases in all testing activities and report on incidences of discrimination in classrooms and in other environments. Literacy classes will be held in schools after school hours and children with illiterate parents will be encouraged to act as agents of change and eventually encourage their parents and others in the community to participate in these classes. The variety of curricular and extracurricular activities will be assessed on a regular basis. Time put by children in these activities will be closely monitored.

Building National Capacities

Training will be provided to enhance national capacities towards acquiring positive female attitudes. Teacher trainers, youth leaders and social workers will be trained and, in a multiplier effect, will in turn train around 1,500 educators including teachers, inspectors, counselors and school principals in addition to social workers and girls leaders at central and peripheral levels. Assessment and evaluation techniques will be included. The training techniques will be based on interactive approaches to cover : 1- *Training of coreteam*, 2- *Training of Trainers*, 3- *Training of teachers*, 4-*Training of social workers and girls leaders*.

Teacher training programmes will include sessions that help teachers improve their teaching skills through gender-based awareness raising and effective teaching/learning strategies. Teachers will be responsible to use gender sensitive language in the

classrooms and to follow interactive teaching methodologies while encouraging increased girls participation. Classroom organization strategies will also be included, such as gender-based seating arrangements. Teachers skills will also be upgraded to reinforce a positive attitude in all pupils, boys and girls, toward mathematics and science in order to overcome low results in these subjects as mentioned above and develop in all pupils, girls and boys, a desire for continued professional and academic growth.

Monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be monitored through regular field visits to all regions of Lebanon. Teachers will be evaluated on the amount of time they spend discussing gender issues. Students will be evaluated on the number of activities finalized and the amount of time put in completing activities. The following indicators, some of which quantitative but also several of a qualitative nature, will be measured in all the project activities:

Input indicators:

- Costs.
- Availability of materials per student.
- Curriculum content, extracurricular activities, variety, percentage, balance.
- Teacher training sessions, teacher workload and background.

Process indicators:

- Student work per activity in class and out of class activities, learning load, time on task.
- Teacher performance, lesson planning, classroom techniques, instructional techniques, teaching skills, time assigned to students, time spent/student.
- Completion rate, dropout rate, repetition rate, attendance and retention rate.

Results of Education, Output indicators:

- Student outcomes, learning achievement level, with particular respect to two subjects: math & sciences.
- Student social attitudes & behaviour.
- Life skills: social cooperative skills, work skills, foreign language, higher cognitive skills.
- External efficiency: community satisfaction with school output, perception to economic returns to education.

Quantifiable indexes will be defined for at least some of the above indicators and regularly monitored as to their change and impact on policy makers, on the benefitting girls, on the community including parents and on educators, including teachers and school principals. Periodic reports will be prepared, highlighting the progress of project implementation, the lessons learned and the course corrections needed to address problems. Annual and mid-term reviews will be organized within a set schedule.

Project Management and Inputs

A national task force will be formed to implement this project under the management of MOE/CERD. Members of this national team will be from MOE, CERD, MOSA, NGOs, universities, teachers of private and public schools in addition to the Higher Council for Childhood and media experts. The project activities will essentially be carried out with contributions from two main sources, Government and UNICEF, with inputs from other agencies. Attached is the overall budget. Government inputs will cover operational and administrative costs. The inputs from UNICEF and other agencies will cover:

- a) Transport and overtime for Lebanese officials of all levels working on the project;
- b) Fees for the consultants (training activities, design and development of materials, including info and education packages, surveys and evaluations tests and questionnaires, data analysis, reporting, etc.), translators (activities, tests, reports, etc.) and field workers;
- c) Travel costs of international (if and when required) and local consultants and other professionals working in the project;
- d) Miscellaneous.

Budget

	1997	1998	1999	2000	Total
Advocacy & Planning	50,000-	50,000-	45,000-	40,000-	185,000
Curricula reform	30,000-	30,000-	25,000-	25,000-	110,000
Training	10,000-	20,000-	20,000-	15,000-	65,000
Activities	20,000-	20,000-	20,000-	20,000-	80,000
International Consultancy	20,000-	15,000-	10,000	5,000-	50,000
Project Support	28,600-	29,700-	24,400	23,100-	105,800
Total	158,600-	164,700-	146,400-	128,100-	597,800

