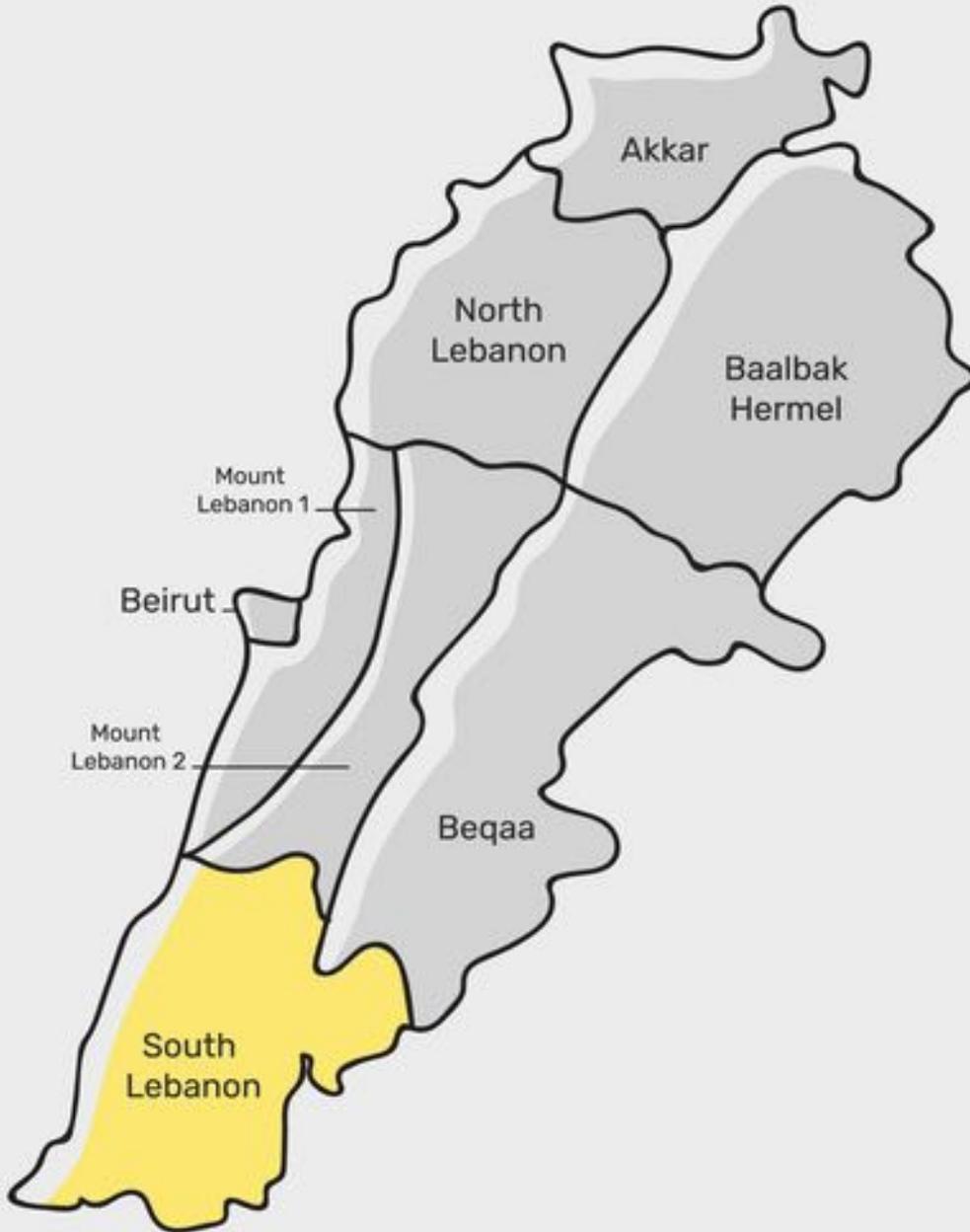


منهجنا

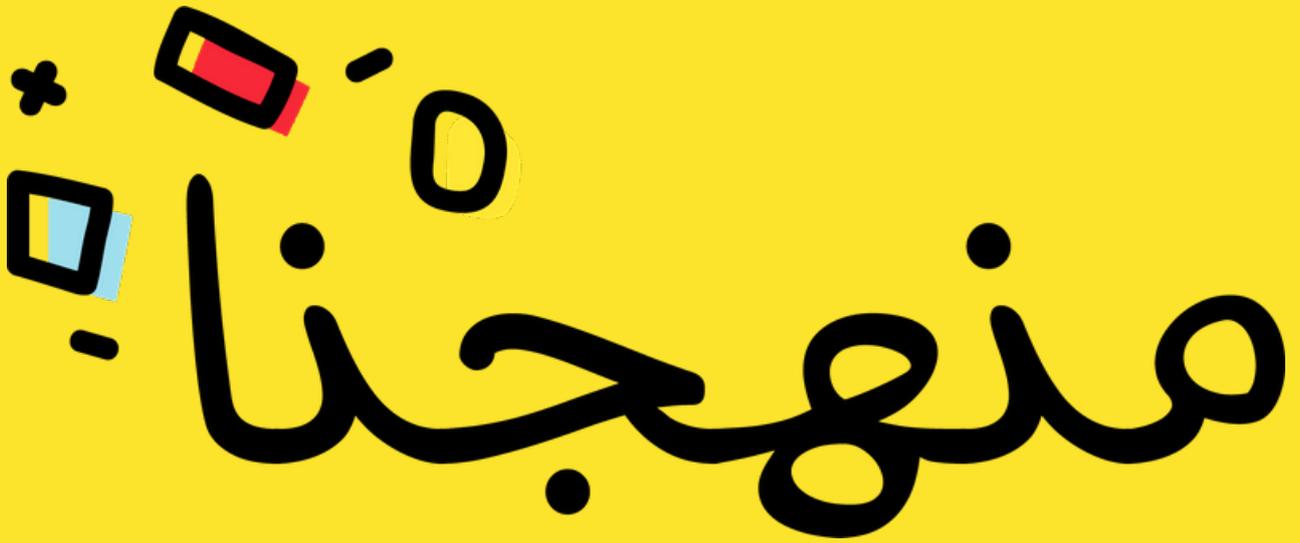


South WonderLand Report 8/8

Outline

- I. About the Project**
- II. About the Partners**
- III. About WonderLand & this Report**
- IV. Whom Are We Designing For?**
- V. Wonder Pillars & Findings**
 - 1/4. Why and Where of Education
 - 2/4. What is a Curriculum?
 - 3/4. Curriculum Development Process
 - 4/4. Educator Profile
- VI. Collaborators & Co-creators**





منهجنا



Vision

Manhajna is a holistic, participatory, and visionary project that aims to democratize the processes of curriculum reform. Manhajna advocates for policy change that is envisioned and conceived by the education ecosystem in Lebanon.



Mission

The project co-creates inclusive spaces for dialogue to re-imagine the new curriculum.

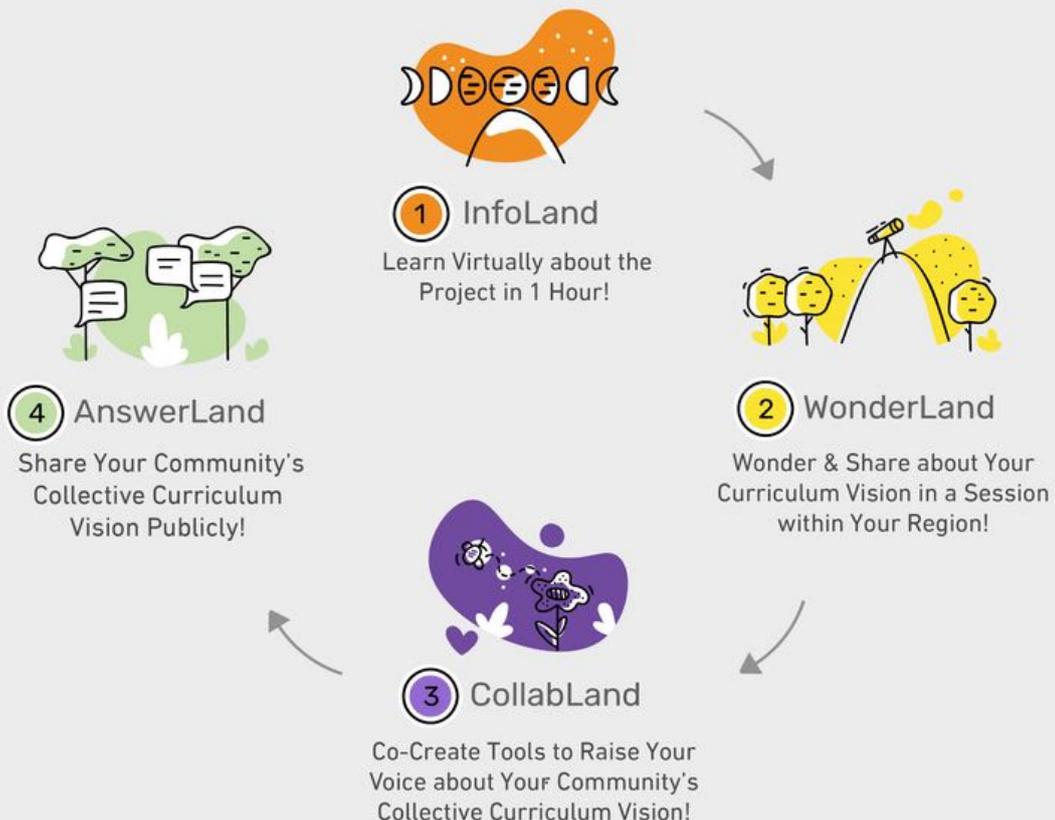
Eights spaces are being facilitated in eights governorates across Lebanon.

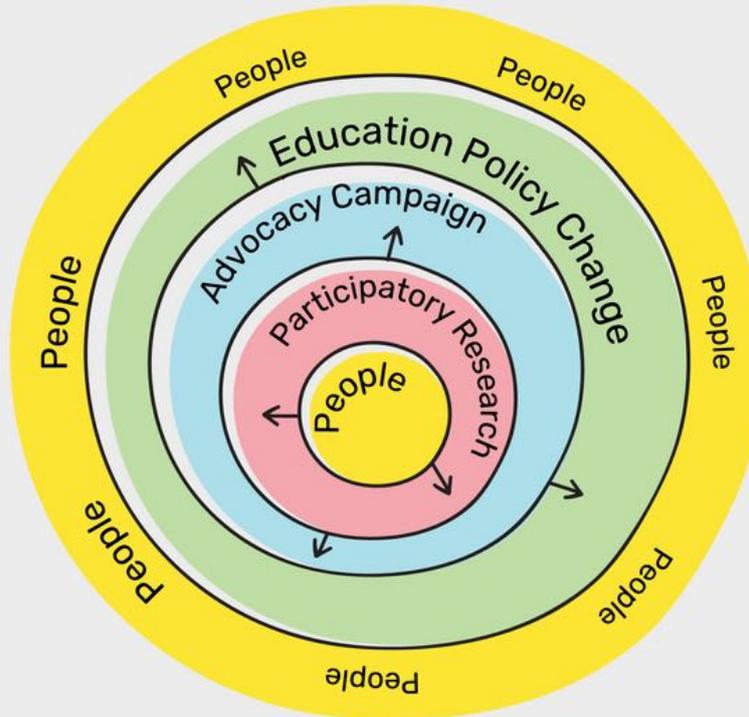
Through Manhajna's activities, we engage diverse groups from across the country to join us to envision a curriculum embedded in the values of participation, inclusion, justice and equity.

We aim to create a national network that will campaign to influence policy and curriculum creation processes to make them more inclusive and relevant to all.



Project Journey





1



People

By adopting a human-centered design, we consider people to be at the heart of this project in all its processes.

2



Participatory Research

Our project relies on the people's perceptions which are seen as central to all stages of the research process.

3



Advocacy Campaign

We will create advocacy campaigns in an attempt to initiate policy change at the national system level.

4



Education Policy Change

We aim to bring about a change at the policy level that leads to the birth of a new Lebanese curriculum.

OUR PARTNERS



About the Partners

منهجنا



Why CLS?

Center for Lebanese Studies (CLS) aims to contribute to Lebanon's education development through research and advocacy to impact education public policies.



Why Learning Land?

At Learning Land, the educators' community mission is to contribute to Lebanon's education systemic transformation through the reform of the current national curriculum and the partnership with key national institutions to influence education public policies.



ABOUT WONDERLAND & THE REPORT



About WonderLand & this Report:



WonderLand aims to collect genuine and authentic needs, wonders, interests, and reflections about people’s vision regarding the Lebanese national curriculum.

This happens through a focused group discussion format of 6 participants per group (see figure 1) with the help of dialogue facilitators.



Figure 1

All wonders are structured and documented through two main tools: 1) The Dialogue Mat and 2) visuals. The Dialogue Mat (see figure 2) is a tool used to collect the wonders of the educators while maintaining an interactive dialogue. It fosters a position-free instructional and reflective dialogue that is based on reflective professional inquiry. Educators freely share their knowledge based on their intuition, practical wisdom, habitual behaviors, and trial-and-error experiences that happened back in their classroom. The visuals (refer to figure 3 as an example) are data collection tools that help educators to visualize their thoughts, reflections, and experiences.



Figure 2

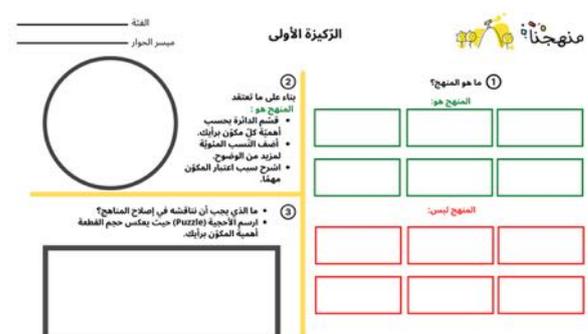


Figure 3

About WonderLand & this Report:



The report summarizes the data generated through qualitative open-ended questions during focus group discussions documented on the Dialogue Mat and visuals.

The researchers opted to analyze the data thematically in order to highlight the key ideas shared by the participants. The researchers also presented quantitative data, such as the the number of participants who presented a common answer, when they believed such an approach would add value and insight to their findings to highlight the significance of such common answers and the level of agreement.

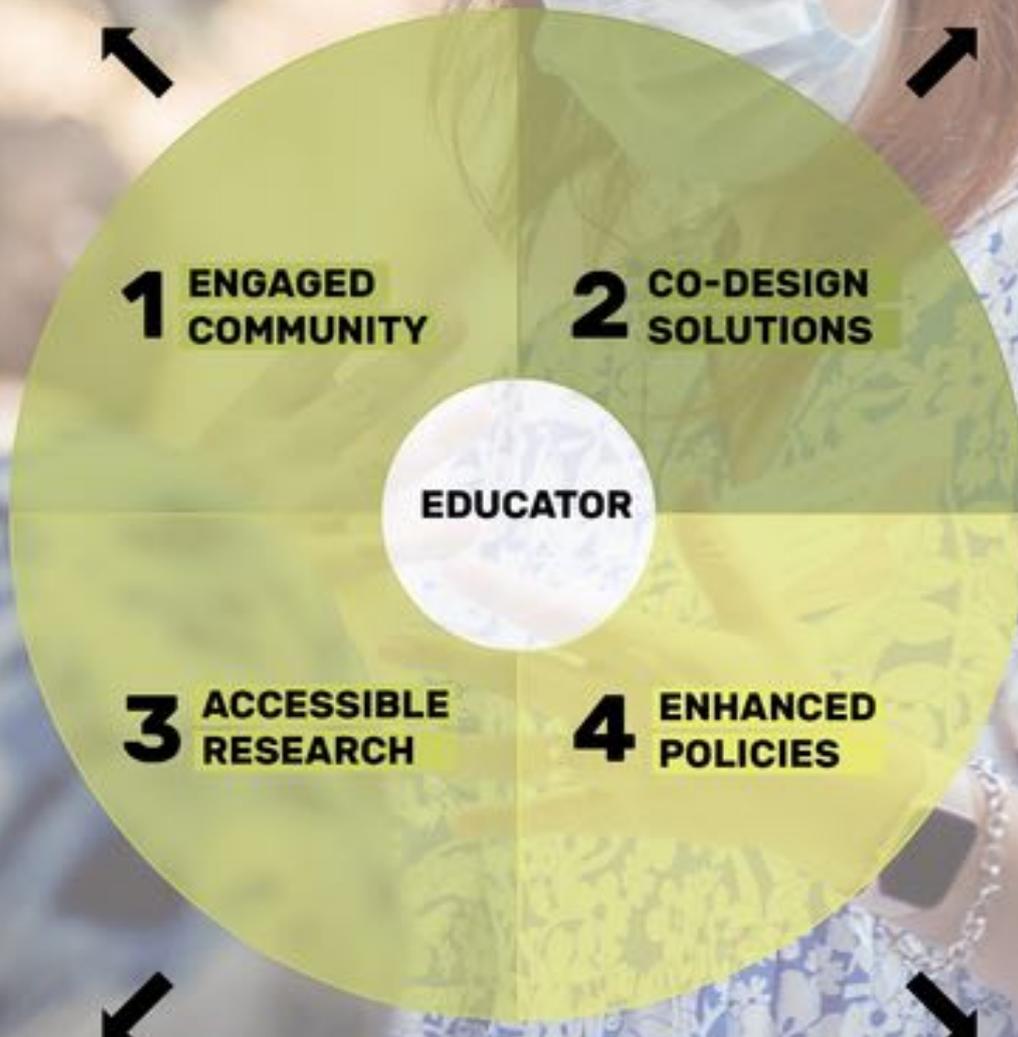
The importance of this report lies at the heart of Learning Land's methodology. Learning Land aims not only to create a community of educators, but also co-create solutions, provide accessible research, and impact practices and policies on a school level and national level. Through accessible research, school-level policymakers, national policymakers, social innovators, researchers, and various practitioners can use this report to drive decisions based on evidence. Learning Land impact pillars are listed below.



Learning Land Impact Pillars

We connect diverse educators coming from public, semi-private and private schools with experts, researchers, academics and social innovators through our transformational learning journeys to exchange knowledge, enhance learning and consolidate their know-how.

We foster a setting for all to codesign sustainable solutions based on diverse school-based needs while building educators' non-positional leadership.

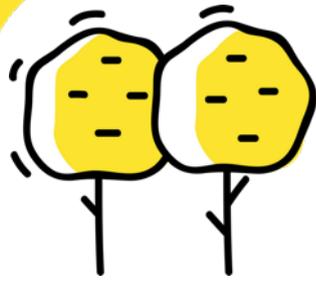


We provide easy-accessible research, centered on teaching and learning, for the education ecosystem players to drive evidence-based decision making.

We promote an inclusive school-policy dialogue with our community members in an attempt to build a grassroots movement that impacts the policy process on a national level.

WHOM ARE WE DESIGNING FOR?





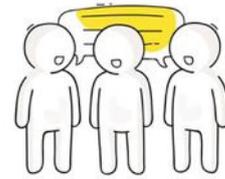
WONDERLAND PARTICIPANTS



16
Attendees



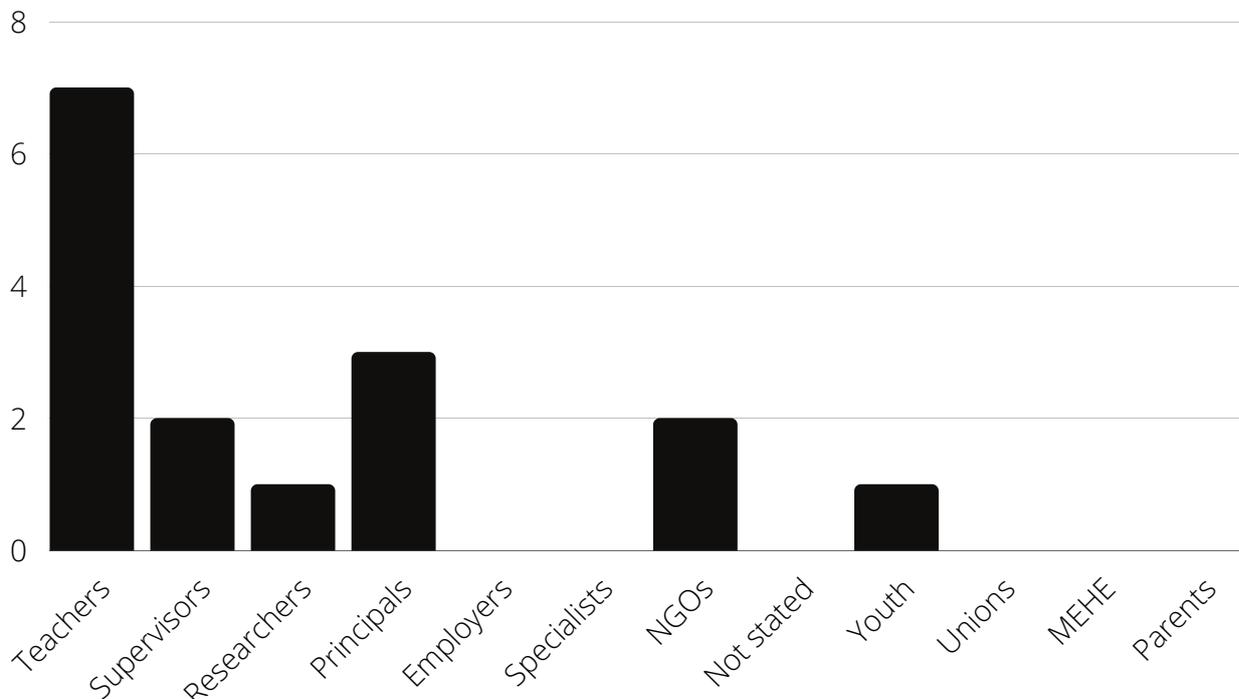
7
Dialogue
Facilitators



3
Team
Members

16 ATTENDEES:

BACKGROUND

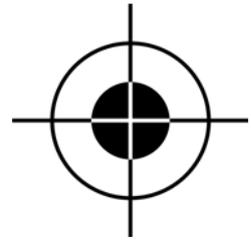


1/4

**WHY & WHERE
OF EDUCATION**



Why and Where of Education



This pillar describes what the participants believe should be the main aims of the new curriculum. The pillar also describes the successful student profile and the values the participants think students should acquire through the curriculum, and why those values and characteristics are perceived to be important.

The participants shared the following as what they considered the aims of the curriculum should be. The results are stated in order starting with the one with the highest consensus.

Aims of the curriculum



Personal development

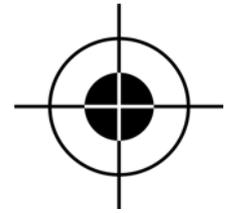
The vast majority of the participants considered the promotion of personal development to be a central aim of the curriculum. They believed that this could manifest through facilitating character building and development through instilling qualities such as leadership, decision making, and problem solving, in addition to developing analytical skills and awareness. Many participants highlighted the importance of constructing a curriculum that allows students to accumulate knowledge and expertise related to technology since they believe such knowledge is essential to success in the 21st century. Participants also added that the curriculum should not be rigid and allow space for children to build their talents.



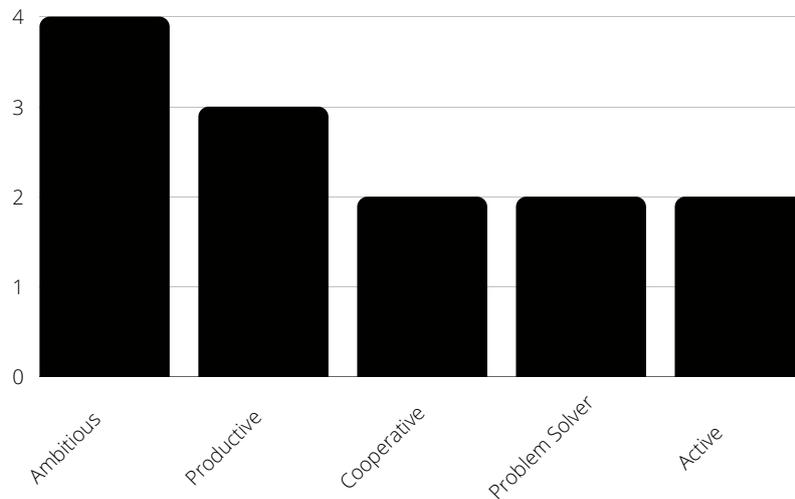
Societal development

Participants believed that the curriculum should promote citizenship and the development of society. The collected data showed that the curriculum should prepare students to play a positive social role through interacting effectively with his or her social surroundings. They added that the curriculum plays a pivotal role in preparing students to help get the country recover.

Why and Where of Education



Successful student profile



Top 6 Values the curriculum should promote:

- Respect
- Acceptance
- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Love



Researchers' Insights:



There was a high level of alignment between what participants' considered the aims of the curriculum to be, their description of a successful student profile, and the value they believed the curriculum should promote.

Why and Where of Education



Participants were asked about their thoughts regarding learning venues, in addition to schools, which can be used to further promote the aforementioned values which will aid in the construction of the student profile they seek. The following venues were the most mentioned and are placed from most to least. The link between those venues and the values they promote is also highlighted.

Additional learning venues

- Nature
 - Gardens
 - Beaches
 - Farms
- Cultural sites
- Art sites
- Laboratories
- Army



Values promoted through the learning venues:

Different values of different frequencies emerged from participants. These values can be categorized under three main themes:

- Personal Development
- Community Development
- Interpersonal Traits

Even though values of interpersonal traits are the most frequent, the slightest difference between the three different themes can be inferred that there is an overall agreement among participants on the necessity of acquiring values that facilitate students' personal development, community development, and nurturing their interpersonal traits (capabilities) all together.



2/4

WHAT IS A CURRICULUM?



What is a Curriculum?



We aimed to explore how participants perceived and understood curricula by asking them “what is a curriculum?”

After going over their answers within the focus group discussions, the participants’ answers were grouped under two main themes:

2.1 Curriculum as a Development Process

The first theme is the curriculum development process which encompasses the overarching curriculum aims, goals, vision, and philosophy that aids the curriculum developers to consider during the development process.

2.2 Curriculum as a Design

The second theme is curriculum design which encompasses the components of a curriculum. These components aid the curriculum developers to break-down the design of the curriculum. These components are themed under four titles:

- Objectives
- Learning Experiences
- Content
- Evaluation

What is a Curriculum?



2.1 Curriculum as a Development Process

The curriculum development process was themed under three sub-goal categories that the curriculum developers could look into while designing the curriculum. These categories are: student, curriculum, and planning goals.

2.1.1 Student Goals. When answering “what is a curriculum?”, participants associated the question to student goals. Some of the participants’ ideas were:

- Learner's personality development
- A change in the way of thinking
- Scientific guidance and skill development
- The development of the human mind
- The basis for building an advanced society
- Rules of studies one needs to build a better future
- Goals for each stage

2.1.2 Curriculum Goals. When answering “what is a curriculum?”, participants associated the question to curriculum goals. Some of the participants’ ideas were:

- A program that changes with time
- A pathway that we believe in and achieve through certain activities that mimic reality
- Aligned with era requirements

2.1.3 Planning Goals. When answering “what is a curriculum?”, participants associated the question to planning goals. Some of the participants’ ideas were:

- Vision/ plan
- Steps (coordination / organization / preparation)
- Direction and leadership
- Educational plan

What is a Curriculum?



2.2 Curriculum Design Components

Curriculum design components are considered the essential components that make up the curriculum. These components were divided into four categories: objectives, learning experience, content, and evaluation.

2.2.1 Objectives: The participants expressed that the curriculum should be designed based on specific objectives, goals, outcomes, and competencies.

2.2.2 Learning Experience: Curriculum Learning Experience is defined as how the curriculum is being delivered. Answering what is a curriculum, participants perceived that the learning experience could be delivered through different teaching strategies, teaching environments, and teaching tools.

Teaching Strategies:

- Learning Points (Explore / Research)
- Combination of theory and practice
- Application
- Open and continuous research
- Advanced teaching methods appropriate to technological development
- Blended learning, taking into account individual differences
- Lessons / indoctrination

Teaching Environment:

- Community environment
- Inclusion of activities
- Activities that develop creative skills
- Classroom and extracurricular activities
- Extracurricular abilities and activities

Teaching Tools:

- Books
- Board
- Papers and Pens
- Advanced books and activities
- A series of books constantly renewed

What is a Curriculum?



2.2.3 Curriculum Content: Participants elaborated that the curriculum content could include general knowledge, skills, and values. They specified that curriculum could be delivered based on a subject-matter division. This content should be systematic and logical with clear sequencing across subjects and grade levels.

Participants were asked to share their thoughts regarding the content that should be delivered through the new curriculum. The purpose of this question was to discover whether the participants possessed a different take than what is currently being applied on what is considered essential in terms of knowledge and learning outcomes. The participants contributed by discussing subjects and skills, in addition to touching on the venues that best suit delivering the content. The participants' insights were as follows:



Additional subjects

Participants stated that students should be able to have their say regarding their own education by being able to choose some of the courses they want to study based on their preferences. Subjects including art, technology, and music were highlighted as options to be chosen from.



Core subjects

The majority of the participants reiterated the significance of what was considered as traditional or core subjects throughout the learning journey. Those subjects were considered to be: languages, mathematics, and sciences. The prominence of those subjects was reflected in the fact that participants considered them as the majority of the weekly contact hours.



Include electives

Participants stated that while classes should be fixed for lower and middle cycles, students should be able to select some of their courses depending on where their interests lie. Those courses are believed to help students make guided decisions regarding their future careers.

Researchers' Insights

It appeared that the main innovation regarding subject matter that participants suggested was to add elective courses in higher levels where students are given the agency to choose what topics to pursue. One notable misconception was that subjects like music, arts, and IT are not part of the current curriculum, while in fact they are.



What is a Curriculum?



2.2.4 Curriculum Evaluation:

Curriculum evaluation is concerned with the strategies, tools, and tasks used to assess its aims. The following are the people's perceptions that were categorized under evaluation based on two major questions in the event. The first question was "what is a curriculum?" and the second question was "How could the new curriculum assess student capabilities?"



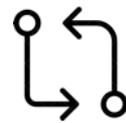
Assessing What?

- Learning Objectives
- Competencies
- Knowledge
- Analysis
- Student Behavior



Assessment Strategies

- Inquiry-Based
- Research-Based
- Project-Based
- Practice-Based
- Play-Based



Assessment Tools & Tasks

- Presentations
- Oral Responses



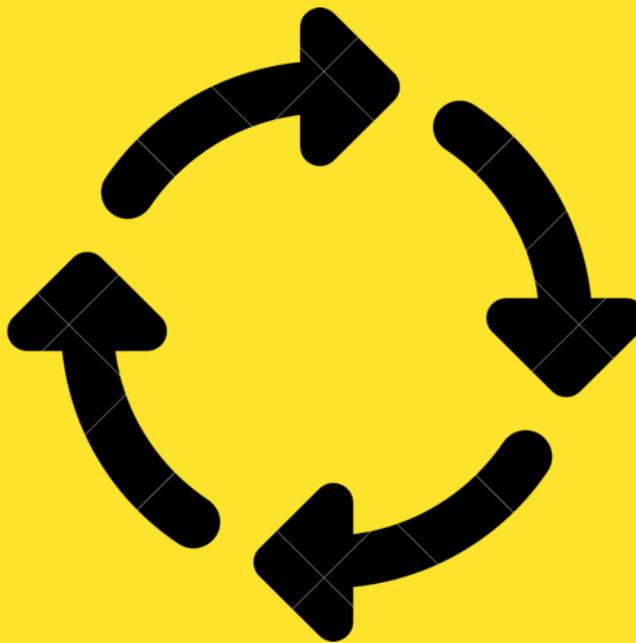
Issues in Official Exams

- It should be decentralized and school-based.
- It should provide students more choices of subjects that will be assessed.
- It should not be based on memorization only.
- Some subjects should be removed from official exams.
- It should focus on quality and not quantity.
- Brevet examination should be removed.
- Official exams should be removed from the official curriculum.



3/4

**CURRICULUM
DEVELOPMENT
PROCESS**



Curriculum Development Process



This pillar focuses on the process of curriculum development through reflecting on the participants' knowledge and past experiences of how the Lebanese curriculum was developed, the 1997 curriculum in particular, and sharing insights regarding how the process should transpire in the current reform process.

3.1 - Curriculum Reality in Lebanon

The participants' thoughts and perceptions regarding the state of the Lebanese curriculum that is currently being used where the focus is on content, culture, and evaluation.

3.2 - 1997 Curriculum Development Process

The participants' take on the curriculum development process that took place in 1997 and led to the birth of the Lebanese Curriculum that is still used today.

3.3 - 2021 Curriculum Development Process

The participants' vision regarding how a successful curriculum development process should be undertaken for it to yield what they consider to be a success.

Curriculum Development Process



3.1 - Curriculum Reality in Lebanon

Curriculum reality in Lebanon encompasses all realities that the participants described as the status-quo of the Lebanese curriculum.

- One size fits all
- Limited
- Prescriptions of how teachers should teach
- Non-updated books
- Punishment
- Memorization/ recitation
- Official exams
- A tool to pressure students
- One way of teaching
- Unchangeable/ Outdated
- General to all learners
- Focused on theory and not practice
- Focused on the syllabus
- Set of instructions
- Set of subjects
- Set of books
- General to all learners
- Should not be centralized
- Should encompass everything that should be taught
- Should include professional development sessions
- Should not be a public policy
- Should not be a calendar

Curriculum Development Process



3.2 - 1997 Curriculum Development Process

The participants were asked about their insights regarding how the curriculum development process was carried out in 1997. The participants shared their thoughts regarding who they thought was not included in the process and in what capacity as well as their feedback of the curriculum development process that was carried out back then.

Who was not represented?

- Parents
- Students
- Education experts
 - Researchers
 - Teachers
 - Coordinators
- DOPS Department

Describe the 1997 curriculum development process



Limited/no knowledge: 3 out of the 14 participants stated that they have no information regarding how the Lebanese curriculum was developed in 1997. Those with prior knowledge stated the following regarding the process.

Curriculum Development Process

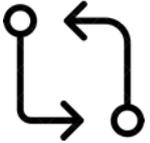


Participants who possessed knowledge pertaining to the 1997 Curriculum development process described it as follows:



Content rather than student based

Participants stated that the 1997 curriculum focused on content rather than taking into consideration how the content is assimilated and used by students. This resulted in adding many subjects which were infused with large subject matter content, in addition to promoting the importance of examination and evaluation. They added that such practice was evident even though it does not align with the original set intentions for the curriculum.



Needed follow up

Some participants stated that the curriculum was a much needed change from its predecessor. However, the curriculum needed follow up which did not take place.



De-contextualized

Participants believed that the curriculum did not take into consideration the variety within the Lebanese context. They added that it was piloted in few schools which was not enough since schools in Lebanon vastly differ from one area to another.

What is a Curriculum?



Researcher's Insights

On Curriculum Development Process as a Journey not a Destination

The curriculum development process is defined as how the curriculum is planned, implemented, and evaluated (Onstein and Hunkins, 2017). We have reviewed the Center for Education Research and Development (CERD) curriculum development plan and saw that it falls into logical steps that are rooted in a behavioral, managerial, and scientific approach to curriculum development. This managerial approach is needed to develop a national highly centralized curricula. However, it might not be compatible with the vision of the audience of seeing the curriculum as a flexible roadmap that provides more autonomy and ownership to the school staff and thus to the students. This is questionable and needs further investigation as CERD rolls out its curriculum development.

Lucchi and Malone (2011) claimed that successful curriculum developers often create long-term curriculum development projects that encompass the ongoing work of the developers as they design, disseminate, support, and continuously improve the materials. We can see that this is CERD's plan but we are not sure about the methodology they are using to reach the intended aim of the curriculum development process. The plan is vague in terms of the support to disseminate the curriculum to the pilot schools. It only shows that there are one-shot workshops provided to disseminate the curriculum developed (see the CERD project logical framework - activities 5.03, 5.04, and 5.05). In the 1997 curriculum, researchers often described the content as great but there is a shortcoming in the school implementation. So, did we learn enough from the 1997 experience?

We are afraid that the pattern of waiting for grants to develop the curriculum, putting the steps into a logical framework, and recruiting an expert team for development is to be repeated over and over since it is quite similar to the development process in 1997.

The only way we see this can be executed is by decentralizing the development process. CERD has to adopt a humanistic approach to curriculum development where we put the citizens at the center of the development process and build their capacity so that they have the tools to co-build and re-build their curriculum as a process. This will help everyone to see the development as a journey and not a destination.

Curriculum Development Process



3.3 - The 2021 Curriculum Process

Many participants believed that everything stated before in this section should be part of the curricular reform discussions. However, below are some questions that were captured as different from how the participants expressed their perceptions compared to the earlier section.

- Who is responsible for reforming the curriculum and what are the individuals' roles in this reform process?
- What should the reform process look like?
- What is the aim of teaching and learning?
- What is the general philosophy that will guide the development of students' cognitive, psychological, and social capacities?
- What objectives, skills, and broad topics do we need to include?
- How can we ensure the development of a locally rooted citizen while being globally informed?
- What are the values that the curriculum should address?
- What is the learner profile?
- How can we tolerate oppression in education?
- To what extent should we keep "stuffing" the students?
- How can we change the official exams?
- How can we keep developing with technological advancement?
- How can we maintain good mental health for our students?



Curriculum Development Process

The 2021 Curriculum Reform

The participants were asked about their insights regarding how the curriculum reform process should be undertaken. The participants shared their thoughts regarding who they thought should be included in the process and in what capacity, and what, in their opinion, the curriculum development process guidelines should be.

Who should be represented?

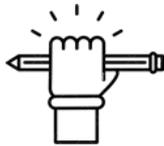
- Parents
- Students
- Education experts
 - Researchers
 - Teachers
 - Professors
 - Curriculum experts
- Policymakers
 - Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE)
 - CERD
 - DOPS Department



Curriculum Development Process



Who should have the main role in developing the curriculum?



Education professionals



Policymakers



Parents and Students

Researchers' Insights:



Participants believed that education professionals should play a main role in curriculum development. However, they believed that the status of MEHE and CERD should not be disregarded, as they are the main authority for educational matters in Lebanon.

What the curriculum development process should look like:



Collaborative

Participants stated that the curriculum development process should adopt a bottom-up approach where all stakeholders are involved. Participants stated that teachers, curriculum experts, CERD, and researchers should construct the curriculum while taking the feedback and suggestions of different stakeholders including parents, psychologists, and economists into consideration.



Technology based

Participants stated that the curriculum development process should take into consideration the importance of incorporating technology with pedagogy to produce citizens who are skillful and capable.



Professional development

Participants stated that the success of the curriculum requires capable practitioners in curriculum development and implementation. Therefore, professional development should be central to the development process.

Researchers' Insights:



Even though the participants were asked about the curriculum development process, many opted to focus on content rather than the process as a whole. This misconception could spring from the reality that those participants have rarely been involved in a dialogue that focuses on the curriculum development process.



4/4

EDUCATOR PROFILE



Educator Profile



To achieve the curriculum aims, values, objectives, and plans, we asked about the ultimate teacher profile that can participate and carry out the curriculum reform. This pillar is divided into three main sections.

First, we asked about teacher characteristics that can increase the chances of success in the curriculum. Second, we asked about the role and characteristics of the educational leaders and instructional supervisors. Finally, we asked about the general opportunities that the new curriculum could bring forward to help teachers achieve the envisioned reform.

Educators' Characteristics

We asked the audience what characteristics the future teachers could uphold so that they could increase the chances of success in the curriculum. Below were the answers:



Knowledge

- Technological knowledge
- Knowledge on how to adapt the curriculum to classroom needs
- Participation in trainings and workshops
- Familiarity with the digital world
- Up-to-date on the development taking place in the field of education

Educator Profile

Educators' Characteristics



Skills

- Firmness, directness, and strictness
- Successful class management
- Listener
- Social skills
- Technological skills
- Communication skills
- Awareness of the age group he or she is dealing with
- Consideration of individual differences among students
- Ability to deal with challenges
- Flexibility with students
- Realistic
- Emotional intelligence
- Flexibility with individual student differences
- Sympathy

Values

- Fairness
- Honesty
- Loyalty
- Loving
- Humane

Educator Profile



Educational Leaders' Characteristics

We asked the audience what characteristics the future school leaders could uphold including principals, instructional supervisors, and general supervisors. The answers are as follows:

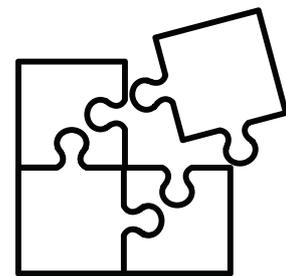
- **Values**

- Acceptance of the opinions of others (students and teachers)
- Compassionate
- Openness
- Humanity



- **Skills**

- Possesses diverse knowledge and specializations
- Stays up-to-date
- Is prepared for emergency situations
- Is capable of inducing change to keep up with external development



Educator Profile



Curriculum Opportunities

We asked about the general opportunities that the new curriculum could bring to help teachers achieve the envisioned reform. The answers are as follows:

Teachers' Rights

- Appropriate salaries
- Education by specialization (teaches subjects relevant to his or her major)
- Transportation allowance
- Social security and health insurance
- Less contact hours



Professional Development

- Continuous training
- An understanding of the correct methods and techniques
- Advanced demonstration tools
- Various training courses
- Advanced training and workshops

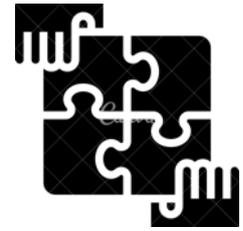


Rewards

- Motivation
- Annual promotion
- Opportunities for development and openness to all that is new
- Incorporate and materialistic motivation
- Providing financial motivation



COLLABORATORS & CO-CREATORS



South Region Champion & Dialogue Facilitators



Abbas Maanna
South Community Champion
Academic Coordinator
Smart College



Asil Siklawi
Math Teacher
Deir Kanoun Ras El Ein
Public School



Dana Yahfoufi
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Cadmous College EFlow



Ghadeer Taki



Laila Khalifeh
English Teacher
Smart College



Layla Shreim
English Teacher
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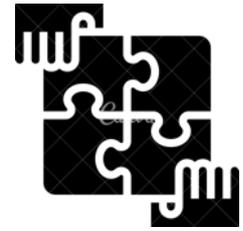


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Manhjna Project Lead



Maha Shuayb
Director

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