

# FINAL REPORT

Education for Refugee  
Children - Basic Literacy  
Numeration



## PRESENTED BY

Sawa Association for Development

## IN COLLABORATION WITH

Ushagram Suisse Association

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# SAWA, USHAGRAM UNICEF & MEHE

Sawa Association for Development, in collaboration with Ushagram Suisse Association, continues to implement the BLN Programme in Mansoura with the ongoing support and funding from our partners.

Sawa Association for Development remains the Co-Chair of the BLN Sub-Group for the Bekaa region, nominated by UNICEF. With NRC, we coordinate monthly meetings for all NGOs implementing BLN programs in Bekaa, document minutes, and share MEHE/UNICEF updates.

UNICEF coordinates all BLN-implementing NGOs to avoid duplication and ensure harmonized implementation. UNICEF also leads monthly national education meetings to discuss progress and challenges and to share MEHE updates.

In 2025, MEHE introduced a major change:

Syrian children may now register in public schools without residency or sponsorship, provided they have not been out of education for more than two years.

This decision enabled 106 children from Sawa's program to enroll at Mansoura Public School for the academic year 2025-2026.



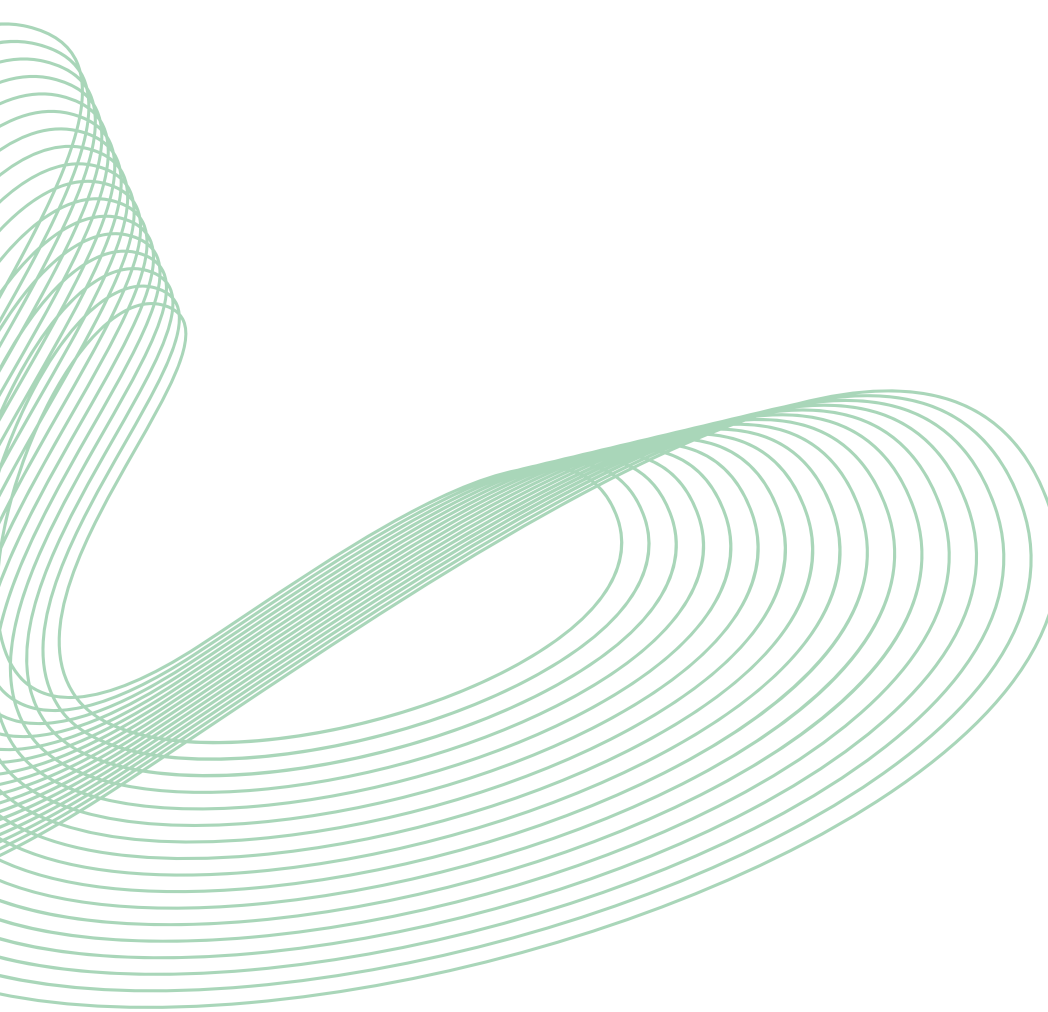
# GLOSSARY

BLN: Basic literacy and numeracy.

CBECE: Community-based early childhood education.

MEHE: Ministry of higher education.

OoSC: Out-of-school children.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As Lebanon continues to navigate economic collapse and displacement challenges, the educational needs of Syrian refugee children remain urgent. According to VASyR 2024, 59% of Syrian primary-age children and only 19% of secondary-age children attend school.

Sawa for Development Association implemented Cycle 1 & 2 of the BLN Program in Mansoura in 2025, supporting 50 Syrian refugee children (July–October 2025). The program strengthened literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional skills, preparing learners for transition into the public school system.

A major milestone this year was MEHE's decision allowing Syrian children to register in public schools even without residency, as long as they had not been out of school for more than two years.

As a result, 106 students from Sawa's program were officially enrolled in Mansoura Public School for the academic year 2025–2026.

This report reflects 2025 achievements, updated VASyR 2024 statistics, and Sawa's expanded impact on refugee education pathways.

# THE CRISIS AT A GLANCE.



THE WORLD BANK HAS DESCRIBED WHAT IS HAPPENING IN LEBANON AS POSSIBLY ONE OF THE TOP THREE ECONOMIC COLLAPSES SEEN SINCE THE MID 19TH CENTURY. WHAT THE UNICEF SURVEY SHOWS IS THAT CHILDREN ARE BEARING THE BRUNT OF THIS ESCALATING CATASTROPHE

**70%** OF HOUSEHOLDS DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH FOOD OR ENOUGH MONEY TO BUY FOOD. IN SYRIAN REFUGEE HOUSEHOLDS, THE FIGURE REACHES **99%**

**1 in 10** CHILDREN HAVE BEEN SENT TO WORK.

**59%** of primary-age Syrian refugee children attend school (VASyR 2024).

**4 in 10** REDUCED SPENDING ON EDUCATION TO BUY ESSENTIAL ITEMS.

# BARRIERS TO EDUCATION TRENDS AND STATISTICS (VASYR, 2024)

- Cost remains the top barrier (transportation 30%, materials 27%).
- School restrictions impacted 11% of children (prior to the 2025 MEHE decision).
- Child labor affects 7% of Syrian children (higher among boys).
- Disability creates additional barriers (18% cite disability as reason for non-enrollment).
- Documentation challenges prevented thousands from enrolling until MEHE allowed exceptions in late 2024.

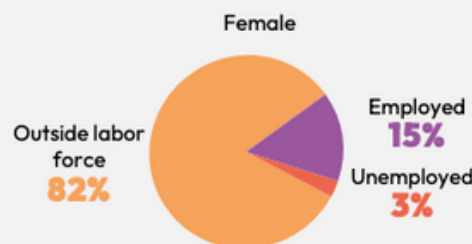
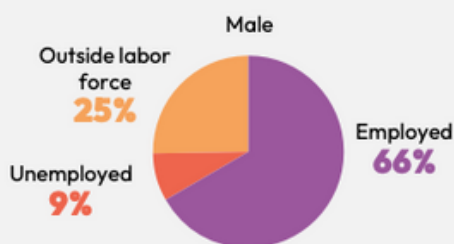
## School attendance

**Individuals above 6 years old who ever attended school**  
**70%**

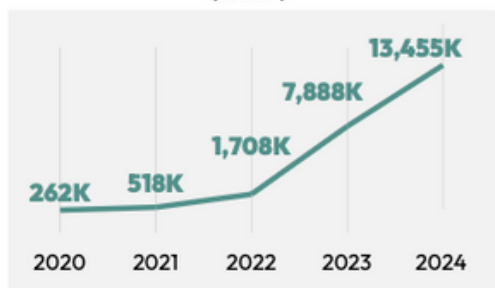
**Primary school net attendance (6–11 years old)**  
**59%**

**Secondary school net attendance (12–17 years old)**  
**19%**

## Employment status



## Total income from employment per household (in LBP)





# CHILD LABOUR TRENDS AND STATISTICS (VASYR, 2024)

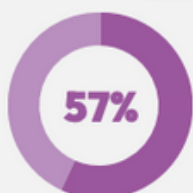
Child labour involves children engaged in work that is harmful or unsuitable for their age, compromising their physical, mental, social, or educational development. Article 32 (1) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child protects children from economic exploitation and hazardous work.

## Key Statistics (2021-2023):

- Child labor increased from 4.3% in 2022 to 7.3% in 2023-2024.
- Boys (11.2%) are significantly more affected than girls (3.2%).
- Highest levels recorded in Baalbek-Hermel and South Lebanon.
- Economic pressure forces families to rely on children's income.

### Economical capacity to meet essential needs

Below SMEB\*\*

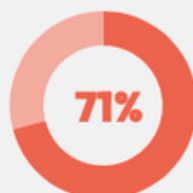


With assistance



Without assistance

Below MEB\*\*\*



With assistance



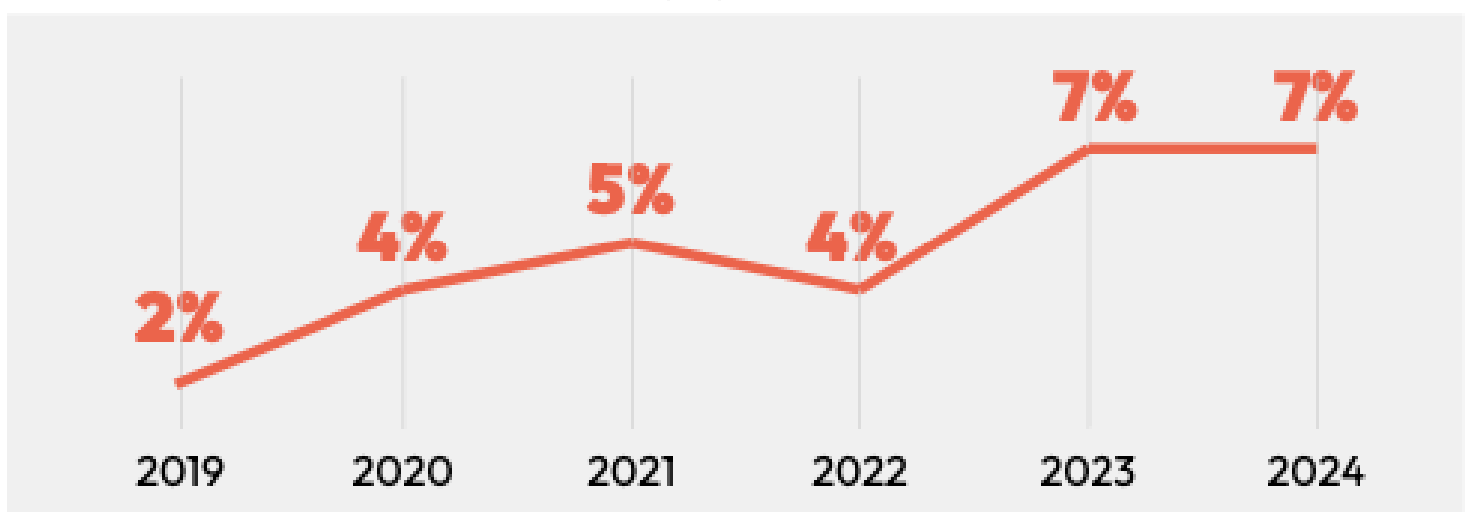
Without assistance

### Debt

**Debt per household  
(all households)**  
35,880,000LBP

**Debt per household  
(households with debt)**  
44,850,000

## Children engaged in child labour

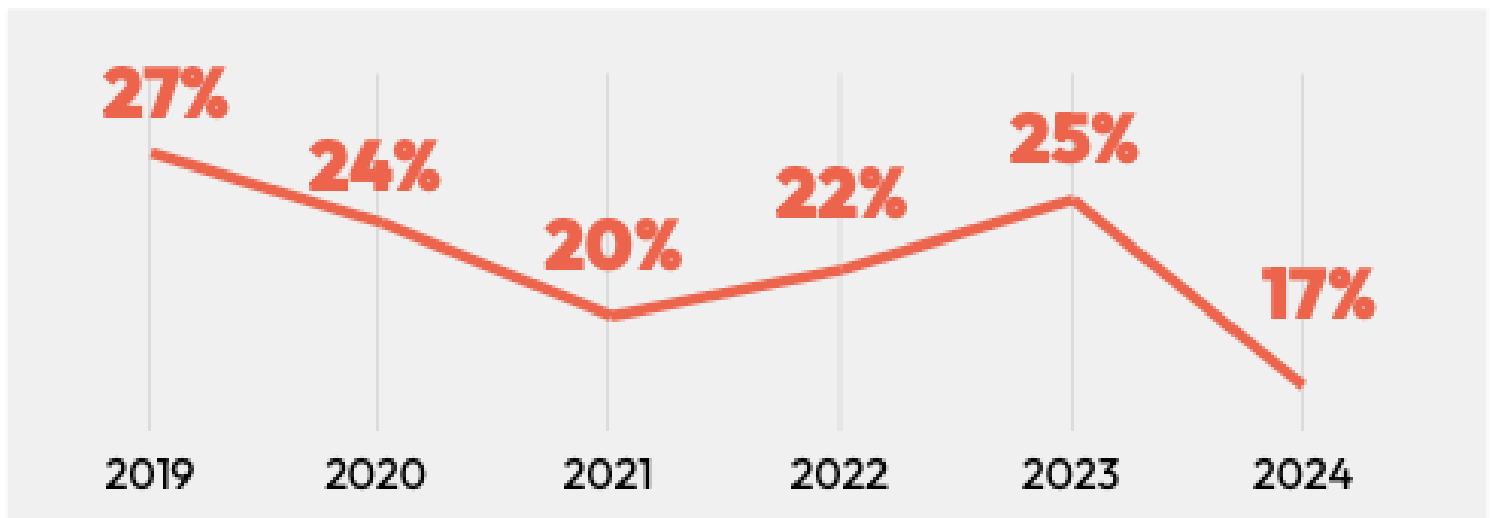




# EARLY MARRIAGE TRENDS AND STATISTICS (VASyR, 2023)

- 17% of girls aged 15-19 are married (VASyR 2024).
- Early marriage disproportionately affects girls (vs. 3% of boys).
- Highest rates found in Mount Lebanon and South.
- Rates are nearly triple in male-headed households.

## Girls between 15 and 19 years of age currently married



# LEBANON'S CRISIS AND HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

The situation in Lebanon became insecure due to the Gaza conflict. Schools faced instability and risks. Below is a summary of key events and the effect on education systems:

689,715

(LEBANESE AND SYRIANS) DISPLACED AS OF OCTOBER 7, 2023.

2,169

DEATHS

10,212

INJURIES

258,000

INDIVIDUALS FLED FROM LEBANON TO SYRIA

OF WHICH 70% SYRIANS, 30% LEBANESE

- **October 2024:** War spread across Lebanon, starting in the South, leading to mass displacement. Residents from the South and West Bekaa relocated to public schools nationwide, which halted registration for Lebanese and Syrian students due to overcrowding.
- **November Memo:** Lebanese students allowed in both morning and afternoon shifts, excluding Syrians. Specific schools designated exclusively for Lebanese students.
- **Post-Ceasefire** (November 27, 2024): Syrian students permitted afternoon shifts only if space was available, with priority for Lebanese students.

## Current Needs:

- Safe shelters, healthcare, food, cash assistance, and protection services remain critical for affected populations.
- Public School Usage: Displaced people occupy 713 centers, with 296 shelters closed post-ceasefire.

## Humanitarian Response:

- UNHCR Flash Appeal: Seeking \$425.7 million to assist 1 million people over three months.
- Emergency Appeal for Lebanon: \$111 million requested for relief items, cash assistance, and institutional support.
- UNHCR emphasizes equitable access to aid and adherence to humanitarian principles.

# BLN EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN PROGRAMME

In 2025, Sawa's BLN programme supported 100 children total, including:

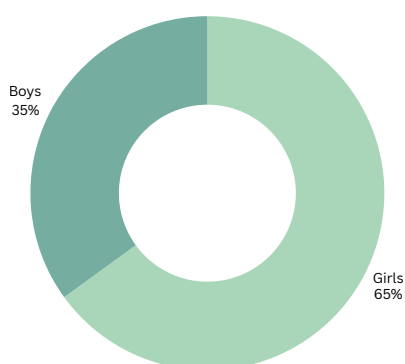
- 50 children who completed Cycle 1 & 2 (July–October 2025)
- 50 children transitioning from the 2024 cycles into Level 3

The curriculum remains aligned with national KG3 objectives, covering:

- Arabic & English language
- Mathematics
- Art, PSS, socio-emotional wellbeing

The programme now prioritizes:

- Reintegration into public schools
- Parental engagement
- Awareness on MEHE's new registration policy



2

VILLAGES IN BEKAA.

3

LEVELS FOR STUDENTS TO COMPLETE.

4

BLN-TRAINED TEACHERS FOR OUR PROJECT WHO IN TURN WERE BEING ECONOMICALLY EMPOWERED THROUGH COMPENSATION FOR THEIR SERVICES.

80

TEACHING HOURS PER MONTH @ 4 HOURS PER DAY FOR 5 DAYS PER WEEK PER TEACHER.

# OBJECTIVES OF BLN EDUCATION FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

the following general objectives of this BLN program have been selected directly from the official national preschool curriculum developed by CERD because it is believed that the national KG3 learning objectives are the most appropriate ones to achieve the BLN objective since they develop the child's linguistic, logical, socio-emotional, artistic and motor skills, serving as a pathway for entry into formal schools.

1

Develop the child into a social person who acquires constructive culture and habits that reinforce his/her spirit of openness, cooperation, integration, interaction and active participation with others.

2

Strengthen the learning process in order to develop the child's sensory, physical, emotional, social, and intellectual skills, so that the child can express him/herself, the needs and perceptible discoveries, and think and imagine so as to expand his/her experience, discover the world and build up their information base.

3

Assist the child to adapt to the school atmosphere, fit into the new environment and be well prepared for the next stage, taking into consideration his/her childhood and needs.

# BLN EDUCATION - TEACHING METHOD

**Selection Criteria:** Based on MEHE's SOPs, children with scores less than 8/20 as an overall average or less than 7/20 in one or more major subject of the Lebanese curriculum (e.g. Arabic language, Foreign language, Mathematics, Science), are eligible for outreach as they show risk of academic difficulty.

**Education Material:** We received the books from MEHE directly at the start of the sessions, we provided the students with stationary.

**Curriculum:** English, Arabic, Mathematics in both Arabic and English, and Psychological and Social Support (PSS).

**Modality:** Face to face learning with regular classes where teachers provide 4 hours per day for 5 days. The students have regular homework daily and exams every 2 weeks to monitor their progress.

4 BLN-trained teachers:

1. **Rabiha Bou Merhi**
2. **Chiraz Al Hayeck**
3. **Mary Hanna**
4. **Hanadi Acouche**

Stronger attendance tracking following displacement waves  
Expanded PSS through storytelling, art therapy, and movement sessions  
Increased focus on transition readiness for public school enrollment  
Parent sessions explaining the MEHE decision allowing Syrian registration without residency

## Outcome 1: Improved Demand and Access to Non-Formal Education Opportunities

The first outcome remains focused on increasing enrollment in non-formal education pathways for Syrian refugee children. As of 2023:

- 56% of children aged 6–17 were in school, with girls enrolled at higher rates in primary and lower secondary levels.
- Financial constraints, including transportation (30%) and educational material costs (27%), were the top barriers to education.

## Outcome 2: Improved Quality of Education Services

SAWA continues to enhance the quality of education through its structured three-level BLN program. By the end of the 2024 cycle:

- 50 students transitioned to public schools (25 girls, 25 boys).
- 25 students advanced to Level 2 and 25 to Level 3 within the BLN framework.
- Teachers received updated training to address the unique needs of displaced children and monitor attendance more effectively.

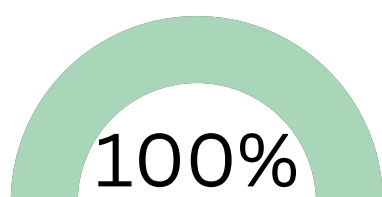
# ATTENDANCE & PERFORMANCE METRICS

The displacement crisis post-October 2023 has significantly impacted attendance.

## Key Challenges:

1. School Access: Public schools have prioritized Lebanese students due to capacity constraints, leaving Syrian students reliant on non-formal programs, in afternoon shifts for the academic year 2024-2025.
- 1.1. Registration Deadline: January 31, 2026.
- 2.2. Eligibility: Limited to students with valid residency permits or UNHCR identification cards.
- 3.3. Start of Teaching: January 7, 2026.
- 4.4. 21977 students are registered in the public schools in Bekaa , only 11899 joined the classes due to the lack of documents (residency or registration with UNHCR)

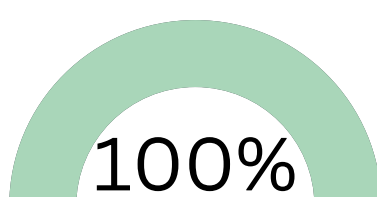
**End of Cycle Results:** We administered examinations for levels 1 & 2, a total of 100 students (25 in Level 1, 25 in Level 2, 50 in level 3). The test did not have a "Fail" result, rather a "Low Level Grade" which is lower than 9/10. Below summarizes the results of that examination.



### Level 1

**Examination Results**  
25/25 students received a  
"High Grade Level".

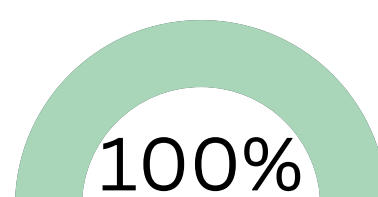
25 students graduated to  
Level 2.



### Level 2

**Examination Results**  
25/25 students received a  
"High Grade Level".

25 students graduated to  
Level 3.



### Level 3

**Examination Results**  
47/50 students received a  
"High Grade Level".

50 students graduated to  
public schools.

# OUR IMPACT.

In **2021-2022**

**90** GRADUATES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL.

In **2022-2023**

**100** GRADUATES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL.

In **2023-2024**

**321** GRADUATES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL.

In **2024-2025**

**106** GRADUATES TO PUBLIC SCHOOL.

## TO DATE

**617**

STARTED PUBLIC SCHOOL EDUCATION  
AFTER COMPLETING ALL 3 LEVELS UNDER  
SAWA ASSOCIATION FOR DEVELOPMENT'S  
PROGRAM.



# ACHIEVEMENTS & MILESTONES.

- Successfully integrated the MEHE policy change into outreach
- Community WhatsApp announcements and Arabic infographics
- House-to-house awareness visits to parents
- Two students with special needs received individualized support
- Follow-up monitoring of all 106 enrolled students
- New agricultural and environmental activities (waste sorting, planting)
- Vision screening for children with potential eyesight difficulties

Here are the activities we facilitated for our students to enrich their learning experience:

- Participation in Art Competition about Peace with IWPG.
- The children learned the agriculture of vegetables & waste management (plastic recycling)
- Clowns without Borders entertainment show - Special show for our Students in Qab Elias, Mansoura and Khiara
- Two Field trips to the natural reserves in Mansoura
- Parents meetings
- PSS sessions in Telling stories and Dance
- A student was complaining about eye pain and bad eye sight, so we had his eyes checked, revealing a myopia. We were able to secure glasses for the student to help him.
- To make the learning experience accessible, we had two students with special needs. Marwa was not able to speak, and Latifa had a physical disability not allowing her to walk. We provided special attention and accessibility to these students so they can continue their education.
- Psychological support through scheduled art days
- Recycling plastics into toys
- Extra activities in the fields, visiting farms and natural reserves

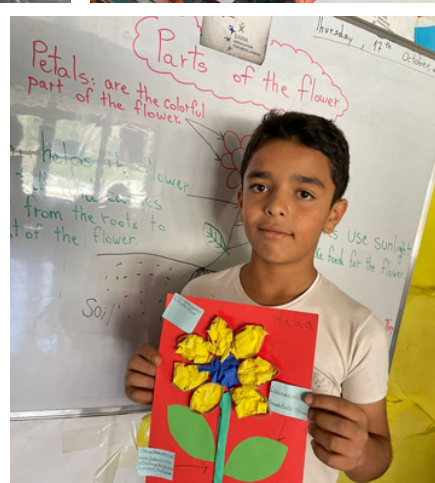
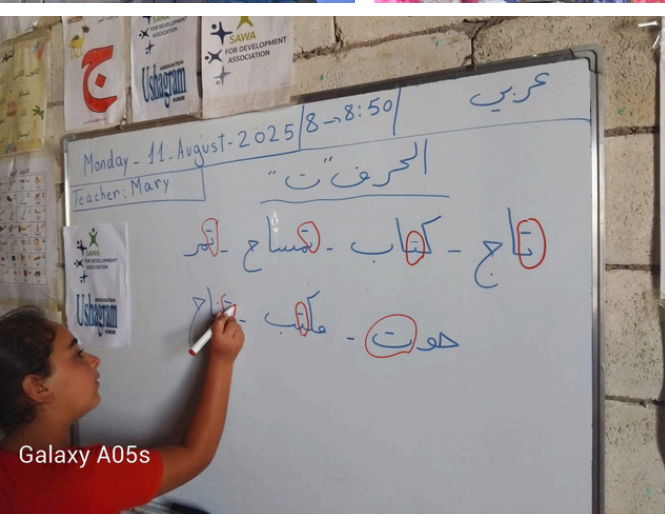
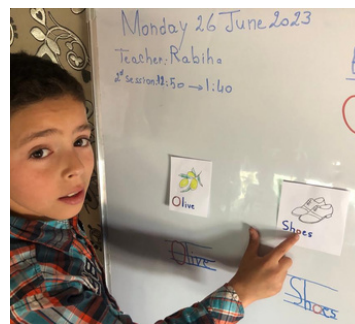
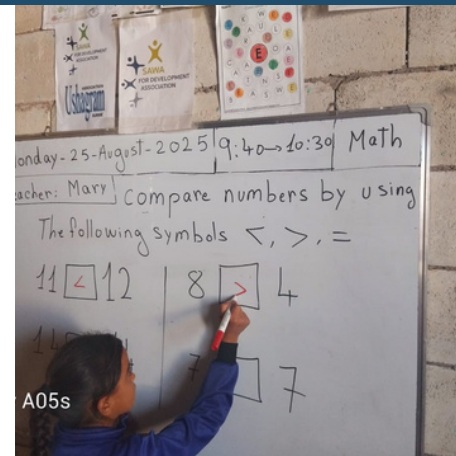
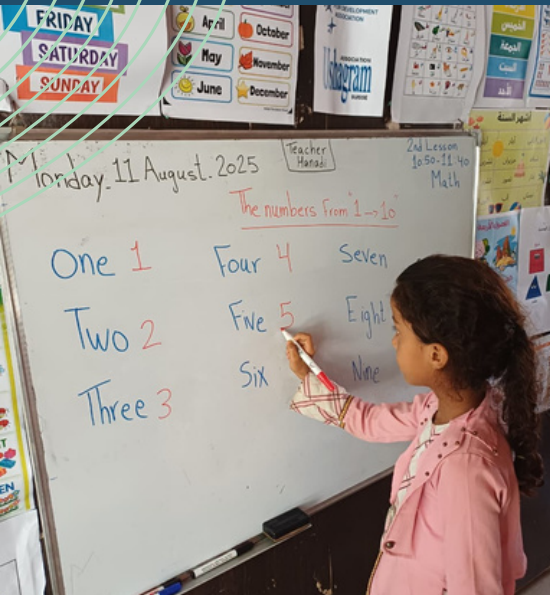
# MEHE DECISION & ENROLLMENT RESULTS

## MEHE POLICY CHANGE (OCT 2024)

- Non-Lebanese children may now register in afternoon public school shifts from KG3 to Grade 9 without residency or sponsorship, provided they were not out of school for more than two years.
- Impact on Sawa's Students
- This decision enabled Sawa to transition 106 Syrian refugee students from BLN to formal education in Mansoura Public School for year 2025-2026.
- A detailed list of names was issued and signed by the school director confirming enrollment.



# ACHIEVEMENTS & MILESTONES.





## ACHIEVEMENTS &amp; MILESTONES.





# RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE PLANS

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## Advocacy for Inclusive Policies:

- Collaborate with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) to secure afternoon school shifts for Syrian students.
- Expand public awareness campaigns to emphasize the importance of education over negative coping mechanisms.

## Enhanced Psychosocial Support:

- Increase art therapy and group counseling sessions to address trauma from displacement and conflict.

## Expanded Resource Allocation:

- Secure additional funding for transportation and educational materials to alleviate financial burdens on families.

## Capacity Building for Teachers:

- Provide advanced training on inclusive teaching practices for displaced and trauma-affected students.

# SOLUTION WE SUGGEST: RETENTION PROGRAM

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The Retention Program targets children enrolled in public schools from grade 6 - 9 who are at risk of dropping out due to their poor academic performance and achievement results. The program focuses on providing these children with individualized learning support in all the subjects that they need help with, especially the major subjects of the Lebanese curriculum (Arabic language, foreign language, mathematics, science).

- The Retention program will be conducted remotely for children previously identified or outreached.
- Only children in grade 6 - 9 who have fallen behind in their academics and scoring an average of 8/20 or below in the four main subjects (Math, Sciences, Arabic and Foreign language) OR children who are scoring an average of 7/20 in one of those 4 main subjects with a priority to be given to girls.
- Children should receive support in all subject areas with diagnostic/pre-test and summative/post tests.
- It consists of a total of 160 hours maximum/equivalent remote sessions, administered at a rate of 2-3 hours /sessions of learning per day, 4 days per week. A session can be defined only as the delivery of content for a planned topic/lesson by the facilitator.
- Children registered in the program will be counted once as unique children and will stay in the program until it ends.
- 50% of Lebanese and non-Lebanese students with gender balance in this program, as per UNICEF guidelines.

# CONCLUSION

Sawa Association for Development remains committed to ensuring that every child has the right to learn, grow, and transition into formal schooling.

The 2025 cycle marks a major turning point with MEHE's inclusive registration policy and the successful enrollment of 106 children in Mansoura Public School.

With the continuous support of Ushagram Suisse Association, Sawa will expand BLN, strengthen retention, and support families navigating the education system in a challenging national context.



# THANK YOU.



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