



RIGHT TO PLAY
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Enhancing Quality and Inclusive Education (EQIE)

Midline evaluation - Lebanon

First draft

September 2024

Note to the reader

This report was developed before the escalation of war on Lebanon in September 2024. Many recommendations, although feasible at the time, may not longer be fully achievable due to the recent events.

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CoP	Community of Practice
CP	Child Protection
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CWD	Children With Disabilities
CWPM	Correct Words Per Minute
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EQIE	Enhancing Quality and Inclusive Education
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HQ	Headquarters
ISELA	International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment
KII	Key Informant Interview
LSC	Learning Support Centre
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
OECD - DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – Development Assistance Committee
OOS	Out-Of-School
PBL	Play-Based Learning
PE	Physical Education
PSS	Psychosocial Support
RCA	Read, Connect and Apply
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
RTP	Right To Play
RWC	Readers With Comprehension
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SDI	Service Delivery Indicators
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SES	Socio-Economic Scale
ToC	Theory of Change
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund



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UNPF
USAID
WASH

United Nations Population Fund
United States Agency for International Development
Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Executive Summary

Background to Enhancing Quality and Inclusive Education

The Enhancing Quality and Inclusive Education (EQIE) program is being implemented by Right To Play (RTP) in Mozambique, Lebanon, Palestine, Ethiopia and Tanzania with the collaboration of local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and government partners. The project started in 2020 and will continue until 2025, with funding by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). The project's primary goals are to **improve the learning outcomes of children from Grade 1 to Grade 4** in terms of reading skills and socio-emotional learning, and to **improve the enrolment and retention of out-of-school (OOS) children with disabilities (CWD) and girls**. EQIE project goals are achieved by building the capacity of education staff, teachers, and parents to provide children with more frequent and higher-quality opportunities to practice reading skills (both inside and outside school) using child-centred, play-based and active learning methodologies, as well as by building the capacity of CSO partners to identify OOS girls and CWD and to develop follow-up and support systems.

This midline evaluation report focuses on Lebanon, where EQIE is implemented in kindergartens and Learning Support Centers (LSCs). The project reached 3,418 children in 2021, 6,384 children in 2022, and 12,814 children in 2023, across 22 kindergartens and 24 LSCs. Additionally, 6,184 children were reached through the Tabshoura platform, extending the impact beyond those directly involved in project activities.

Evaluation design and methods

This report summarizes midline evaluation findings through a comparison of baseline and midline **quantitative data**, as well as the analysis of midline **qualitative data**. The evaluation focused on project design and emerging results, assessing its **relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability**.

Key findings

Relevance

The EQIE program is a **holistic intervention** on teaching quality, home and school learning environments, and inclusion of CWD in education. It addressed the needs of children and teachers, particularly through play-based learning (PBL), which helped children manage stress and view education more positively. Teachers praised the training provided, emphasizing its role in building their skills and adopting more inclusive practices. Additionally, the program included components aimed at parents, like the English course, which received a positive response. However, there is limited data on the program's full impact on children with disabilities and caregivers due to sampling restrictions. The EQIE program also showed

significant flexibility in adapting to external challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the socio-economic crisis in Lebanon, and the conflict in Palestine. During school closures, the program pivoted to digital learning by developing the Tabshoura platform in collaboration with local partners, to ensure educational continuity.

Effectiveness

The EQIE program in Lebanon effectively supported teachers' professional development, particularly in adopting play-based learning (PBL) methods. Teachers reported increased confidence and improved pedagogical practices, which led to more interactive and student-centered classrooms. However, challenges such as insufficient materials, space, and limited follow-up training were highlighted. Classroom observations showed that teachers frequently implemented PBL methods, though activities focusing on reading comprehension and critical thinking were less common. While children showed consistent engagement and improved socio-emotional skills, results from the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) were mixed, with some declines in reading fluency and accuracy between the samples taken at midline and baseline¹. Girls generally outperformed boys in reading fluency, but boys showed improved reading comprehension by midline.

The program fostered a positive learning environment at home and in schools, with increased parental involvement and access to reading materials. Initiatives like reading clubs and mobile libraries enhanced children's engagement in reading, despite challenges in distributing materials. The program also emphasized inclusivity, making strides in gender equality and providing support for children with disabilities. –The project's success was driven by strong partnerships, flexibility in adapting to Lebanon's socio-economic crisis, and regular teacher training, but resource limitations and the challenging context posed ongoing barriers to full implementation.

It is important to note that the project was originally designed with outcomes intended for a non-emergency context but had to adapt to operate within the framework of education in emergencies. At the intermediate outcomes level, effectiveness was evident in the areas of teacher development, building a culture of reading, and fostering a safe and inclusive environment. However, at a higher objective level (improving holistic learning outcomes) effectiveness was not evident, mostly due to the rapidly deteriorating external conditions.

¹ The study involved two distinct samples at different points in time; it was not the same group of children who experienced decreased learning outcomes.

Efficiency

Right To Play partnered with local organizations like Developmental Action Without Borders (Naba'a) using a sub-granting model, which included capacity-building and a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach. While partners were valued for their contextual knowledge, some struggled with financial management, indicating the need for stronger monitoring and support. Elements like tech infrastructure, digital labs, and activities such as play tournaments were costly and hard to sustain. The main cost drivers included the Tabshoura App and disability support. Community-focused activities, like mothers' English courses, were effective but challenging to scale due to high costs, highlighting the need for a thorough budget assessment. Recommendations to improve cost efficiency include focusing on community-based interventions, outsourcing costly activities to other partners, and implementing structured planning to avoid excessive, unfocused piloting.

Sustainability

The sustainability of the EQIE project in Lebanon shows potential for continuity, especially in the components of teacher training and the Tabshoura digital platform. While financial constraints pose challenges for some activities including caregivers' English courses and technology innovation labs, the play-based learning approach has strong community and teacher support, suggesting continued implementation. Additionally, there is significant interest from stakeholders in expanding the program to more students and different grade levels, but further funding and strategic planning will be required to achieve scalability and long-term success.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Lessons Learned

The evaluation highlighted important lessons regarding the EQIE program's design, implementation, and research processes. While the program successfully improved students' reading fluency, challenges in reading comprehension persisted, signalling the need for more focus on deeper learning strategies. Significant progress was also observed in children's socio-emotional skills, particularly in collaboration and conflict resolution, though some gender differences emerged in these outcomes.

In terms of implementation, play-based learning (PBL) positively influenced classroom engagement, yet the adoption of student-centred activities varied across classrooms, with traditional methods still prevalent in some settings. Inclusive practices also advanced, but many classrooms remained under-resourced. Participation in out-of-school reading activities increased, but these did not strongly correlate with improvements in reading or socio-emotional skills, reflecting the need for more targeted engagement strategies.

On the research side, the assessment tools used for measuring reading skills may not have fully captured the progress of older students, and the absence of focus group discussions limited the qualitative insights, particularly regarding children with disabilities and caregivers.

Recommendations

In response to these lessons, several recommendations have been proposed to strengthen future program design and implementation. It is suggested that future initiatives place greater emphasis on reading comprehension and critical thinking activities, alongside fluency exercises, to foster deeper understanding. Gender-specific approaches should also be considered to ensure that both boys and girls equally benefit from socio-emotional learning.

In terms of implementation, further training on student-centred approaches, coupled with ongoing mentorship, would help ensure the consistent application of participatory teaching methods. Moreover, encouraging both in-person and virtual learning activities would help sustain education in times of crisis.

Lastly, the research process could be improved by using more advanced assessment tools for older students and adopting more flexible methods for gathering qualitative data, such as remote interviews or surveys, to capture a wider range of perspectives.

Introduction

The report is structured in four sections and five annexes. [Section 1](#) provides an overview of the project's context and background, while [Section 2](#) presents an overview of the evaluation methodology. [Section 3](#) presents the evaluation findings on relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. [Section 4](#) concludes and dives into lessons learned and recommendations from the evaluation.

Annexes include: the project's Theory of Change ([Annex 1](#)); the Evaluation and Analysis and Research frameworks ([Annex 2](#)); the respondent list ([Annex 3](#)); and the bibliography ([Annex 4](#)).

1. Context and Background

1.1 Lebanon Socio-economic and Educational Context

Lebanon is a Middle Eastern country with about 5.4 million inhabitants (UNFPA, 2023). Since 2019, the country has been facing one of the worst socio-economic crises in history (World Bank, 2021), exacerbated by the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and the 2020 Beirut Port explosion. More recently, the ongoing Israel attack on Gaza and the West Bank has impacted Lebanon as well, particularly in the south, and is expected to exacerbate further the country's dire economic conditions (UNDP, 2023).

Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees per capita and per square kilometre in the world, with a total of 1.5 million refugees (UNHCR, 2024). The majority are Syrian refugees, displaced in the country between 2011 and 2015 (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2021). Lebanon also hosts 210,000-250,000 Palestinian refugees, among whom 45% live in the country's 12 refugee camps operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNICEF, n.d.); (UNRWA, 2023). About 26% of them are under the age of 14, in line with the general Lebanese population (Chaaban, et al., 2016); (UNFPA, 2023).

Palestinian refugees in Lebanon have faced historical marginalization and exclusion from critical aspects of social, political, and economic life. They lack citizenship and the right to own property, experience limited access to public services (including health and education), and face restrictions in accessing several professions and job opportunities (UNHCR, 2016); (U.S. Department of State, 2022). For this reason, Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are highly dependent on UNRWA services.

About 80% of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon are reported to be living below the national poverty line (UNRWA, 2023), and about one-third are dependent on cash distributions from

UNRWA (McCloskey, 2023). The living conditions in the camps are frequently overcrowded, unclean, and unsafe (UNICEF, n.d.); (McCloskey, 2023), and are linked to mental health and protection issues (McCloskey, 2023). Refugees who live outside the camps, in adjacent areas known as Palestinian gatherings, are often even more vulnerable (UNICEF, n.d.).

The illiteracy rate among Palestinian refugees above 15 years of age was reported at 8% in 2016, ranging from 11.3% among females to 4.1% among males (Chaaban, et al., 2016). This is slightly above the general Lebanese population, in which 5% of adults (3% of males, 6% of females) are illiterate (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2024); (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2024); (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2024).

Government Education Policy and Plans

The Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE) is responsible for education policy in Lebanon. Education represents the largest share of expenditure for UNRWA across the countries in which it operates, accounting for 44% of total expenditure and 70% of its staff (UNRWA, 2023). Currently, UNRWA manages 65 schools in Lebanon, where almost 40,000 children are enrolled in grades from 1 to 12 (UNRWA, n.d.), while about 3% of students in Lebanese public schools are Palestinian (Ministry of Education and Higher Education, 2021).

The curriculum followed in UNRWA schools is in line with the official Lebanese one and is supplemented by courses on human rights (UNRWA, n.d.). Non-profit organizations enhance UNRWA's basic education program by providing preschool services, additional after-school recreational activities, psychosocial support, and vocational training (Chaaban, et al., 2016).

UNRWA has committed to inclusive education in its 2023-2028 Strategic Plan (UNRWA, 2023). Lebanon's MEHE approved in 2023 a National Policy on Inclusive Education for Children with Special Needs with several strategic goals. One goal is to increase public support for inclusive education through awareness-raising and the involvement of caregivers and communities. Another goal is to create and strengthen inclusive and accessible education services through, among others, inclusive school practices and approaches, capacity building for the education workforce, and accessible and safe learning environments (MEHE; CERD; Education Cannot Wait; UNICEF, 2023). The policy built on the experience of the Inclusive Education Pilot Project in Lebanese Public Schools started in 2018 (MEHE; UNICEF, 2021).

Learning Outcomes

About 97% of children are enrolled in primary schools, with no significant difference between boys and girls and between children living inside the camps and those who live in the gatherings (Chaaban, et al., 2016).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, Schools in Lebanon closed in late February 2020 and reopened only between October and November of the same year. Even then, children were

attending school in shifts, and COVID-19 outbreaks caused intermittent closures (UNRWA, 2021). Overall, schools were fully closed for 34 weeks and partially open for 15 weeks between 2020 and 2021 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2022). Full-time, in-person attendance only resumed in the school year 2022/2023 (UNRWA, 2022). Despite UNRWA shifted to remote and blended teaching methods during school closures, the transition significantly impacted student learning. The Assessment of Learning Outcomes (ALO)² conducted in October 2021 revealed a decline in the percentage of students meeting the minimum proficiency levels in Arabic compared to the 2015/16 school year. Only 18% of UNRWA Grade 4 students in Lebanon reached the minimum proficiency level in Arabic in 2021, compared to 65% in 2015. This average mask a stark gender difference, with 31% of females reaching the minimum proficiency levels, compared to 7% of males (UNRWA, 2022). Similar results on literacy skills and gender differences were found among Lebanese public primary school students following COVID-19 closures (USAID, 2022).

Education Quality and School Infrastructure

UNRWA reports the dropout rate in its primary schools in Lebanon to be around 1.2% in 2021/2022, with more boys dropping out than girls (1.6% compared to 0.8%) and a decreasing trend that has reversed since the start of the pandemic (UNRWA, 2022). The main reasons for dropout at the primary school level were the need to economically support the household and family issues, including violence and abuse (UNRWA, 2022).

A study conducted in 2013 found that teachers at UNRWA schools adopted passive teaching methods³ (UNRWA, 2014). To improve pedagogical practices, UNRWA introduced measures to professionalize teachers and enrich curricula to enhance students' competencies and life skills, ensuring equal opportunities and outcomes for boys and girls and strengthening support for students with disabilities (UNRWA, 2023). Currently, UNRWA teacher training incorporates the "Teacher-Centered Approach" and "Critical Thinking Approach". These approaches aim to empower teachers to foster critical thinking and engage in meaningful classroom discussions (UNRWA, 2023).

In recent years, due to budget cuts, additional pupils have been accommodated without a corresponding increase in the number of teachers. As a result, class sizes have grown

² The ALO replaced the Monitoring of Learning Achievement exams that were conducted until 2015/2016. Performance levels are categorized as "Not Achieved", "Partially Achieved", "Achieved" and "Advanced", with the latter two considered as the minimum proficiency level (UNRWA, 2022).

³ Passive teaching methods are traditional, teacher-centered approaches where students listen and absorb information with minimal interaction, often relying on lectures and rote memorization rather than active participation or critical thinking.

significantly. During the 2021–22 school year, 53 % of classes in UNRWA schools⁴ had more than 40 pupils (UNRWA, 2023). Moreover, numerous school buildings are aged and/or damaged. Some of them are not physically accessible for individuals with disabilities and lack gender-aware features such as the separation of lower grades from upper grades and internal toilets⁵. Over half of the schools operate on a double-shift basis, and many are housed in rented facilities. These spaces are often former residential buildings rather than purpose-built schools. About 50% of the schools lack the necessary physical space, proper lighting, and ventilation to create an optimal learning environment (UNRWA, 2023).

In the Summer of 2023, armed conflict erupted between factions in the Ein el Helwe camp, and all eight schools inside the camp were occupied by armed forces, while three other schools in its vicinities were used as temporary shelters (UNRWA, 2023); (OCHA; UNRWA, 2023). As a result, the start of the school year was postponed by a month for all students in the area, and alternative arrangements were put in place to allow children to attend classes, namely second-shift attendance in schools outside the camp (OCHA; UNRWA, 2023).⁶

Play-based Learning and Its Effects on Socio-Emotional Learning and Reading

Research shows that play-based learning (PBL) has significant benefits for socio-emotional skills and academic outcomes at the pre-primary level in Lebanon. Studies highlight how play fosters socio-emotional competencies among children aged four to five, including cooperation, social interaction, self-efficacy, social identity formation, positive peer relationships, and social literacy skills (Al-Hosni & Khamis, 2021). Additionally, PBL, particularly through structured play activities, has proven effective in teaching literacy skills such as phonemic awareness, print concepts, reading comprehension, and writing behaviors (Nasser, 2022). For instance, a UNICEF initiative in Lebanon aimed to enhance school readiness among preschoolers through play-based strategies, promoting emotional and social development. Educators observed that children who engaged in these activities exhibited better literacy skills in Arabic, improved socio-emotional abilities —such as collaboration and classroom participation— and stronger executive functions like concentration and task adherence (UNICEF Lebanon, 2022). While the focus has primarily been on pre-primary children, evidence regarding the impact of PBL on primary school students in Lebanon remains limited. However, a study conducted in the context of Lebanese refugee populations found that play-based interventions enhanced empathy and conflict resolution skills among children facing challenging circumstances

⁴ UNRWA operates in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank.

⁵ Internal toilets are restroom facilities located inside a building, providing easy access and better sanitation. In contrast, external toilets are located outside the main structure, often lacking the same level of convenience, privacy, and hygiene.

⁶ At the time of writing, only three out of eight schools were reported to have been reopened (L'Orient Today, 2024).

(Mansour, 2023). In contrast, research in other regions, such as a two-year intervention in Northern Ireland, indicated that while a play-based curriculum had no significant positive effects on reading and math in the medium term, it did enhance children's learning attitudes, social development, and emotional well-being compared to traditional classrooms (McGuinness, Sproule, Bojke, & Trew, 2014). It is crucial to approach PBL evidence with caution, especially in Lebanon's diverse and complex sociocultural landscape. There is consensus on the value of play for children's socialization, enjoyment, and overall well-being. However, the effectiveness of play in academic contexts can vary, often due to challenges in defining what constitutes "play" for research purposes (Khalil, Aljanazrah, Hamed, & Murtagh, 2022). Culturally relevant play-based approaches are essential, as the perception and significance of play differ across sociocultural settings (Mendenhall, Chopra, Falk, Henderson, & Cha, 2021). Furthermore, structural barriers, such as overcrowded classrooms and limited resources, can hinder the implementation of PBL in Lebanon, particularly in areas affected by crises (Mendenhall, Chopra, Falk, Henderson, & Cha, 2021); (Khalil, Aljanazrah, Hamed, & Murtagh, 2022).

1.2 Project Background

Right To Play (RTP) is a global organization committed to protecting, educating, and empowering children to rise above adversity using the power of play. Established in 2000, RTP has pioneered a play-based approach to learning and child development that focuses on quality education, life skills, health, gender equality, child protection (CP), and building peaceful communities. RTP began working in Lebanon in 2006 and is active in the governorates of Akkar, North Lebanon, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and South Lebanon. Work in the country involves supporting children and youth from vulnerable communities of various nationalities, including vulnerable Lebanese children and youth, displaced Palestinian and Syrian refugees, as well as stateless children and youth residing in Lebanon.

Today, the work of RTP revolves around three different primary areas:⁷

- + **Education, using play to improve learning outcomes.** Right to Play develops activities to enhance children's literacy and numeracy skills, mainly targeting primary-school pupils, but also teenagers, youth, or children in pre-primary education.
- + **Gender-sensitive programming.** Right to Play initiatives apply a gender-sensitive approach through training, implementation, and advocacy sessions. Some projects are more directly gender-focused and include behavioural change about gender-based violence (GBV) and forced marriage as the explicit project goal.

⁷ For more detailed information, see the RTP website [here](#).

- + **Health, well-being, and Psychosocial Support (PSS).** This is a newer area for the organization, which has more long-standing experience in the education sector. Health interventions range from sexual and reproductive health, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, to psychosocial support.

Enhancing Quality and Inclusive Education (EQIE) is a five-year education program (2020-2024), financed by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and implemented by RTP and various local partners. The program implements tailored and context-specific intervention strategies in Ethiopia, Lebanon, Mozambique, Palestine, and Tanzania. EQIE's goals are achieved by building the capacity of education staff, teachers, and parents to provide children with more frequent and higher-quality opportunities to practice reading skills (both inside and outside school) using child-centred, play-based, and active learning methodologies. RTP is also building the capacity of partner Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) to identify out-of-school children with disabilities and to develop follow-up and support systems.

In Lebanon, the EQIE program aims to improve the learning outcomes of boys and girls living in Palestinian refugee camps. It is being implemented in kindergartens and Learning Support Centers (LSCs), rather than in traditional primary schools. The intervention targets reading proficiency for Grades 1-4 students and seeks to increase retention rates for out-of-school children with disabilities (CWD).

1.2.1 Recent changes in context and background affecting project implementation

During project implementation, Lebanon was affected by severe crisis and dreadful escalation of violence, that affected project's logistics and most of all the safety, well-being and stability of all actors involved (children, RTP staff, families, and broader communities).

- + **COVID-19:** At the beginning of the project, the COVID-19 pandemic was at its peak, causing delays in the baseline study until after lockdown restrictions were lifted. The children now in Grade 4, who experienced disruptions to schooling in their early education (during the 2020/2021 academic year, while in kindergarten and Grade 1) were the focus of the midline study. This creates a variable in learning outcomes when comparing the midline results of these Grade 4 students, who lacked proper early school years, with the baseline results, which included Grade 4 students from 2021 who had a normal early education experience.
- + **War in the South of Lebanon:** The outbreak of the war on Gaza on October 7, 2023, significantly affected the southern region of Lebanon, where 80% of project activities are based. The war has disrupted children's ability to focus on learning, with frequent closures of schools and centers due to the unstable situation, affecting their engagement with the program.
- + **Palestinian refugee context:** The escalation of the war on Gaza and its repercussions have had a profound effect on the target groups of Palestinian children residing in refugee camps and their families, contributing to heightened instability and stress.

- + **Internal Instability in Palestinian Camps:** In addition to the broader conflict, internal instability within the camps has been a significant issue. Armed conflicts between various groups have occurred intermittently throughout the project. For instance, in the Ain el-Helwe camp, schools and centers had to temporarily close due to the intensity of the situation, further impacting the project's effectiveness.
- + **Actual implementation time:** Project implementation with partners began at the end of the 2020/2021 academic year, resulting in a one-year delay at the start. Moreover, the 2023/2024 academic year was significantly impacted by the outbreak of the Gaza and South war (mentioned above), limiting effective implementation to only two years instead of the planned four.

The project reached 3,418 children in 2021, 6,384 children in 2022, and 12,814 children in 2023, across 22 kindergartens and 24 LSCs. Additionally, 6,184 children were reached through the Tabshoura platform, extending the impact beyond those directly involved in project activities.⁸

The program comprehensively addresses the diverse needs of children, teachers, caregivers, and communities through play-based learning (PBL) and holistic child development strategies. Its tailored activities include capacity-building for teachers and implementing partners, inclusive practices for CWD, and support for caregivers, ensuring it meets the specific needs of each group. Additionally, its flexible design allows it to adapt to broader challenges, such as the socio-economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The following activities were implemented:⁹

Table 1: Activities implemented in the EQIE project

Reading and socio-emotional skills	
+	Training of KG and LSC teachers, headteachers and supervisors on PBL
+	Establishment of bi-weekly communities of practice (CoP) for teachers
+	Provision of learning materials to KGs and LSCs
+	Training of caregivers to support children's learning at home (Learning Together Toolkit)
+	Provision of English language course to mothers to help them support children with homework
+	Establishment of reading centers
+	Provision of supplemental learning activities (Summer Camps, Junior Writer Initiative, Mobile Libraries Initiative, reading clubs, youth-led initiatives focused on reading and writing)
+	Provision of school kits to most vulnerable children; provision of tablets to children who regularly participated in project activities
+	Provision of PSS activities to children and parents

⁸ No children were reached by the project in 2020 due to school closures related to COVID-19.

⁹ Information on implemented activities was sourced from 2021 and 2022 [Progress Reports](#).

Improvement of the learning environment	
+	Digitalization of official curriculum or G1-G4, integrating PBL activities, through Tabshoura platform
+	Rehabilitation of learning spaces (classrooms, play spaces, WASH facilities, reading centers)
+	Establishment of Technology Innovation Labs
+	Community sensitization initiatives on child rights and CP
+	Sensitization initiatives with children on CP, GBV, bullying/abuse, healthy food, building friendships
+	Support and training of KG Parent-Teacher Associations on school development and inclusion initiatives
Enrollment and retention of CWD and cross-cutting activities	
+	Individualized support for a small number of CWD
+	Training of KG and LSC teachers on the inclusion of CWD
+	Establishment of School Inclusion Committees
+	Sensitization initiatives on the importance of education for CWD
+	Training of CSOs working on CP, MEL, financial management, HR policies, procurement, internet safety for children

Learn More was contracted to lead the midline evaluation of the EQIE program, with CoProfit supporting field data collection. The initial mixed-methods evaluation, planned for September 2023, included a quantitative sample of 200 children and an extensive qualitative component, such as focus group discussions (FGDs) with caregivers and children. Due to instability and security concerns in southern Lebanon, the evaluation was postponed to January 2024. To adapt to the crisis, several changes were made to the original design, including reducing the quantitative sample size and canceling FGDs with children and caregivers. For further details on the evaluation methodology, please refer to [Section 2](#).

2. Evaluation Methodology

This Midline Evaluation is a follow-on from the 2021 baseline. The report explores project results to date and provides recommendations to maximize effectiveness in the final year of implementation.

2.1 Overview of the Evaluation Design

The evaluation explores the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of project activities at midline. It is important to note that the Project's outcome 4, specifically addressing children with disabilities (CWDs)¹⁰, has not been assessed in this study as another independent study was planned to investigate EQIE's impact on CWDs. The present study identifies the contribution of EQIE activities to the observed outcomes of interest for children in Grade 4 (reading and socio-emotional skills) through the triangulation of multiple data sources. Its mixed-methods approach includes a large-scale survey for children, combining the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and the International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment (ISELA), and the analysis of data from 449 classroom observations carried out as part of the project's monitoring efforts. We worked closely with the project team to align the midline study's methodology and tools with the baseline ones, to ensure comparability to the greatest possible extent possible. Quantitative data collection with children was complemented by in-depth qualitative research with a small sub-sample of stakeholders including 15 key informant interviews (KIIs). For details on quantitative and qualitative data collection tools, see [Annex 2](#).

This cross-sectional study compares data of Grade 4 children collected at midline with data of Grade 4 children attending the LSCs collected at baseline. Due to the absence of a control group, there is no counterfactual. This means we cannot infer a direct causal attribution between the observed changes and the project activities.

Further qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews with local stakeholders and Right To Play staff. Upon discussions with the RTP team, we adapted the evaluation approach initially outlined in the proposal to ensure the comparability of data with the baseline one and to adequately reflect learning priorities for RTP and its partners in Lebanon..

¹⁰ To obtain the expected outcome, RTP collaborated with CWD-focused partners to rehabilitate schools and kindergartens (different from the learning centers object in this study), provide aid materials, and offer learning-through-play opportunities. However, they were not included in the sample for this study.

2.1.1 Sampling Approach

Quantitative data was collected from 119 Grade 4 children (assessment including administration of EGRA and ISELA) in five LSCs. The Consultancy collected qualitative data through 15 KIIs with Naba'a teachers and staff, UNRWA school principals and RTP personnel.

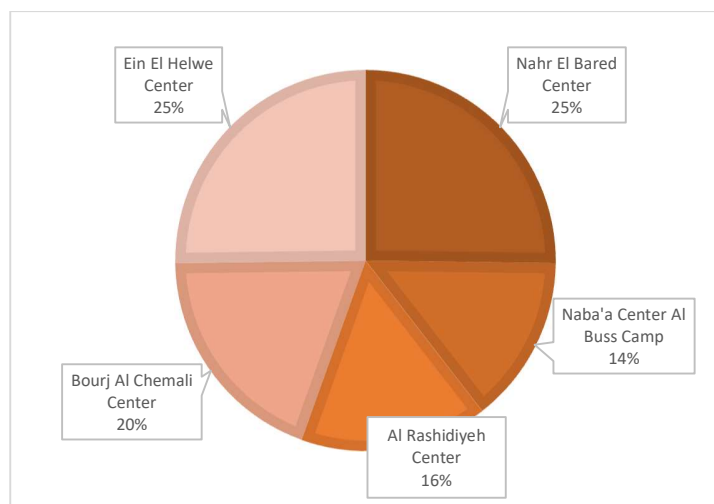
It is important to note that the sample does not include all stakeholders involved in the program, which comprises multiple components (see Table 1 for details). Most of the insights provided by those interviewed primarily focus on children's reading and socio-emotional skills.

To supplement this evaluation, the Consultancy also analyzed 449 classroom observation reports conducted by Right To Play and local partners.

2.1.1.1 Sample Demographic Insights

The Midline Evaluation's quantitative sample includes 119 children, comprising 60 girls and 59 boys. The majority of these children (74%) were 10 years old, with only a few older children, specifically two aged 12 and two aged 13. Almost all children attended early childhood development (ECD) or pre-school, except one. Additionally, 13 children had repeated at least one grade, mostly in grade 4. The children were fairly evenly distributed across five centers (Figure 1), with the highest representation at Ein El Helwe and Nahr El Bared Centers (each at 25%) and fewer children at Naba'a Center Al Buss Camp (14%). Most children (60%) come from households of 5 or 6 members, while 15% live in larger households of 7 members, reflecting a common family structure in the surveyed population.

Figure 1: Distribution of learner assessment observations among learning support centers



2.1.2 Quantitative Data Collection Tools

Quantitative data was collected using SurveyCTO and analyzed using STATA.

2.1.2.1 Learner assessment

The survey for children included a set of questions on their background, reading materials available at home, and their activities outside school hours. These questions were followed by the EGRA and ISELA assessments described below. A separate tool, the Life Skills and Reading Teacher Interview for Children with Disabilities, was available for cases when children with a severe disability were present in the classroom and unable to take part in the learner assessment directly but was not used.¹¹

2.1.2.2 The Early Grade Reading Assessment

The EGRA is a widely recognized tool designed to measure the fundamental skills necessary for literacy development in the early grades of schooling, typically from Grade 1 to Grade 4. EGRA aims to assess various components of reading proficiency including letter names, letter sound recognition, familiar word reading, oral reading fluency, reading comprehension, and listening comprehension.¹² For the Midline Evaluation, we used the same tool (including the same stimuli) used at baseline with Grade 4 students, to maximize the comparability of results.¹³ The tool was tailored at baseline to the specific linguistic and cultural context of Lebanon. The tool employed for the evaluation differs from standard EGRA across some characteristics in each of the tasks, including auto-stop rules, stimuli format, and others (please see the [Inception Report](#) for further details). Further details on the various tasks are provided in [Section 3.2.1](#).

2.1.2.3 The International Social and Emotional Learning Assessment

The ISELA is a performance-based tool designed to assess the development of self-concept, stress management, perseverance, empathy, and conflict resolution in children between six and twelve years old in low-resource and crisis contexts.¹⁴ For this evaluation, we used the same tool, including the same stimuli, used for the baseline evaluation. The RTP Lebanon Country Office chose the following ISELA indicators: relationships, stress management, collaboration, perseverance, and conflict management.

Although there is no set standard, as ISELA needs to be deeply adapted to context, it is customary to compute scores by domain (such as stress management and perseverance) using items that have been specifically designed to measure that domain. Following discussions with the RTP team, ISELA scores were computed with a different methodology with respect both to

¹¹ The survey was identical to that prepared for the baseline evaluation. It included questions on child background, disability type and severity, life skills and coping mechanisms, and reading skills.

¹² For more details, see [here](#).

¹³ The only change made to the tool has been expanding available options for one of the questions. See the [Inception Report](#) for further details.

¹⁴ For more details, see [here](#).

baseline and to our proposed approach.¹⁵ In particular, there were changes in the number of indexes we calculated (with the addition of the relationships index), in the items included in some of the indexes, and in the way in which some indexes were computed. Overall, only the indexes for self-concept and collaboration have not been modified at all. Further details on the skills measured by each indicator are provided in [Section 3.2.3.3](#).

2.2 Data Collection

During the baseline evaluation, the learner assessment was administered to children who were in Grade 1 in 2021 and are now in Grade 4. The ones selected for the midline evaluation were not necessarily part of the original sample. The midline sample was developed from a list of 120 current Grade 4 children provided by Right To Play. A pilot study was conducted with randomly selected Grade 3 children.

The data collection reached 119 children (16 children were surveyed in paired administration with one main survey administrator and an observer) across five learning support centers. The sample distribution across locations, due to limitations and movement restrictions, is as follows:

Table 2: Sample distribution across locations

Center name/location	Number of children surveyed	% of surveys by the center
Nahr El Bared	30	25.2%
Buss	17	14.3%
Rachidyeh	19	16%
Burj El Shmeli	23	19.3%
Ein El Helwi	30	25.2%
Total	119	100%

Of the 119 children interviewed, 59 were male and 60 were female. Enumerators reported that two children from the original sample refused to participate in the survey and were replaced by others randomly selected.

Due to conflict-related restrictions and security concerns, the midline evaluation in Lebanon faced several challenges (see [Section 2.3](#) for further details). Travel limitations and limited access to refugee camps required quantitative data to be collected in-person by young

¹⁵ Scores were computed according to the instructions contained in the document *Steps for ISELA Data Cleaning and Basic Analysis* shared by RTP.

participants from Right To Play's STEP project, who received a two-week online training. This data was gathered between May 13th and May 22nd.

Qualitative data collection was conducted online by the Learn More and CoProfit teams during the first week of April and the last week of May. Detailed descriptions of the training and fieldwork activities are provided in the [Data Collector Training Report](#) in the [Fieldwork Completion Report](#).

2.3 Limitations

2.3.1 Overview

Data collection for the midline evaluation in Lebanon faced several challenges due to conflict-related restrictions and security concerns. To adapt, the Consultancy and Right To Play decided to use the EGRA (Early Grade Reading Assessment) tool to assess children's reading progress. Qualitative data collection with children and parents was excluded to reduce stress and maintain data quality, though interviews with teachers, RTP staff, and local stakeholders were still conducted.

Because of travel restrictions and limited access to refugee camps, data collection was carried out by young participants from Right To Play's STEP project, who underwent a two-week online training. To mitigate potential risks in data quality, several mitigation strategies were implemented, such as simplifying the data collection tools to reduce errors, daily quality checks, and extra sampling (for further details, please refer to the [Data Collector Training Report](#) and the [Fieldwork Completion Report](#)).

While these strategies allowed the evaluation to proceed, they introduced certain limitations in both the quantitative and qualitative data. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge some limitations in both the baseline and midline methodologies which are unrelated to the contextual challenges. The following sections provide a detailed look at these limitations.

2.3.2 Quantitative Data Limitations

The quantitative data collection presents limitations related to both the design and the context:

- + **Sample size:** The sample sizes for the baseline and midline assessments were inconsistent for both learners and classroom observations. One significant limitation is the unequal sample sizes at baseline and midline both for learner assessment and classroom observations. This discrepancy may affect the comparability of results across phases, as variations in sample size can introduce biases or distort the representativeness of findings. A more consistent sample size across all data collection points would improve the reliability and comparability of results.
- + **COVID-19:** As mentioned (See 1.2.1.), the COVID-19 pandemic impacted on the schooling of children sampled for this midline study. This creates a variable when comparing their results

with results by children sampled for the baseline study, whose schooling process was not affected by major disruptions.

- + **EGRA assessment:** Following the same task design used in the EGRA baseline assessment, reading and listening comprehension tasks were combined into a single measure. Comparing students who completed a reading comprehension task with those who completed a listening task is not entirely accurate. Additionally, the small sample size and lack of clear criteria to distinguish between those who read and those who listened make it difficult to analyze the results effectively.
- + **Indicators Limitations:** Several indicators included in the Analysis and Research Framework present some limitations. Some indicators rely on self-reported measures, which can compromise the reliability of the data due to potential biases in responses. Moreover, the design and computation of some indicators may not accurately capture the changes they are intended to measure. For instance, indicator 1310.1, which aims to measure the percentage of school community members with knowledge of creating safe and inclusive learning environments, relies on asking teachers whether they know how to address safety concerns. This approach may not fully reflect the depth of knowledge or practical application, leading to an incomplete picture of the indicator's intended outcome.
- + **Absence of a Control Group:** In this emergency context, the lack of a control group makes it difficult to interpret the results, as external stress and psychological pressures may affect children's performance.

2.3.3 Qualitative Data Limitations

Qualitative data limitations include both design and logistical challenges.

- + **Limited Respondent Pool:** Travel restrictions and logistical challenges prevented focus group discussions (FGDs) with children and caregivers, reducing the number of respondents and limiting the depth of qualitative insights. This also impacted the ability to triangulate quantitative findings, particularly concerning children's reading and social-emotional learning (SEL) skills.
- + **Interview Constraints:** Due to internet access issues, interviews with local stakeholders had to be conducted during working hours using workplace internet connections, as these were the only locations with stable access. This may have distracted respondents and affected the quality of their responses. Additionally, the ongoing crisis made it difficult for some to focus on the questions, often leading to repetitive or unrelated answers.

3. Findings

3.1 Relevance

This criterion aims to assess how EQIE's goals and implementation methods are aligned with participants' and stakeholders' needs. It investigates to what extent project stakeholders view the intervention as useful and valuable.

+ **Relevance to children, teachers, and caregivers**

The EQIE program meets the needs of children and teachers mainly through play-based learning (PBL) training, which reduces stress and makes learning more engaging. Teachers valued the training for promoting inclusive practices. The positive feedback from parents, as reported by other respondents, suggests that the program's efforts to enhance the home environment and community support are relevant, though direct data from children with disabilities and caregivers is still limited.

+ **Responsiveness to external challenges**

The program adapted to challenges such as COVID-19 and the socio-economic crisis by adjusting its approach to meet emerging needs. One example is the development of the Tabshoura platform to support students during school closures. Although the platform is still in its early stages, this initiative demonstrates the project's flexibility and commitment to addressing the needs of children in a volatile context.

This section draws from the qualitative data gathered from interviews with Right To Play staff, Naba'a staff, Naba'a teachers, and UNRWA school principals.

3.1.1 Relevance to children, teachers and caregivers

The EQIE program has addressed the needs of most children and teachers, though further efforts are needed to assess its full impact on children with disabilities. *Many respondents emphasized that the EQIE program effectively addressed children's learning needs, particularly through the integration of play-based learning (PBL). Play-based learning provides a safe, engaging way for these children to process their trauma and emotions through creative expression and collaborative activities. Furthermore, play allows children to develop problem-solving skills and build social connections. For children who have missed out on formal schooling, a rigid academic approach may feel overwhelming, while play-based learning can reintroduce them to educational environments in a non-threatening and supportive manner. Naba'a teachers praised the PBL approach for its ability to help students manage stress, meet their learning needs, and provide a more interactive learning experience.*

"Those activities are totally relevant for the targeted groups. The children needed recreational activities to have fun and learn at the same time, which is a new approach when it comes to the Lebanese educational curricula."
Naba'a Teacher

Respondents also noted that this approach improves children's perception of education, making it more enjoyable and engaging.

One Naba'a team member explained that they strongly advocated for the inclusion of psychosocial support (PSS) activities in the program, recognizing their importance in the local context. She specifically highlighted the Small Writer Initiative and the Travel Library as being particularly valuable:

"The [Junior Writer Initiative] and MobileLibrary activities are especially relevant because they help children connect with one another, boosting their self-confidence."

Naba'a staff member

A Naba'a teacher praised the distance learning activities, noting that they were particularly effective in changing children's attitudes toward learning and education. Additionally, a UNRWA Principal expressed appreciation for Right To Play's unique use of the play-based methodology, distinguishing it from other organizations working in the area.

The program promoted the adoption of inclusive strategies for children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Many respondents confirmed that the learning-through-play approach is particularly valuable for children with learning difficulties as it shifted educational practices toward a more inclusive and child-centred approach.

"The center is equipped but not specialized in dealing with these cases and during training, we focus on including all children in integration activities."

Naba'a staff member

As mentioned above, the component of the Project related to CWDs was not addressed in this study, and CWDs were not part of the sample. That is why there is limited qualitative data available on children with disabilities, which makes it challenging to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the program's relevance to their specific needs.

Many respondents praised the training's relevance to their perceived needs. One Naba'a teacher shared that the training provided valuable skills and knowledge, expressing interest in participating in additional sessions.

Although UNRWA teachers were not included in the qualitative sample, the UNRWA school principals and Naba'a members reported that these teachers appreciated the training offered by Naba'a.

"Training for UNRWA teachers on the importance of learning through play [received particularly positive feedback]."

Naba'a Staff Member.

A few Naba'a learning support teachers also mentioned that UNRWA teachers showed strong interest in the activities conducted with children at the learning centers.

“UNRWA teachers have asked us to give them details of the sessions we offer to the students, and they have expressed that they love these activities.”

Naba’a teacher

According to Right To Play staff, initiatives aimed at parents were not part of the original project design. As the team identified caregivers’ needs for psychosocial and parenting support in the target community, they introduced components to address caregivers’ parenting skills and offer strategies to support their children’s psychological well-being. The broader community and local partners were actively involved in the needs assessment phase, ensuring that the project was designed to address the most urgent needs effectively.

“We decided to work on the well-being kit based on the needs of the community and a certain consultant’s input. We were working with children on play-based methodologies, [...] various activities to support the children, along with proper training for the teachers. Then we looked at the parents’ component. Initially, we thought about giving them books to support their children’s reading, but we saw a higher need, a prerequisite, which is well-being because there were serious issues of well-being. So, we developed videos and a well-being kit to tackle their well-being and support them in their parenting skills.”

Right To Play staff member

Moreover, the positive response from parents to the activities targeting them (like the English course) may suggest that the initiative addressed their needs (see [Section 3.2.4.1](#) for more details).

The positive reception from the community and local CSOs was cited by Right To Play staff as evidence of the project’s responsiveness to those needs.

“The first thing that comes to my mind [as an example of what makes EQIE potentially more relevant than other projects] is the acceptance that we have from the communities and the partners we work with.”

Right To Play staff member

As noted in the Limitation Section (see [Section 2.3](#)), movement restrictions and limited access to refugee camps reduced the sample size, preventing the inclusion of caregivers in the qualitative data collection. As a result, there is limited data to fully assess the project’s impact on parents. Future evaluations should rely on such data to fully investigate the project’s relevance to caregivers.

3.1.2 Responsiveness to external challenges

The EQIE program demonstrated significant flexibility in response to the challenges faced in its context. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Right To Play recognized the need to maintain educational continuity while schools were closed and shifted EQIE’s focus toward digital and

remote learning, designing the Tabshoura App, in collaboration with a local partner, a free e-platform in Arabic, English, and French, aligned with the Lebanese curriculum.

"[EQIE] was planned pre-COVID. So, when COVID hit, we had to move to the online modality and [...] we had to get to a new activity that wasn't there from the beginning and to partner with an organization [...] and develop a digital play-based curriculum based on the Lebanese curriculum that the children study with. So, we spent [...] the last three years developing this. Last year we started piloting this curriculum and the centers that we work with, training teachers on using this this digital platform. It took time, and we couldn't use it obviously during COVID, [but] now it's available."

RTP staff member

In addition to the challenges posed by COVID-19, the project had to navigate Lebanon's worsening socio-economic crisis and growing political instability, as well as the impact of the conflict in Palestine, which heavily affected refugee camps, especially in the southern regions of the country. The movement restrictions, which limited children's consistent access to school, led Right To Play to rely on its digital curriculum, ensuring that students in the camps continued to have learning opportunities.

"Once again, we had to go back to some of the approaches that we were using during COVID-19. Now [...] we are piloting again the digital curriculum: we had the piloting last year and now there were more edits done on the platform. So, after this happened, we went and piloted again. We trained a new batch of teachers to work on this digital platform. The good thing is that children alone can work on it. They can download the application and work on it from their homes. [There are limitations like] the limited Internet efficacy and the scale is still small, but through teachers at the centers, we are trying to encourage children [to use the application] and study on it while they're at home."

Right To Play staff member

3.2 Effectiveness

By effectiveness, we mean the extent to which EQIE achieved its objectives and results, including differential results across target groups. As outlined in the Theory of Change (please refer to Annex 3), EQIE aims to improve children's reading and socio-emotional skills by enhancing teachers' knowledge of play-based learning, and to increase school enrollment and retention for children with disabilities (CWD) and out-of-school (OOS) girls.

+ Teachers' Professional Development

Teachers reported improved confidence and competence in PBL methods, though challenges like limited materials and space persisted. More targeted follow-up training was requested, particularly for the use of digital tools.

+ Improvements in Pedagogical Practices based on PBL

Teachers increasingly adopted PBL techniques, making classrooms more interactive, though there was less focus on reading fluency and comprehension. Most teachers used play to teach new words and letters, but fewer emphasized critical thinking and comprehension.

+ Changes in Children's Reading and Socio-Emotional Skills

Children showed significant improvements in socio-emotional skills like conflict resolution and collaboration. Reading outcomes were mixed, with some declines in fluency and accuracy but stable comprehension levels.

+ Culture of Reading and Learning Environment

Parental involvement increased due to awareness sessions, supporting a better home learning environment. Reading clubs and mobile libraries enhanced engagement, though distributing materials remained a challenge.

+ Inclusive Practices for Gender and Disability

The program promoted gender equality and supported children with disabilities through improved learning environments and adaptive teaching. However, not all classrooms were fully equipped to meet the needs of children with disabilities.

+ Success and Hindering Factors

Strong partnerships and adaptability to Lebanon's socio-economic challenges were key to the program's success. However, resource constraints and the crisis limited the program's reach and effectiveness.

3.2.1 Teachers' Professional Development

To evaluate the improvement in teachers' professional development, we relied on Right To Play's monitoring data from classroom observations, and qualitative data collected by the Consultancy. The classroom observations were conducted in kindergartens, learning support centers working with pre-primary children, and learning support centers working with primary school children. The qualitative data was gathered from interviews with Right To Play staff, Naba'a staff, Naba'a teachers, and UNRWA school principals. It's important to note that comparing midline classroom observation data with baseline data is not possible. Classroom observations were not conducted at baseline as some learning centers were still on online learning, and there was some unrest inside Palestinian refugee camps during baseline data collection (as stated in the baseline report).

In **qualitative interviews**, both Naba'a respondents and RTP staff widely acknowledged the project's effectiveness in helping teachers apply PBL activities. Naba'a staff observed that the EQIE program offered comprehensive training to both UNRWA and Naba'a teachers, covering aspects such as integrating play with education, understanding child learning stages, and using technology for personal learning.

"[The program supported in] promoting learning through play, relying on UNRWA teachers to increase awareness, implementing comprehensive training practices, improving cooperation with support teachers and other professionals, promoting the use of technology for personal learning, focusing to a greater extent on curriculum to make it

more student-centric compared to parrot-fashion education.”
Naba’a staff member

In the interviews, most teachers could accurately list the various topics covered in their training, demonstrating a strong interest in and understanding of the specific content areas they were taught. A few members of the Naba’a staff also underlined how the training helped to build new professional opportunities and development for all participants, including local partners and teachers.

“These training impacted [my] professional life to a great extent due to the conveyance of important information using non-traditional means.”
“[This training] allowed teachers to gain professional experience.”
Naba’a staff members

However, the adequacy of support provided to teachers faced some issues. A few teachers highlighted the lack of materials – with no further specification - along with the absence of sufficiently large space for activities with children. This limited their ability to fully implement the play-based learning (PBL) approaches introduced during the training. Some RTP staff pointed out the need for more targeted training on the Tabshoura application and a few teachers highlighted that they would appreciate more follow-up and more training specifically on its use.

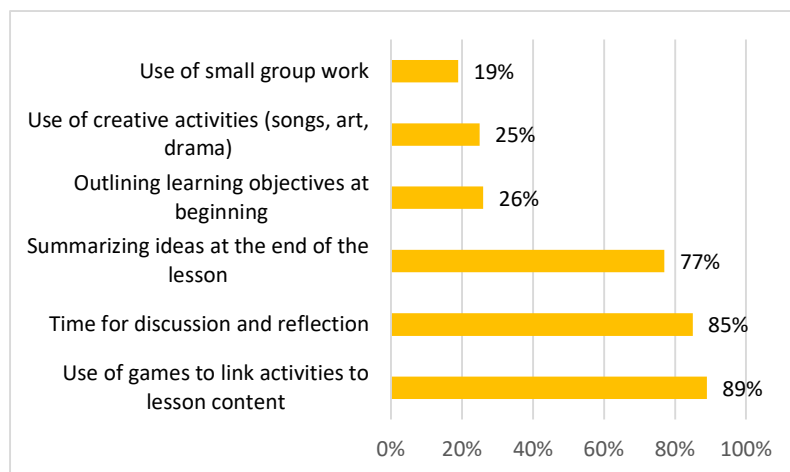
3.2.2 Improvements in pedagogical practices based on PBL

Most teachers noted improvements in their pedagogical practices, especially in adopting play-based learning (PBL) methodologies. This shift was largely attributed to the comprehensive training and follow-up provided by the project. Teachers reported feeling more capable and confident in applying new teaching strategies, which in turn led to a more engaging and interactive classroom environment.

“All those trainings helped [me] develop and organize [my] work and expanded [my] expertise, and even impacted the way I deal with the children.”
Naba’a Teacher

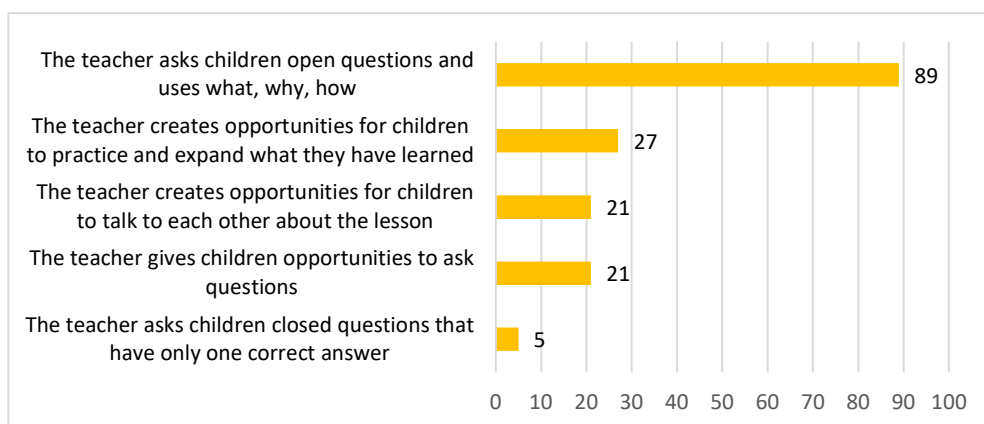
According to the **qualitative data**, teachers reported improvements in their ability to understand their students' needs and select appropriate games or activities to address them. Many teachers also mentioned increased flexibility and adaptability in modifying the curriculum to better meet students' needs. Most teachers also noted improvements in their ability to interact and communicate with children, along with greater effectiveness in their teaching methods.

Classroom observations confirm that 99.5% of teachers were able to **share the lesson plan for the day** (only 2 teachers were not able to), and all these plans were designed with play-based learning approaches.

Figure 2: Play-based teaching approaches

Classroom observations showed how often teachers implement which PBL techniques. Most of the teachers used games to link activities to lesson content and gave kids time for discussion and reflection (Figure 2). However, the use of creative activities and small group work was used only in a quarter of the classrooms.

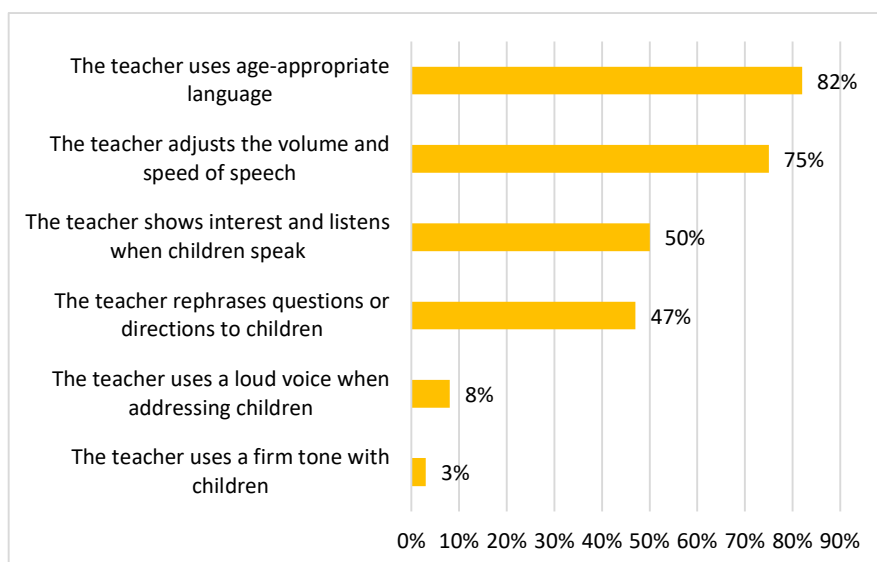
The data on **participatory teaching methods** (Figure 3) show that teachers frequently used strategies that encourage student interaction and engagement. In most classrooms (89%), teachers asked open-ended questions to promote discussion and critical thinking. Additionally, in 28% of classrooms, teachers created opportunities for children to practice and expand what they have learned, and in 22% of classrooms teachers encouraged children to talk to each other about the lesson's content. However, teachers gave children the opportunity to ask questions less frequently and 5% of teachers used closed questions.

Figure 3: Participatory teaching methods

Overall, classroom observations showed that most teachers emphasized on balanced participation between teachers and students. In most classrooms (75%), teachers and children spent equal amounts of time talking and engaging in activities. Fewer classrooms

(31%) focused on student-centered activities, where children primarily talked and did activities while the teacher supervised. In contrast, only in a few classrooms (5%) teachers followed a more traditional approach where they led most of the lesson while children primarily listened or watched.

Figure 4: Teacher communication style with children in the observed classrooms



Teachers frequently used different **communication strategies**. Nearly half of the teachers (47%) rephrased questions or directions to help children understand, and half of them showed interest and actively listened when children were speaking. The use of age-appropriate language was widespread, with 82%

of teachers ensuring their language suited the children's age group. 25% of teachers adjusted the volume and speed of their speech to be more easily heard and understood by students, demonstrating an effort to enhance effective communication in the classroom. Few teachers were observed to use a loud voice (8%) or a firm tone with children (3%), suggesting that the majority opted for a gentler communication style.

1.2.1.1 Using Play-Based Learning to Teach Reading Skills

According to classroom observations' findings (Figure 5), a substantial number of teachers prioritized using interactive activities to teach or review specific reading skills, such as new words (40%) and letters (39%). The activities that foster reading fluency and comprehension, on the other hand, were much less common, suggesting that comprehension and critical thinking skills were not consistently emphasized during reading sessions: only 28% of teachers engaged students in reading aloud, providing opportunities for students to develop fluency. Only a few teachers (17%) asked students to answer questions or summarize stories. This might be an important area for improvement, considering the significant gap between reading fluency and reading comprehension encountered in EGRA assessment (see Section 3.2.2).

Similarly to previous findings, classroom observations on the use of playful reading-aloud activities (Figure 6) show that while most teachers effectively engaged students by reading fluently and expressively (76%) and using illustrations to enhance understanding (80%), teachers did not always provide kids with opportunities to enhance comprehension skills (asking

problem-solving or predictive questions, giving opportunity to discuss story with each other). Many teachers asked questions that relate to students' real lives (77%), but relatively low percentage posed problem-solving questions (52%) or encouraged predictive thinking (14%) and discussions of the story with peers (16%). This might indicate a need for a more balanced approach that includes activities fostering critical thinking and interactive dialogue among students.

Figure 5: Teaching of basic reading skills in the observed classrooms

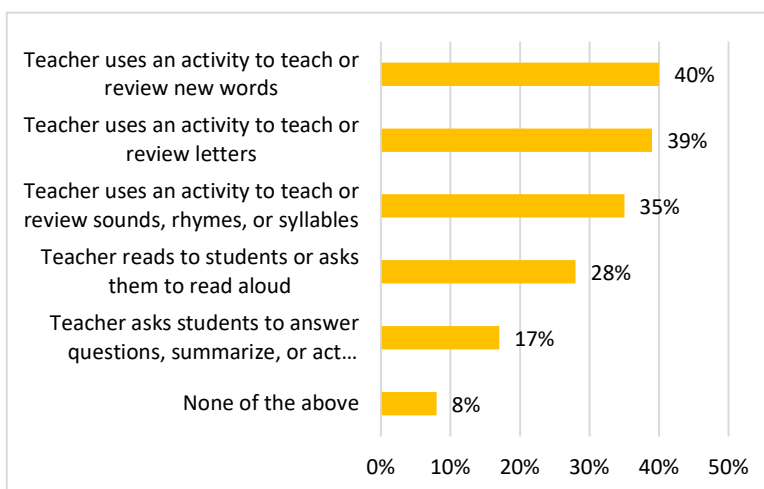
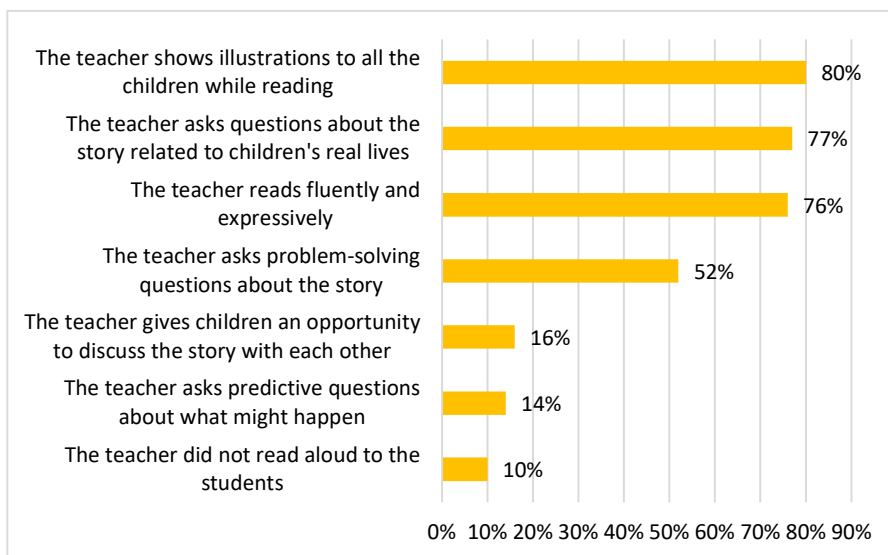


Figure 6: Use of playful reading-aloud activities in the observed classrooms



To give an overview of the use of PBL practices by teachers, we can see the progress on Right to Play's **indicator 1100.1**. The indicator summarizes the knowledge and implementation of PBL practices by the observed teachers in the classrooms. At midline, teachers obtained, on average, 45.2% of the maximum score, which corresponds to the midline target of 45% (the indicator however was not calculated at the baseline).

3.2.3 Changes in Children's Reading and Socio-Emotional Skills

To evaluate the improvement in children's reading and socio-emotional skills we relied on data from the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) and ISELA tests, as well as qualitative data collected by the Consultancy. The qualitative data was gathered from interviews with Right To Play staff, Naba'a staff, Naba'a teachers, and UNRWA school principals.

3.2.3.1 Reading Outcomes of Children

According to most respondents to the qualitative interviews, the PBL approach significantly increased children's interest and motivation to learn, making learning an enjoyable activity for students.

"We've noticed a higher interest in learning, mainly reported by teachers. The play-based approach makes learning more enjoyable for kids."
RTP staff member

A few respondents also observed improvements in students' performance, particularly in reading and writing. However, the interviews offered limited details on the specific areas in which they noticed the improvement (e.g. fluency, comprehension, spelling).

Quantitative data from the EGRA shows some positive and negative shifts in children's performance compared to the baseline, as outlined in the following table. It is important to note that not all changes are statistically significant, and some might reflect the natural variations in the population, given the increased sample size at the midline compared to baseline (63 children at baseline, and 119 at midline).

Table 3: Comparison of baseline and midline EGRA scores by subtask

Task	Description	Baseline avg ¹⁶	Midline avg	p-value of difference ¹⁷
Reading score	# correct words/ minute out of 50	36.5	32.59	0.065
Reading fluency	% readers (at least five correct words in the first 30 seconds)	92%	93%	0.067

¹⁶ Baseline results were taken from baseline report

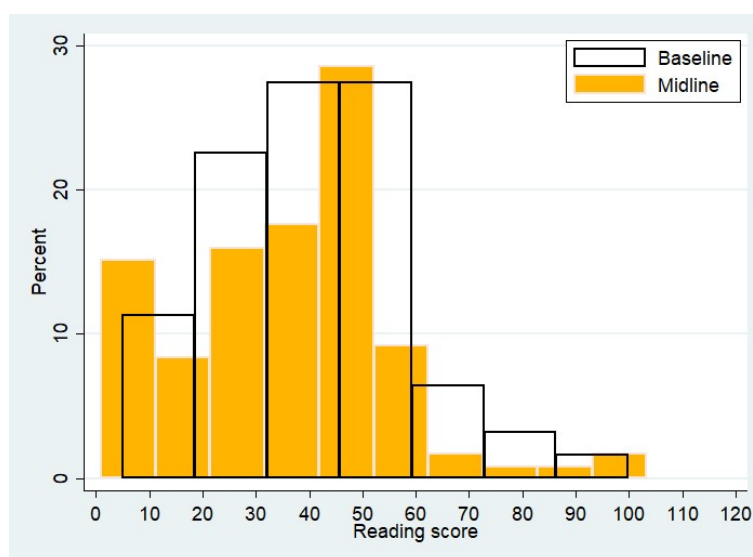
¹⁷ Asterisks indicate statistically significant changes.

Reading accuracy	Percentage of words read correctly from those attempted	87%	81%	0.01*
Reading and Listening Comprehension	% correct answers out of 5	70%	70.8%	0.89
	% RWC (at least 4 correct answers)	57%	58%	0.84

Reading scores

In the reading task, children were asked to read as many words as possible from a 50-word text in one minute. If a child could read less than five words correctly in the first 30 seconds, the task was automatically stopped. If the child read all the text in less than one minute, scores were adjusted for the time remaining in the task and therefore scores could result higher than 50.

Figure 7: Distribution of children's reading scores at baseline and midline



The average **reading score**, measured by the number of words read correctly per minute, has decreased slightly from 36.5 at baseline to 32.59 at midline, a reduction that is approaching statistical significance ($p = 0.065$).

Figure 7 shows that at baseline most children scored in the middle range, particularly around 30, 40 or 50 correct words mark, with a gradual decrease in scores above this range. At midline, results show a more varied distribution of scores, with an increased percentage of children achieving scores of around 50, but also more children reaching low scores.

Overall, children's reading scores did not show statistically significant improvement, but demonstrated stability in some areas, which is an important indicator in unstable, emergency contexts. Maintaining stability (or even avoiding deterioration) throughout increasingly deteriorating external conditions is of significant value in an Education in Emergencies context.

Reading fluency and accuracy

The reading fluency is measured as a percentage of readers in a sample, that is number of children who read at least five correct words in the first 30 seconds over total sample size. The proportion of readers in a sample showed a slight increase, from 92% to 93%, which is almost statistically significant ($p = 0.067$). This suggests that most children remain readers, indicating that foundational **reading fluency** is maintained among the population.

The analysis of differences in reading fluency performance bands (see Table 4 below) between baseline and midline provides more detailed insights into the number of readers and number of correct words read. Midline results show almost no change in the percentage of children who read less than 10 words correctly but a slight decrease in the percentage of children who read more than 30, more than 40 and 45 or more correct words per minute. More children moved into the 20 to 29 correct words per minute category at midline, increasing from 10% to 18%. These changes could reflect either the natural variations in the population (as the midline sample got bigger) or a slight decrease in the highest level of reading fluency.

Table 4: Reading fluency performance bands

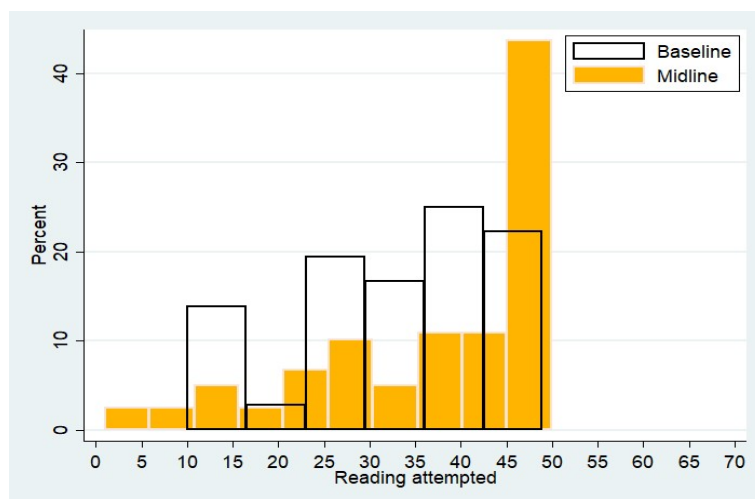
# correct words per minute	% baseline	% midline
Less than 10 correct words	13%	14%
From 10 to 19 correct words	9%	9%
From 20 to 29 correct words	10%	18%
From 30 to 39 correct words	25%	20%
From 40 to 44 correct words	11%	10%
45 correct words and more	30%	29%

Reading accuracy is measured as percentage of words read correctly among those attempted. Reading accuracy at midline showed a statistically significant decrease, from 87% at baseline to 81% at midline ($p = 0.01^*$).

Figure 8 shows changes in the number of words children attempted to read. At midline, there is a noticeable increase in the proportion of children attempting to read the maximum number of words, with a significant majority reaching the higher end of the scale compared to the baseline. At baseline, there was a distribution showing a concentration in the middle range (from 25 to 50 words) rather than at the maximum. This shift suggests more children were willing to attempt the entire set of words. Since we do not have a control group, it is

impossible to attribute this result either to the fact the midline sample is larger and more diverse or to changes in reading motivation and higher participation commitment.

Figure 8: Distribution of attempted words read by children at baseline



Comprehension task

Reading and listening comprehension were combined both in baseline and midline assessment.¹⁸ Specifically, if a child did not finish reading the passage independently, the enumerator would complete the reading for them. Those who finished reading a passage themselves were assessed based solely on reading comprehension; the ones who could not finish reading the whole passage were assessed based on a mix of reading and listening comprehension elements. The task included five questions to assess comprehension.

¹⁸ In the midline, we followed this approach to a comprehension task in data collection as it was done in baseline. It is important to note that this approach to measuring comprehension deviates from the standard method typically employed in the EGRA assessment, which measures reading and listening comprehension separately.

Comprehension scores

remained largely unchanged, with the percentage of correct answers out of five questions increasing marginally from 70% at baseline to 70.8% at midline, a difference that is not statistically significant ($p = 0.89$). Figure 9 indicates only minor changes in comprehension scores between baseline and midline, with most students still scoring three or four out of five correct answers. While there was a slight increase in midline scores for students achieving three and four correct

answers, the proportion of students scoring five slightly decreased. Additionally, fewer students managed to respond zero, one or two questions at midline, suggesting slight improvements in comprehension among lower-performing students.

The percentage of students demonstrating **reading with comprehension (RWC)**, defined as children identified as readers who have answered at least four questions correctly, remained virtually unchanged (58% at baseline vs. 58% at midline, $p = 0.84$). These results suggest that while children might be reading, there is still a gap between being able to read and being able to understand and retain the information. This gap was present at baseline and remained at the midline.

3.2.3.2 Gender-disaggregated EGRA results

The analysis of EGRA results disaggregated by gender both at baseline and at midline (see [Table 5](#)) does not show statistically significant results except for comprehension scores (the result approaches statistical significance, $p=0.08$).

Figure 9: Distribution of children's comprehension scores at baseline and midline

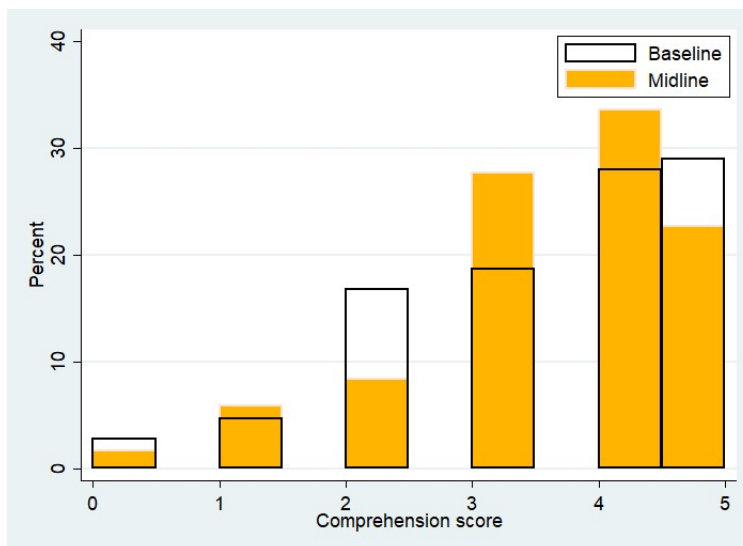


Table 5: Comparison of baseline and midline EGRA scores by subtask and by gender

Task	Description	Baseline avg (F)	Midline avg (F)	Baseline avg (M)	Midline avg (M)	p-value of difference (baseline)	p-value of difference (midline)
Reading score	# correct words/minute out of 50	37.7 words	32.55 words	34.6 words	32.6 words	0.42	0.98
Reading fluency	% readers (at least five correct words in the first 30 seconds)	95% qualify as readers (94.7%)	96.7% qualify as readers	88% qualify as readers	89.8% qualify as readers	0.38	0.14
Reading accuracy	Percentage of words read correctly among those attempted	89% words correct in report (89.5 among all 63 sample)	82.3% words correct	86% words correct (85.7%)	79.2% words correct	0.38	0.42
Comprehension	% correct answers out of 5	73% correct questions	69% (3.45 correct questions)	66% correct questions	73% (3.63 correct questions)	0.28	0.43
	% RWC (readers, at least 4 correct answers)	61% RWC (from report) (60% if sample is 63 children)	50% RWC	56% RWC (from report) (52% if sample is 63 children)	66% RWC	0.51	0.08

At baseline, girls outperformed boys in all tasks. At midline, the gender gap in reading skills has shown some changes – girls still outperformed boys at reading fluency and accuracy, but boys performed better in the comprehension tasks.

In reading fluency, the number of readers has slightly increased both for boys and girls. A higher percentage of girls qualified as readers (95% at baseline increasing to 96.7% at midline) compared to boys (88% at baseline rising to 89.8% at midline). These differences were not statistically significant at either time ($p = 0.38$ at baseline, $p = 0.14$ at midline).

Comparing baseline and midline, both girls' and boys' average reading scores decreased. Reading scores decreased from 37.7 words per minute at baseline to 32.55 words per minute at midline for girls, and from 34.6 to 32.6 words per minute for boys, but the gender differences were not statistically significant at either baseline ($p = 0.42$) or midline ($p = 0.98$). Reading accuracy trends showed a similar trend as fluency for both genders. Girls' accuracy decreased from 89% at baseline to 82.3% at midline, while boys' accuracy dropped from 86% to 79.2% with results not being statistically significant ($p = 0.38$ at baseline, $p = 0.42$ at midline).

In comprehension tasks, the gender differences were more varied. The average number of correct answers to comprehension questions by girls declined from 73% to 69% at midline, whereas boys' average response improved from 66% to 73%. These shifts, however, did not reach statistical significance ($p = 0.28$ at baseline, $p = 0.43$ at midline), indicating no conclusive evidence of a gender disparity in comprehension abilities. The percentage of readers with comprehension revealed noticeable gender differences at midline and the changes from baseline. Among boys, the number of readers with comprehension (RWC) increased from 56% to 66%, while the number of RWC has decreased from 61% to 50% among girls.

The midline gender gap among readers with comprehension – 66% of RWC among males and 50% of RWC among girls – shows a trend towards statistical significance (p -value of 0.08). It might mean a possible emerging gender difference in comprehension capabilities, which needs to be investigated and contextualized further.

3.2.3.3 Socio-Emotional Learning Skills of Children

Qualitative data shows that the program also improved children's socio-emotional learning (SEL) skills. Respondents often observed improvements in children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

“The first [program's] result is breaking the educational routine for students by improving their problem-solving skills by engaging them in open games. The student learns how to

think outside the box and how to deal with problems from different points of view.”
UNRWA principal

As reported by Naba’a teachers and staff members, children improved their relational and collaboration skills, together with their abilities to communicate with each other. One of the Naba’a teachers explained that this may be linked to an increase in the collaborative activities and games they participate in.

Some respondents also highlighted positive changes in children’s self-confidence and self-respect.

“There is a positive impact on students as their self-confidence [has] increased.”
Naba’a staff member

The **quantitative analysis** confirms these improvements in children’s socio-emotional skills. As for the quantitative data, socio-emotional learning (SEL) outcomes are measured using several measures from the ISELA: communication, stress management, collaboration, conflict resolution, and perseverance.

The ISELA assessment at the midline (see Table 6 below) shows high scores for all the areas (higher than 65%) with the highest scores in perseverance (85.7%) and collaboration (77.3%). Results at midline also demonstrate remarkable improvements in children’s social-emotional skills compared to baseline, all the changes are statistically significant. The most significant improvements at midline compared to baseline (20 percentage points change and more) are noted in conflict resolution and collaboration skills.

Table 6: Comparison of baseline and midline ISELA scores by domain

Index	Description	Baseline avg Grade 4	n	Midline avg Grade 4	n	p-value of difference ¹⁹
Communication	% correct answers out of 8	54%	105	65%	119	0.03*
Stress management	% correct answers out of 7	49.3%	107	66.1%	119	0.00*
Collaboration	% correct answers out of 4	57%	104	77.3%	119	0.00*
Conflict resolution	% correct answers out of 4	38%	101	66%	119	0.00*
Perseverance	% correct answers out of 4	69.7%	104	85.7%	119	0.00*

Communication

¹⁹ Asterisks indicate statistically significant changes.

Children were asked about their relationships with members of their social networks (household members, peers, and other people in the community).²⁰ The ability to communicate effectively improved significantly, with the percentage of correct answers increasing from 54% at baseline to 65% at midline ($p = 0.03^*$).

Collaboration

This index includes items asking children for ways to work in a team, and whether they had spent time with friends, in the previous week, either individually, playing, or doing homework. The percentage of correct answers in collaboration skills increased from 57% at baseline to 77.3% at midline ($p = 0.00^*$), highlighting significant progress in children's ability to work effectively with others. This improvement reflects the success of programs that emphasize teamwork and cooperative learning activities.

Critical Thinking

This domain refers to children's reactions to situations of conflict, including management of the situation and recognition of other people's intentions.²¹ Conflict resolution skills also showed a notable increase, with correct answers rising from 38% at baseline to 66% at midline ($p = 0.00^*$). This substantial improvement suggests that children have developed better strategies for managing disagreements and resolving conflicts, possibly through role-playing scenarios and guided discussions.

Stress Management

Stress management items assessed children's ability to identify strategies they used to calm down if angry or upset.²² There was a substantial and statistically significant improvement in

²⁰ Children were asked, for each category of people in the network, whether they talked to someone when they were sad, asked someone for help with problems with peers, asked for help when working on something difficult, and knew when a person was feeling sad.

²¹ Children were asked to name two things they would do if they were playing with a toy and another child asked to play with the same toy. They were then asked to name two things they would do if the other child took the toy from them without asking and started playing with it. The index comprises also four questions in which children were asked to interpret the intentions and consequent feelings of a child whose action caused another child to feel sad or angry.

²² Scores reflect whether the child could accurately define up to three appropriate, non-destructive stress-management strategies. If the child could not identify an appropriate strategy, they were not asked for additional strategies. The index also includes items about the management of sadness (see the description of the relationship index above).

stress management skills, with correct responses rising from 49.3% at baseline²³ to 66.1% at midline ($p = 0.00^*$). This indicates that children have become more capable of handling stress and emotional challenges, likely due to the introduction of mindfulness practices and techniques for emotional regulation.

Perseverance

The index includes questions asking whether the child looks for help when doing something difficult (see the description of the relationship index above). The percentage of correct answers for perseverance increased significantly, from 69.7% at baseline to 85.7% at midline ($p = 0.00^*$). This improvement indicates that children are now more determined to complete tasks and persist through challenges, which may result from resilience-building exercises and a supportive learning environment that encourages effort and persistence.

Gender-disaggregated ISELA results

The analysis of gender-disaggregated midline results (see Table 7 below) shows that girls scored higher than boys in most cases across the social-emotional skill indicators, although the differences are not always statistically significant. Girls scored higher than boys in communication skills (girls – 69.8% compared to boys – 60.2% with a p -value of 0.058), in stress management (70.5% vs. 61.7%, p -values of 0.07) and conflict resolution (71.7% vs. 60.2%, p -values of 0.07), indicating these differences are approaching statistical significance. In contrast, other differences were not statistically significant, but girls scored slightly higher than boys (88.3% vs. 83.1%) in perseverance skills while scores for collaboration for girls (76.3%) and boys (78.4%) were very close.

Generally, girls performed better than boys across most social-emotional skill indicators at baseline, which is consistent with the midline results. However, none of the identified gender differences were statistically significant at baseline. At midline, both girls and boys showed significant improvements in these skills; however, the increases for girls were often more pronounced. These results suggest that while both genders benefited from the interventions, girls continued to perform better overall and showed more significant gains in several areas.

Table 7: Comparison of gender-disaggregated baseline and midline ISELA scores by domain

Index	Description	Baseline avg (F)	Midline avg (F)	Baseline avg (M)	Midline avg (M)	p-value of difference (baseline)	p-value of difference (midline)
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²³ The index was not computed at the baseline and was not presented in the report. However, the tests were conducted with the children from baseline sample and the baseline data allowed the midline evaluation team to calculate this index.

Communication	% correct answers out of 8	57%	69.8%	50%	60.2%	0.15	0.058 ²⁴
Stress management	% correct answers out of 7	50%	70.5%	48%	61.7%	0.67	0.07
Collaboration	% correct answers out of 4	59%	76.3%	55%	78.4%	0.54	0.60
Conflict resolution	% correct answers out of 4	42%	71.7%	33%	60.2%	0.21	0.07
Perseverance	% correct answers out of 4	73.4%	88.3%	64.3%	83.1%	0.14	0.12

3.2.4 Culture of Reading and Learning Environment

3.2.4.1 Home Environment

As part of its comprehensive approach to creating inclusive learning environments in the targeted communities, several activities aimed at helping parents and caregivers become familiar with the PBL methodology, improve their parenting skills, and create a supporting home environment for children's learning. These activities included awareness sessions, well-being sessions, and an English language course.

During the **qualitative interviews**, most Naba'a teachers and staff noted that the awareness and well-being sessions were especially helpful in helping parents understand the value of a playful approach to learning. Some also mentioned that these initiatives improved the relationship between parents and the learning center's teachers, creating a supportive environment where children could better learn and develop their skills.

"Important activities such as awareness sessions and well-being sessions were implemented, which changed the perspective of the parents when it came to the concept of learning through play. Those sessions increased the knowledge and culture of individuals and guided them toward making informed and responsible decisions. [...] The trust between the center and the parents increased and the parents are now keener to bring their children to the center as they sensed the progress they achieved."
Naba'a teacher

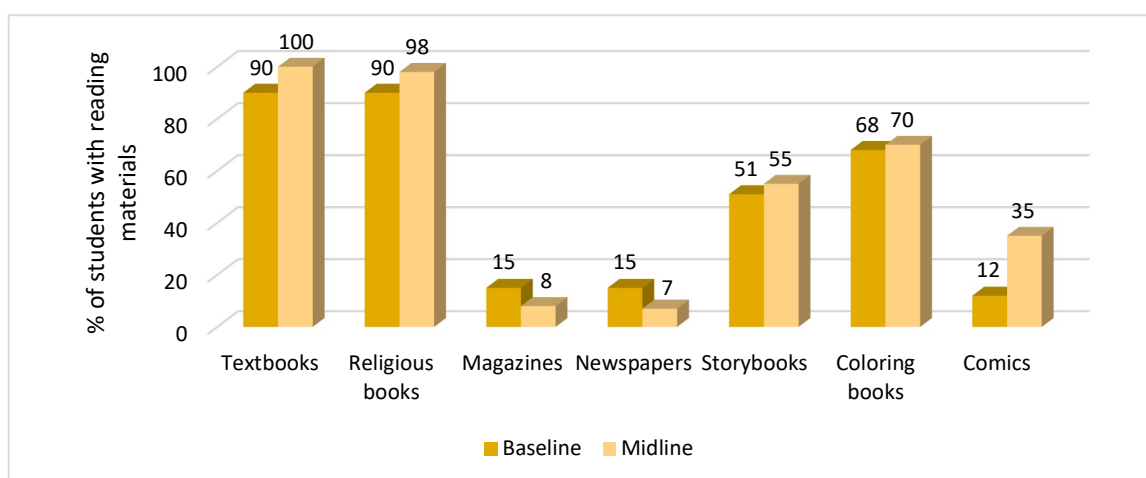
²⁴ The result is almost statistically significant.

Right To Play staff also noted that the English language course for parents, designed to help them support their children with homework after school hours, was highly appreciated by the participants.

All these activities could contribute to the creation of a home environment able to support children's learning.

Another element that could contribute to children's learning, as measured by the **EGRA tool**, is the availability of reading materials in the households of the sampled population. Compared to the baseline, it has mostly improved (see Figure 10 below).

Figure 10: Percentage of students with reading materials at home



The midline results indicate an overall improvement in the availability of various types of reading materials at home compared to the baseline. Textbooks and religious books were nearly universally available at midline, with slight increases from baseline. The availability of storybooks and colouring books also saw modest improvements. However, there was a decline in the availability of magazines and newspapers, suggesting that these types of reading materials may be less prioritized in households. Notably, the availability of comics increased significantly, highlighting a possibility that parents buy kids reading materials more adaptable to their interests or higher availability of these materials. These changes suggest a shift towards a broader range of reading materials at home, supporting children's literacy and engagement in reading activities.

At midline, almost all the children (99%) were engaged in at least one reading behaviour at home in the previous week (this corresponds to an **indicator 1200.2 of the analysis and research framework).**

The consultancy attempted to assess the correlation between reading habits at home and EGRA results by administering to children in the EGRA sample this questionnaire:

In the past week, have you seen anyone in your home reading?
In the past week, has someone in your family helped you with your homework?
In the past week, has a family member read to you?
In the past week, has a family member told you a story?
In the past week, has a family member played literacy games with you?

Some statistically significant, though quite weak, correlations show that **some home reading activities could be somewhat associated with improvements in children's reading scores.** Children who saw adults reading or had someone in their family read to them during the last week tended to have higher reading scores. **The correlations are statistically significant** ($p=0.02$ for seeing adults read, $p=0.05$ for reading to children) and suggest that **fostering a culture of reading to a child at home could be associated with higher reading skills.** If a child was told a story by a family member, s/he was more likely to read more words correctly during the EGRA task (the association approaches statistical significance, $p=0.06$). None of the home activities is associated with the results in comprehension scores.

There are also some statistically significant associations between home reading activities and ISELA scores. If someone in the family played games ($p=0.000$) or told a story to a child ($p=0.004$), it positively, though weakly, associated with the improvements in communication skills with a notably positive impact observed among female children.

3.2.4.2 Initiatives Supporting Reading

Right to Play contributed to improving reading learning environment by initiatives to support reading, such as reading clubs, reading centers, the Summer Camp, and the Mobile Library Initiative. These initiatives were aimed at increasing the time children spend reading both at school and in the community. Teachers and implementation partners highlighted during qualitative interviews that these initiatives positively impacted children's reading skills and were well-received by the community.

Resource constraints posed challenges to the distribution of reading materials, limiting their availability for all households. In response, the project adapted its approach, providing books through schools, churches, and community centers. These adaptations facilitated access to reading materials, especially for children involved in reading clubs or centers.

The proportion of children attending after-school in-person reading activities such as reading camps, reading centers, or reading games increased considerably from baseline to midline. The percentage of children participating in these activities in the prior week also saw a slight increase. On the other hand, the proportion of children participating in out-of-school reading activities (such as those available through radio, TV, or mail) decreased. This decrease in participation in virtual out-of-school reading activities might reflect a shift towards more traditional, in-person literacy activities as the impact of COVID-19-related restrictions

lessened. The increased availability of in-person options could explain the reduced reliance on media-based activities for engaging children in reading.

Overall, the proportion of children who participated in either in-person or virtual reading activities in the previous week is 48% (see [indicator 1200.1](#) of the analysis and research framework). This is a notable increase from the baseline value of 27%.

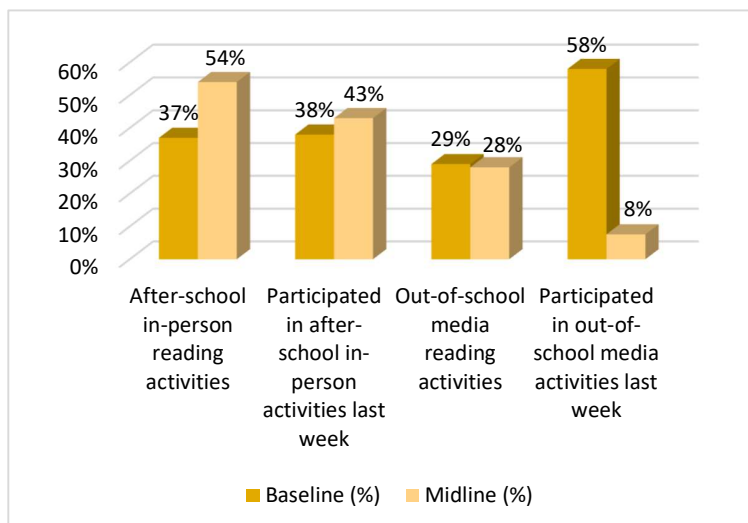
There are no statistically significant correlations between participation in after-school reading activities or use of virtual reading activities outside of school and changes in reading indicators. The correlation between collaboration skills and attendance of after-school reading activities (0.2233) is the strongest of all the ISELA scores, but it is statistically weak. Camp

participation might have some positive, though a weak, association with children ISELA collaboration skills. There is almost no correlation between the increase in children's socio-emotional skills and participation in after-school reading activities (such as reading camps, reading centers, or reading days out) or out-of-school reading activities (like those available through radio, TV, or mail).

The reading and education materials available in the learning support centers, supported the reading activities. According to the classroom observations from the learning support centers targeting primary school students (122 observations), most learning centers are well-equipped with learning and reading materials, which might have helped maintain the reading skills of kids and support reading and recreational activities. Most learning support centers are well-equipped with textbooks: 106 classrooms provide textbooks for all children, while 5 classrooms cover three-quarters of their students, and only 1 classroom – half of the students. Most learning support centers are well-equipped with pens, with 116 classrooms providing pens for all students.

Visual and reading aids are prevalent, including picture stories in 63 classrooms, dedicated reading areas in 48, and posters and word cards in 88 classrooms, while only 5 classrooms reported having none of these resources. 82 learning centers offer materials in Arabic and 82 centers – in English. Recreational resources are also common, with 64 classrooms having

Figure 12: Participation in after-school and media reading activities among children at baseline and midline



entertainment games, 114 providing educational games, and 25 equipped with sports equipment, enhancing both the educational and recreational engagement of the children.

3.2.4.3 Safety of Learning Environment

Physical safety

Physical safety of the classrooms was assessed through classroom observations with the following two questions:

Is the learning environment physically safe?

Which of the following is true of this class? (see **Error! Reference source not found.** below)

Error! Reference source not found. on the classroom conditions specify that most classrooms are well-ventilated (98%) and properly lit (93%). A significant number of classrooms also have sufficient space for play and active learning (87%). Only 27% of classrooms were assessed as suitable for children with disabilities by the enumerators conducting classroom observations. More attention might need to be dedicated to improving the classroom conditions to respond to the needs of children with disabilities.

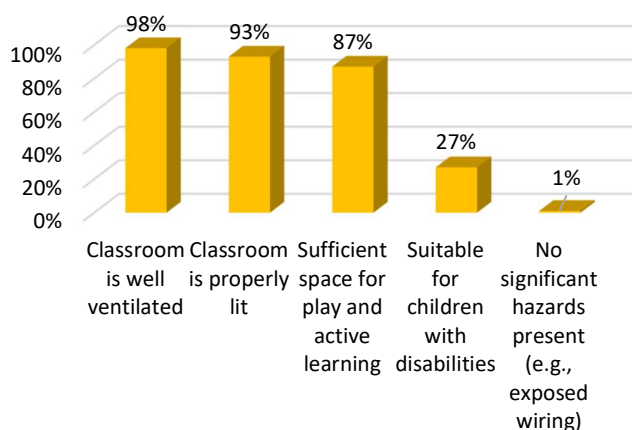


Figure 13: Classroom conditions

As for the assessment of physical safety of learning environments

in the observed classrooms, most enumerators reported that teachers explained physical safety hazards to children in over 80% of classrooms. Enumerators also reported that in around 45% of classrooms, appropriate actions were taken to address these hazards, but the question does not really specify by whom. Only in a few classrooms (20%) students were assessed to be actively involved in identifying physical safety hazards, suggesting there is room for more student engagement in safety awareness. Enumerators assessed that only in 1% of classrooms physical safety hazards were not addressed. The enumerators' assessment indicates that most teachers acknowledge the importance of safety education, however it is not always clear how the assessment was made and whether enumerators simply based the answer on their personal perception or followed some standards.

Emotional safety

The emotional safety of the classrooms is assessed and summarized in indicator 1300.2. At midline, 93% of observed kindergartens and learning support centres met the criteria for emotional safety/emotional well-being. It is a big improvement from 50% of the classrooms identified at baseline.

A positive and supportive approach is prevalent among teachers when managing classroom behavior, which creates a good environment for emotional safety. Classroom observations show that most teachers handle misbehaviour calmly and constructively: over 80% of teachers remain calm, patient, and non-stressful, and nearly 70% engage children in identifying solutions or alternative behaviours. Moreover, most teachers encourage students: 65% of teachers smile during lessons, 77% use positive, friendly, and caring language, and 50% encourage students even when they provide incorrect answers.

In contrast, very few teachers resort to negative practices, such as threatening or scolding children (less than 1%) or ignoring misbehaviour (3%). This suggests a strong focus on positive behaviour management strategies in the classroom, promoting a supportive and constructive learning environment.

3.2.5 Inclusive Practices for Gender and Disability

This section explores the strategies implemented to ensure gender equality and support for children with disabilities within the EQIE program. To evaluate it, we relied on Right To Play's monitoring data from classroom observations, and qualitative data collected by the Consultancy. The classroom observations were conducted in kindergartens, learning support centers working with pre-primary children, and learning support centers working with primary school children. The qualitative data was gathered from interviews with Right To Play staff, Naba'a staff, Naba'a teachers, and UNRWA school principals. It's important to note that comparing midline classroom observation data with baseline data is not possible, as classroom observations were not conducted at baseline due to conflict (as stated in the baseline report).

3.2.5.1 Inclusive approaches in EQIE program

As reported by respondents in the **qualitative interviews**, by improving the safety and accessibility of learning centers through maintenance and rehabilitation the EQIE program has helped ensure that all children, including those with disabilities, can access learning environments.

"All the outcomes of the project are connected. We support the learning environment by doing some rehabilitation work inside kindergartens and centers [so that they] become

accessible for children with disabilities.”

RTP staff member

This focus on inclusivity was also reflected in the training provided to teachers, who learned to adapt activities to accommodate different learning needs.

“There are games that the teachers were unable to implement due to certain cases of learning difficulties or physical impairments among children. The teachers would therefore change the activities to suit all children.”

Naba’a teacher

3.2.5.2 Practices for gender inclusion

As reported in the **qualitative interviews**, some Naba’a learning support teachers observed improvements in the inclusion of boys and girls into the activities. To favor better interaction and cooperation between male and female groups, group work was identified as the most effective strategy. A few teachers reported that this was the most effective strategy to include children with disabilities, too.

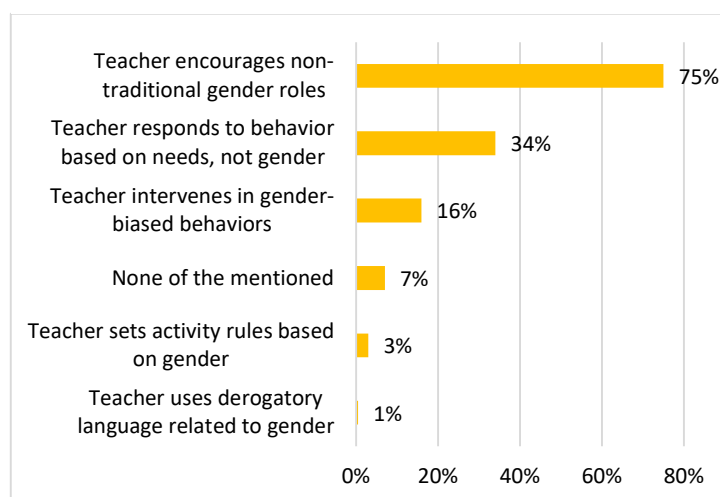
“We suffered from this problem at the beginning, but when we integrated the children together in the activities, the issue remarkably improved.”

Naba’a teacher

Classroom observation data also report that in most classrooms (95%) teachers give girls and boys equal opportunities to participate in activities such as answering questions and expressing ideas. Very few classrooms showed a tendency to give more opportunities to either boys (0.5%) or girls (0.2%).

As can be seen from **Figure**, most teachers (75%) encourage children to engage in non-traditional gender roles and many of them also respond to behaviour based on needs (not gender), showing a proactive approach to challenging gender norms. However, only a small percentage of teachers (16%) intervene when gender-biased behaviours occur among peers, suggesting either children do not express gender-biased behaviour,

Figure : Gender inclusion practices in the observed classrooms



or a teacher does not recognize it or decides not to intervene. In any case, a more careful design of classroom observation protocols may be needed in this area to answer questions more accurately on gender biases and understand the reasons behind them.

Gender differences do not seem to contribute a lot to the participation or engagement of children in the classroom, except for the presence of child-led activities in predominantly female or male classrooms. Classrooms with more girls are slightly less likely to have child-led activities compared to those with more boys or to those with an equal number of boys and girls. This trend might suggest that gender dynamics could influence the degree to which teachers implement child-led activities (although the overall effect is small, there is a trend towards significance, $p=0.079$). the proportion of boys and girls in the classroom does not have a notable impact on participation.

3.2.5.3 Practices for disability inclusion

According to the 2022 progress report, the program provided comprehensive support for children with disabilities by identifying and enrolling 42 out-of-school children in various educational institutions, including kindergartens and schools. To ensure their successful participation, the project supplied necessary aids such as wheelchairs, hearing aids, and eyeglasses. Additionally, scholarships were offered to help families manage educational costs, and regular home visits were conducted to monitor the children's well-being and provide ongoing support to their families.

Community engagement and awareness initiatives played a crucial role in fostering an inclusive environment. The project organized life skills sessions to emphasize the importance of education for children with disabilities and hosted summer camps to provide safe spaces for recreational and educational activities. These efforts aimed to increase the acceptance of children with disabilities, reduce bullying, and promote a supportive atmosphere within the community.

Based on the full sample of **classroom observations**,²⁵ 99 classrooms are equipped with special resources for children with disabilities, while 167 classrooms lack such equipment. There were no children with disabilities in 183 classrooms.

Among the **learning support centers** (122 classroom observations), most classrooms (86 out of 122) had no children with disabilities, while 31 classrooms had one CWD child, three

²⁵ There were 449 classroom observations, out of which 308 observations were made in kindergarten, 122 in learning support centers, 18 in learning support centers in kindergarten. Here we refer to the classroom observations for the learning support centres only in order to be consistent with the student assessment data (which was collected only in learning support centres, not in kindergartens).

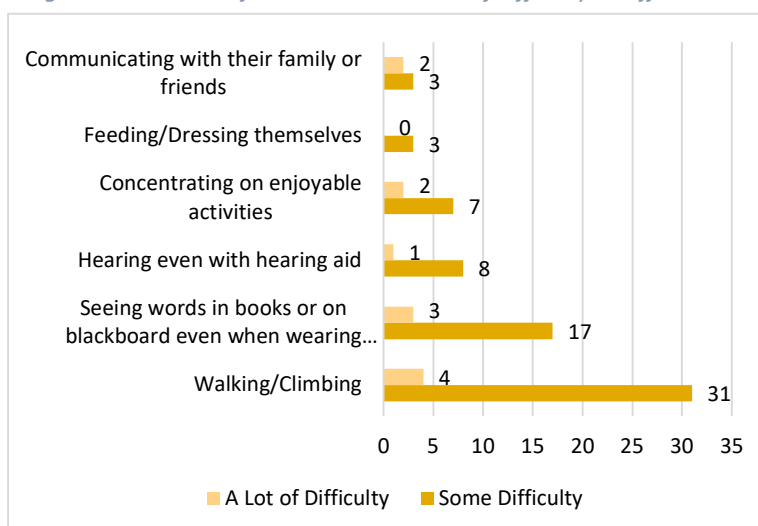
classrooms had two children, one classroom had three CWD kids, and one classroom had nine children with disabilities.²⁶

Children with disabilities were actively included and engaged in classroom activities: many were feeling comfortable, participating, and benefiting from modified lessons to support their inclusion. none of the classroom observations noted that children with disabilities were not included or ignored. In 32 classrooms, they actively participated in classroom activities, while in 20 classrooms they benefitted from modified lessons by teachers to ensure inclusion. there were no classrooms where they were reluctant to participate. Children with disabilities in 29 classrooms appeared comfortable in class, displaying relaxed and positive behaviours, while in another 29 classrooms, they interacted comfortably with their teacher; in 16 classrooms they shared ideas, opinions, and feelings with their teacher.

12 children self-reported having a lot of difficulties with certain tasks or being unable to perform them at all, suggesting that they might also be considered CWD (see Figure 14).

In addition, 59 children reported some difficulty with various tasks. The most common challenge was walking or climbing steps, with 31 children indicating some difficulty. 17 children had some difficulty seeing words in their books or on the blackboard, even if wearing glasses.

Figure 14: Number of children with a level of difficulty in different



Cognitive difficulties, particularly with memory and concentration, might somewhat contribute to reading outcomes. Those related to memory and concentration show the strongest negative impact on reading scores, reading correctness and number of words attempted to read. This might suggest these are critical areas to address to improve reading outcomes. Children who have more difficulty concentrating tend to have lower reading scores (moderate negative correlation of -0.2544 with reading scores). Visual difficulties (wagroup1) show a noticeable negative correlation with reading correctness (-0.1769), while sensory and

²⁶ 4 kids in Grade 1, 2 children in Grade 2, 12 children in Grade 3, 8 in Grade 4, and 10 categorized as 'others'.

physical difficulties and communication challenges also exhibit moderate negative correlations (-0.1511, -0.1527, and -0.1922, respectively), indicating these factors can somewhat affect reading accuracy. No strong or moderate correlations were identified between the difficulties that children have and their socio-emotional skills.

3.2.6 Success and hindering factors

Several factors were key to the successful implementation of the EQIE program in Lebanon. The sub-granting mechanism, through which Right To Play subcontracted the implementation of some activities to local organizations, proved highly effective. Strong partnerships with local CSOs were crucial, as they facilitated community access and provided essential support to both teachers and students. Local partners reported feeling well-supported by RTP and expressed high satisfaction with the implementation process. Another key factor was the program's adaptability, particularly in addressing Lebanon's socio-economic challenges.

"Our ability to adjust the program to meet the current needs of the community has been critical to its success."

Right To Play staff member

Regular monitoring and capacity-building efforts were also identified as critical in supporting the implementation of the program. These activities ensured that teachers were well-equipped to implement PBL effectively, even under challenging conditions.

"The ongoing support and training we receive help us stay on track and continue improving our practices."

Naba'a teacher

Moreover, as highlighted in the **qualitative interviews**, the program and the use of the PBL methodology had also a positive effect on children's relationships with the centers. Naba'a teachers and staff noted that students became more enthusiastic about attending the centers and participating in activities.

"There are no challenges because the children themselves are the ones who love these activities; even after the activities are over, they like to stay at the center to play."

Naba'a teacher

Despite these successes, the program faced significant challenges that hindered its full implementation. The socio-economic crisis in Lebanon, characterized by fuel shortages, inflation, and limited access to resources, severely impacted the program's reach and effectiveness.

"We've struggled with maintaining consistent attendance and engagement due to the difficult circumstances many families are facing."

Right To Play staff member

Additionally, while the project was generally well-received, during interviews some teachers mentioned challenges in fully implementing the activities during interviews. These difficulties were often due to high teacher-to-student ratios in some centers or limited space available for conducting the activities

While strong partnerships, adaptability, and ongoing support drove the program's success, socio-economic challenges and resource limitations posed significant obstacles to full implementation. Sustaining the program's adaptability to the crisis context will be essential for the continued success of future activities.

3.3 Efficiency

This criterion examines EQIE's operational efficiency, focusing on implementation, the role of local partners, key cost drivers, and stakeholders' views on activities offering the best or least value for money.

+ Operational Efficiency

Right To Play partnered with local organizations like Naba'a using a sub-granting model for capacity-building and ToT. Despite partners' strong contextual knowledge, some had difficulties with financial management, suggesting a need for better monitoring and support.

+ Cost-efficiency

High-cost elements like tech infrastructure, digital labs, and play activities were difficult to sustain. Key expenses included the Tabshoura App and disability support. Community-focused activities, though effective, were hard to scale due to costs, indicating a need for budget reassessment. Suggestions for improvement of cost-efficiency include focusing on community-based interventions, outsourcing expensive activities and implementing structured planning to prevent unfocused piloting.

This section draws exclusively on qualitative data from interviews with Right To Play and Naba'a staff about the components perceived to provide the highest or lowest value for money. For a more comprehensive assessment of project efficiency, future evaluations should include a quantitative analysis of project expenditures about the planned budget.

3.3.1 Operational Efficiency

To expand its activities and reach a broader target population, Right to Play (RTP) partnered with local organizations, like Naba'a, through a sub-granting model.

This partnership involved capacity-building, system strengthening, and a Training of Trainers (ToT) approach, where RTP trained Naba'a focal points to teach learning center teachers the play-based learning (PBL) approach. This was crucial for the project's successful delivery. Respondents from Right To Play staff often praised the value of local partners' contextual knowledge and technical skills.

“Without the partners and community-based organizations we've worked with, we wouldn't have been able to implement the project as effectively [as we did]. They provide contextualized knowledge and visibility we don't have.”

Right To Play staff member

“Implementation was carried out very well and it was very effective for children.”

Naba'a staff member

While partnerships with local organizations were key to the project's success, several challenges affected its efficient delivery. Some local partners had limited capacity to manage financial systems and monitoring processes effectively, which at times hindered resource management and tracking. Although the sub-granting model helped extend the project's reach, it required strict financial oversight that not all partners were fully equipped to provide. This situation highlights the need for stronger monitoring mechanisms and increased support and capacity-building opportunities from Right To Play for its local partners.

3.3.2 Cost-efficiency

Certain program elements presented financial challenges, prompting the need for a more strategic approach moving forward. For example, rehabilitation components such as the tech infrastructure and digital labs, while valuable, were found by some Right To Play staff to be quite costly and difficult to sustain within Lebanon's current infrastructure. Additionally, a Right To Play staff member noted that activities like play tournaments, play days, and summer camps, while enjoyable, were high-cost. Sub-granting them to other organizations was proposed as a viable solution.

Main Cost Drivers

Key cost drivers included the Tabshoura App and disability support initiatives. A Right To Play staff member noted that the design of materials for the Tabshoura application is costly, but this is one of the activities with the greatest potential.

“The Tabshoura component [was expensive], but we would do the same again because of its high impact potential.”

Right To Play staff member

Right To Play staff reported that the provision of aid for disability support was deemed necessary but came with high expenses. A full cost-effectiveness analysis of these two components is needed.

Project staff identified community-focused activities, such as the mothers' English courses, as effective but limited in reach compared to larger initiatives like the Tabshoura App and PBL training. However, they noted that the high cost of these activities makes scaling up challenging. This feedback points to the need for a thorough quantitative budget assessment to guide future strategic and planning decisions.

Suggestions for Cost Improvements

Respondents offered several strategic suggestions for enhancing cost-efficiency. One recommendation was to focus more on community-based interventions that can be mainstreamed more easily, thus maximizing the use of existing resources. There was also a suggestion to reconsider the approach to activities like summer camps and play days, potentially entrusting them to other partners. This would allow the project to allocate its resources to areas with a more sustained impact. Additionally, the need for more structured strategic planning was emphasized to avoid piloting too many initiatives without a clear framework. These insights provide valuable direction for optimizing the project's future financial management while maintaining its positive outcomes.

3.4 Sustainability

This criterion assesses whether the project shows promise for continuation after its end, focusing on activities that may have potential for sustainability and scalability.

+ Prospects for Sustainability

The project's partners are equipped to ensure the continuity of activities, especially in teacher training and collaboration with the Ministry of Education through Tabshoura platform

+ . However, long-term sustainability depends on formal partnerships and financial support, especially for resource-intensive initiatives like caregivers' English courses and technology innovation labs.

+ Strategies and challenges for long-term Sustainability

The Tabshoura platform and teacher training components lay a strong foundation for sustainability, but activities may depend on external resources, such as rehabilitation efforts, and can face long-term challenges.

+ Potential for Scalability

There is strong enthusiasm for expanding the program, with interest in reaching more students and higher grade levels. However, scalability requires additional resources and strategic partnerships to extend the project's successful elements effectively.

This section draws from the qualitative data gathered from interviews with Right To Play staff, Naba'a staff, Naba'a teachers, and UNRWA school principals.

3.4.1 Prospects for Sustainability

Implementing partners appear equipped to carry out the program's activities due to their experience.

"We chose partners who are not grassroots [organizations] in their current state. They are advanced, know what they are doing in terms of service delivery, and are using their experiences to strengthen their portfolios."

Right To Play staff member

Two EQIE components that may be of particular interest to the Ministry of Education and Higher Education are teacher training and the digital platform. Right To Play personnel mentioned that they are working to establish a partnership with the ministry's department responsible for teacher training.

Additionally, a Right To Play staff member highlighted other potential partnership opportunities with the MEHE:

"[Right To Play is] exploring [collaboration] with the Ministry of Education [to provide] play-based training and include social-emotional learning into the curriculum."

Right To Play staff member

Based on the current data, it is unclear whether these opportunities with the ministry will lead to concrete support for the project's sustainability. Future evaluations should focus more on this aspect to provide a clearer assessment.

At the community and school levels, there is enthusiasm for continuing activities like play-based learning, with teachers convinced of its value. Right To Play personnel reported that, given the positive acceptance of this approach, trained teachers will continue to implement it and would favorably welcome a continuation of the program.

Financial challenges remain a significant concern, particularly for activities requiring maintenance or costly resources, like caregivers' English courses, solar panel systems, and technology innovation labs. The continuation of these activities relies heavily on ongoing funding and support. Elements such as reading sessions could continue if other funding sources are identified by implementing partners.

3.4.2 Strategies and challenges for long-term Sustainability

Efforts such as the Tabshoura platform and teacher training have laid a strong foundation for sustainability. However, ongoing support and adaptability will be important to address challenges related to external resources and Lebanon's changing conditions.

Several actions were implemented to ensure the long-term sustainability of the play-based learning (PBL) activities. One of the most successful examples is the Tabshoura digital platform, which will remain freely accessible even after the project's completion. The availability of the platform and its accessibility can ensure continued learning in periods of disrupted school calendars and lack of safety due to the volatile socio-political Lebanese context.

"The digital platform for students has a lot of potential for interactive learning. Overall, the platform is the most sustainable element."

Right To Play staff member

The program's training components, both the teacher training and the training-of-trainers (ToT) model, demonstrate potential for sustainability. The teacher training fostered ownership of the PBL approach among participants, while the ToT model equipped partner staff to further expand play-based methods across communities. However, some elements proved less sustainable, primarily due to their reliance on external resources. For example, rehabilitation efforts and play days require ongoing funding, limiting their long-term viability.

3.4.3 Potential for Scalability

The project demonstrates strong potential for scalability across multiple areas. Many respondents—including Naba'a teachers and staff and UNWRA school administrators—expressed strong interest in expanding the scope and reach of various components.

Many respondents, including Naba'a teachers and staff, recommended expanding the program to include additional grade levels, particularly up to the 6th grade, emphasizing that extending support to older students would ensure a more comprehensive and sustained impact.

"Increasing the number of teachers and classes to reach the 6th grade because students need follow-up at this important stage of their educational life."
UNRWA School Principal

Additionally, Naba'a teachers showed interest in expanding professional development offerings, with many expressing enthusiasm for new training opportunities. This focus on programmatic growth suggests an opportunity to expand the curriculum and training components further.

Respondents also advocated for increasing the program's reach by involving more students.

"These activities should continue and be carried out more frequently and on a wider scale to reach a larger number of children."
Naba'a teacher

Further suggestions for scalability included increasing resources to expand the project's reach, such as providing additional tablets for digital learning.

Overall, the feedback shows strong enthusiasm from participants to scale up the project's successful elements. However, achieving this will require strategic planning, sufficient funding, and ongoing support from partners, making scalability a key part of the project's overall sustainability strategy.

4. Conclusions, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusions

The findings from this evaluation indicate that the EQIE project in Lebanon was designed to address the educational and socio-emotional needs of children, particularly those living in Palestinian refugee camps. While the study's limitations, such as the absence of a control group and restricted access to certain areas, prevent definitive causal attributions to project activities, the results still demonstrate notable progress in several key areas.

Improvements were observed in the reading and socio-emotional skills of children, particularly through the implementation of play-based learning (PBL) approaches. However, the gains in reading skills were more mixed, with some positive outcomes in fluency but persistent challenges in comprehension..

Community and teacher engagement with the PBL methodology was a positive outcome of the project, with respondents noting increased interest and motivation in students. However, financial sustainability remains a significant concern, especially for activities like the mothers' English courses, the school rehabilitation and the provision of technological materials for digital labs, both of which are resource-intensive. The support from government partners, including interest from the Ministry of Education, shows potential for integrating elements of the project into the broader education system, but this requires further financial commitment.

Finally, the program demonstrated flexibility in responding to external challenges, including Lebanon's socio-economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic, through adaptations like the Tabshoura digital platform. However, the sustainability and scalability of these initiatives will depend heavily on securing continued funding and expanding teacher capacity. Despite these challenges, there is significant interest in scaling the project's successes to more students and grade levels, indicating a strong foundation for future growth.

4.2 Lessons Learned

This evaluation identified three sets of lessons learned and recommendations, which refer to, respectively, EQIE's design, its implementation, and the research process. Lessons learned, and their corresponding recommendations, are outlined in this and the following section.

Design

Lesson Learned 1.1. While reading fluency improved slightly, comprehension gaps persisted, indicating that students can read but struggle with deeper understanding.

Lesson Learned 1.2. Significant improvements were observed in children’s socio-emotional skills, particularly in collaboration and conflict resolution, though gender differences emerged.

Implementation

Lesson Learned 2.1. Play-based learning (PBL) improved classroom engagement, but the implementation of student-centred activities was uneven across classrooms, with some still relying on traditional methods. Classroom observation results also showed that teachers still do not always involve kids in problem-solving or encourage predictive thinking or peer discussions.

Lesson Learned 2.2. While inclusive practices improved, many classrooms still lack the necessary resources for children with disabilities, affecting their full participation.

Lesson Learned 2.3. Participation in in-person out-of-school reading activities increased, while virtual activities decreased, possibly due to the return of traditional in-person options post-COVID-19. The participation in these activities did not show strong correlations with improvements in reading or socio-emotional outcomes.

Research Process

Lesson Learned 3.1. The EGRA tool may not be sensitive enough to measure reading improvements in Grade 4 students, as many students are already proficient readers, leading to a ceiling effect. Additionally, the text length in the assessment may be too short to capture nuanced differences in reading ability.

Lesson Learned 3.2: The absence of focus group discussions (FGDs) with children and caregivers due to logistical challenges limited the qualitative data available for assessing the full impact of the program, particularly on children with disabilities and caregivers.

4.3 Recommendations

Design

Recommendation 1.1. Future programs should emphasize reading comprehension activities alongside fluency exercises, incorporating strategies like summarizing and critical thinking to bridge the gap.

Recommendation 1.2. Future initiatives should include gender-specific strategies to ensure that both boys and girls equally benefit from socio-emotional learning, particularly in areas like collaboration and stress management.

Implementation

Recommendation 2.1. Future programs should provide additional training focused on student-centred approaches, specifically targeting problem-solving, predictive thinking, and peer discussions. Continued follow-up and targeted support should focus on expanding student-centred practices and ensuring that all teachers adopt participatory approaches consistently, with ongoing mentorship or coaching to support teachers in shifting from traditional methods to more participatory and critical thinking-focused practices.

Recommendation 2.2. Future programs should prioritize equipping all classrooms with appropriate resources for children with disabilities and provide ongoing training for teachers on inclusive practices.

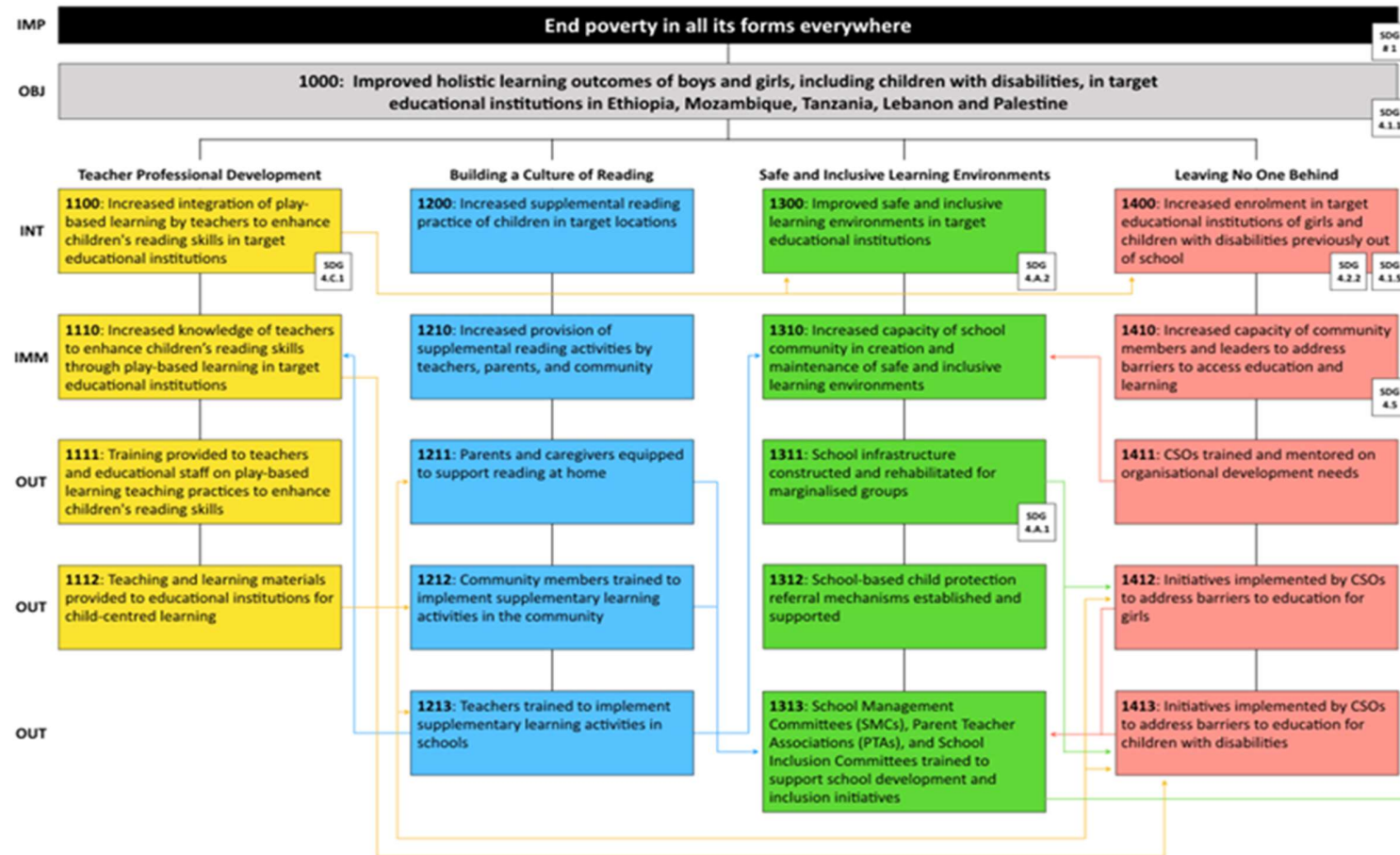
Recommendation 2.3. Future programs should encourage participation in both in-person and virtual out-of-school activities, ensuring both formats are engaging and accessible. Given country's context and vulnerable condition, it could still be useful to encourage participation in media use to improve reading skills. This will allow to ensure the continuation of the activities in case of emergency or conflict.

Research Process

Recommendation 3.1. Future programs should consider using more advanced reading assessments for older students, such as Grade 4, that offer more complex texts and tasks to accurately measure higher-level reading skills. Exploring alternative assessment tools that go beyond basic fluency and focus on comprehension and critical thinking could provide more meaningful insights into student progress at this stage.

Recommendation 3.2: Future evaluations should incorporate more flexible qualitative data collection methods, such as remote interviews or digital surveys, to capture insights from a broader range of stakeholders, including children with disabilities and caregivers, despite contextual challenges.

5. Annex 1: Theory of Change



6. Annex 2: Evaluation and Analysis and Research Frameworks

Evaluation Criteria	Research question	Source of information	Data Collection Method
Relevance	To what extent are the EQIE project intervention packages relevant to advancing Ministry of Education priorities of implementing countries (Palestine, Lebanon, Mozambique)?	National Education Policy plans, education sector strategies	Desk review
	Is there early evidence that the EQIE project intervention packages are relevant to the needs and priorities of intended users (ie children, both male and female, in-school and out-of-school, living with disability and living without disability; teachers/ educators; schools; district education directorates; caregivers/ parents; local CSOs)?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff	Key Informant Interviews
		CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews
		Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders	Key Informant Interviews
		Education statistics, academic and grey literature	Desk review
	What can we learn about the contextual relevance of the different intervention packages under the EQIE project?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff	Key Informant Interviews
		Local and/or national-level education stakeholders	Key Informant Interviews
		CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews
		Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders	Key Informant Interviews
	Effectiveness	To what extent is the EQIE project on track in achieving the planned project targets at the outcome (ie teachers’ pedagogical practice, enrolment and retention of out-of-school girls and children with disability, inclusive learning environment in schools, access to supplemental learning opportunities), and objective (literacy and socioemotional skills) levels?	CSO partner representatives
Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders			Classroom observations, Key Informant Interviews
Children			Learner assessment
Project documentation, including Progress Reports			Desk review
What factors have influenced the achievement (or non-achievement) of the EQIE project’s objectives at midline?		Right To Play HQ and CO staff	Key Informant Interviews
		CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews
		Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders	Classroom observations, Key Informant Interviews
	Project documentation, including Progress Reports	Desk review	
Are the activities and outputs of the EQIE project consistent with the overall outcomes and objectives of the project?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff	Key informant Interviews	
	CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews	
	Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders	Classroom observations, Key Informant Interviews	

Efficiency	Does the Theory of Change of the project still hold, and are the implied assumptions of the TOC still valid?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff CSO partner representatives Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders Children Project documentation, including Theory of Change documents	Key informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews Classroom observations, Key Informant Interviews Learner assessment Desk review
	How effectively has the project used its risk register, monitoring and fiduciary systems to remain adaptive and responsive to changing needs, context and challenges in communities, districts and countries of implementation?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews
	To what extent have the partnership (including implementing partners and government partners) and operational modalities been conducive and adequate to enable the efficient delivery of the EQIE project and the achievement of results at midline?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews
	Are the capacities of implementing agencies and partners adequate for continued efficient and effective delivery of the EQIE project?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews
Sustainability	Is there early evidence that local implementing partners and government partners have the capacity (institutional, financial), positive attitude, and ownership mindset to continue the pedagogical practices and safe/ inclusive learning environments of the EQIE Project?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff CSO partner representatives	Key Informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews
	What are the key factors or risks that are likely to affect the persistence of positive effects of the EQIE project in the short, medium and long term?	Right To Play HQ and CO staff CSO partner representatives Teachers, Headteachers/Center Leaders	Key Informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews Key Informant Interviews

7. Annex 3: Respondent List

Respondents List		
Organization	Role	Name
Naba'a	Project Manager Ein El Helwe Center	Mohammad Shabayta
	Project Coordinator Borj Chmali Center	Mirna Hussein
	Center Director Rashidieh camp	Khalid Othman
	Learning Support Teacher	Saliha Wannas
		Suzan Awad
		Bahija Abo Hamid
		Roaa Al Hajj
		Oussama Ali
		Hanin Abdel Aal
UNRWA	Principal Naher El Ordon School	Nada Wehbe
	Principal Qadisieh school, Rashidieh camp	Jihad Al Hanafi
Right To Play Lebanon	Program Manager	Ma'amoun Salhab
	Project Manager	Milia Jebran
	MEL Officer	Ghinwa Monzer
	Education Specialist	Julien Jalkh

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