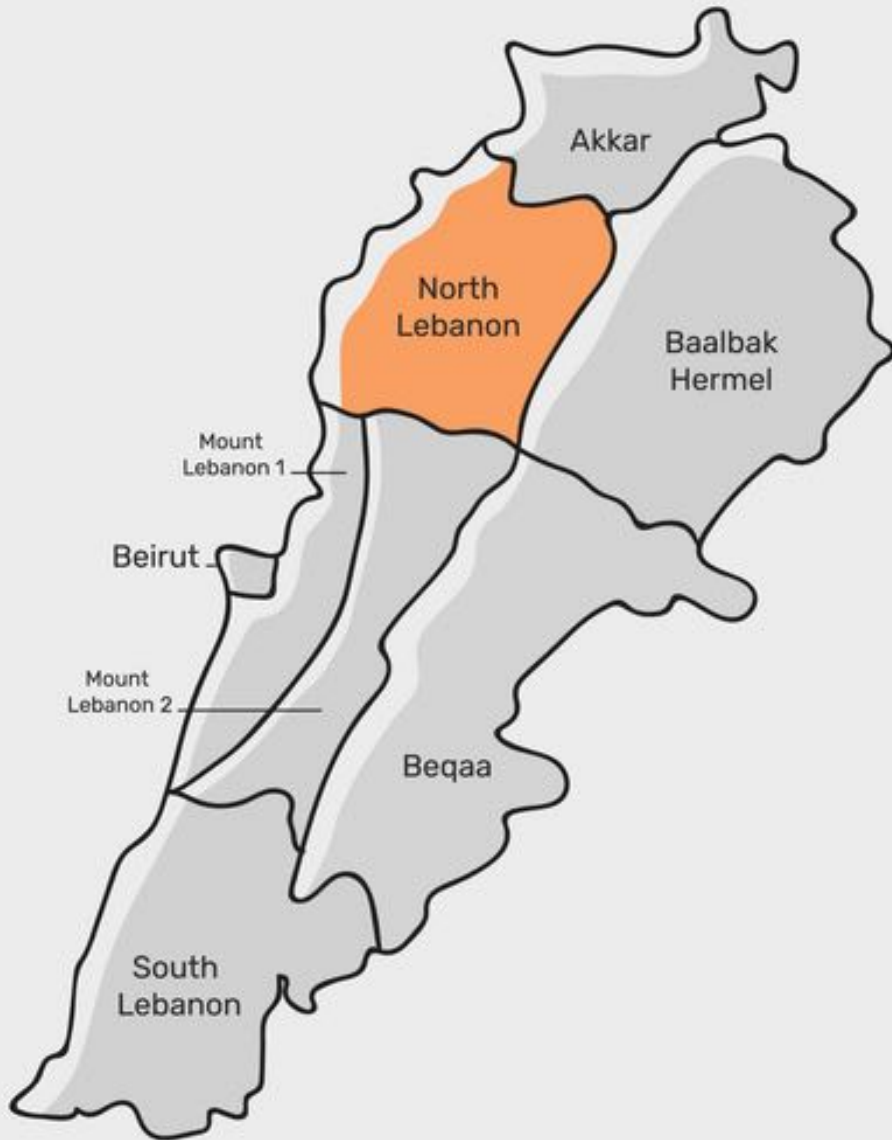


منهجنا



North Lebanon WonderLand Report 5/8

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.

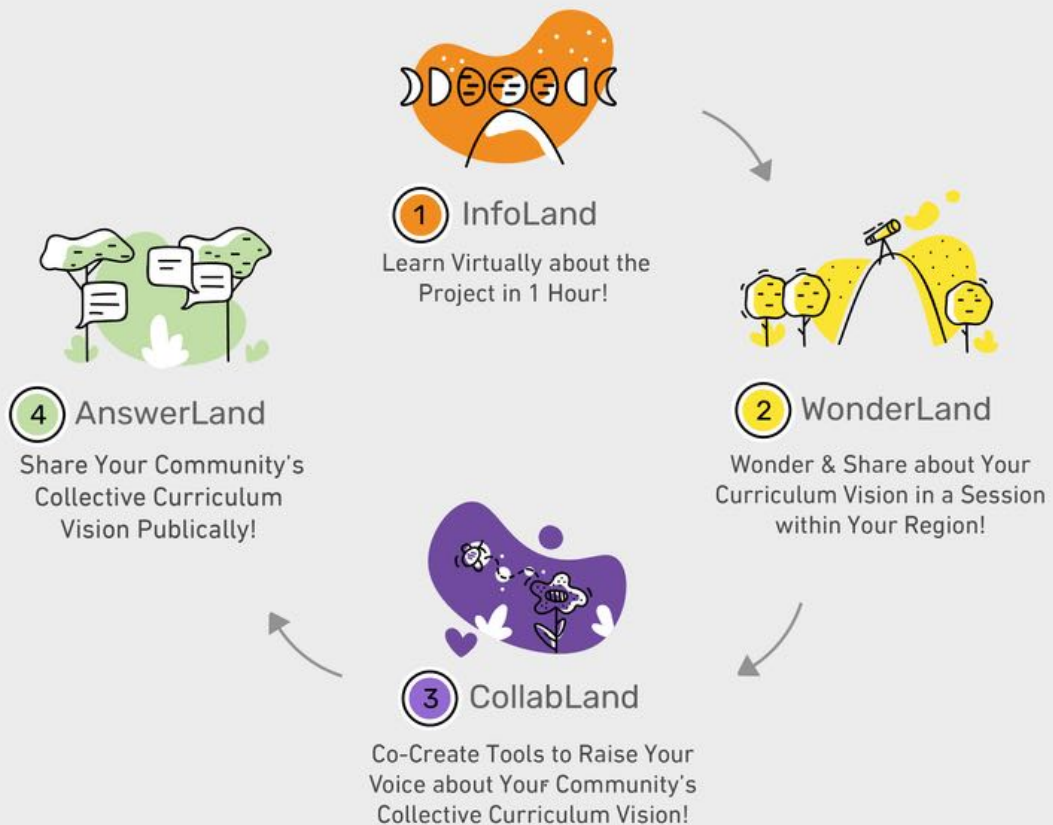
Eights spaces are being facilitated in eights governorates across Lebanon.

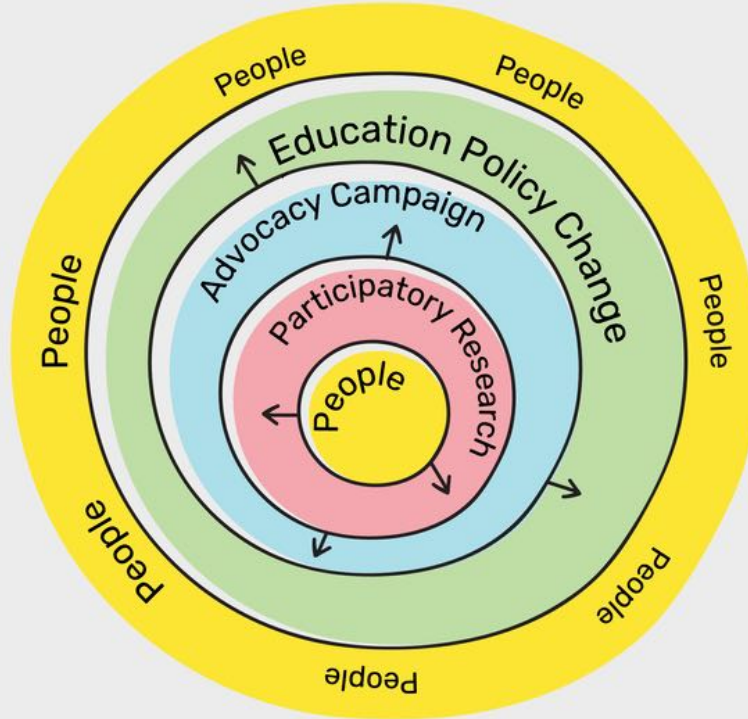
Through Manhajna's activities, we engage diverse groups from across the country to join us to envision a curriculum embedded in the values of participation, inclusion, justice and equity.

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.

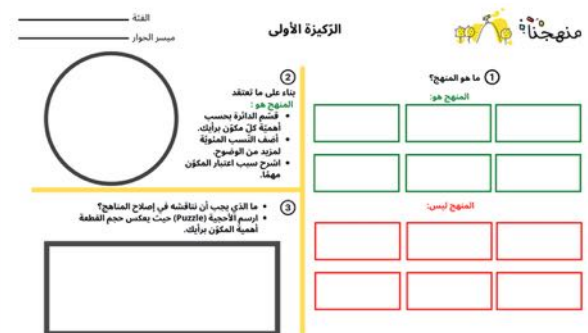


Figure 2



Figure 3

About WonderLand & this Report:



The report summarizes all collected quantitative and qualitative data gathered through the focused group discussions documented on the Dialogue Mat and visuals.

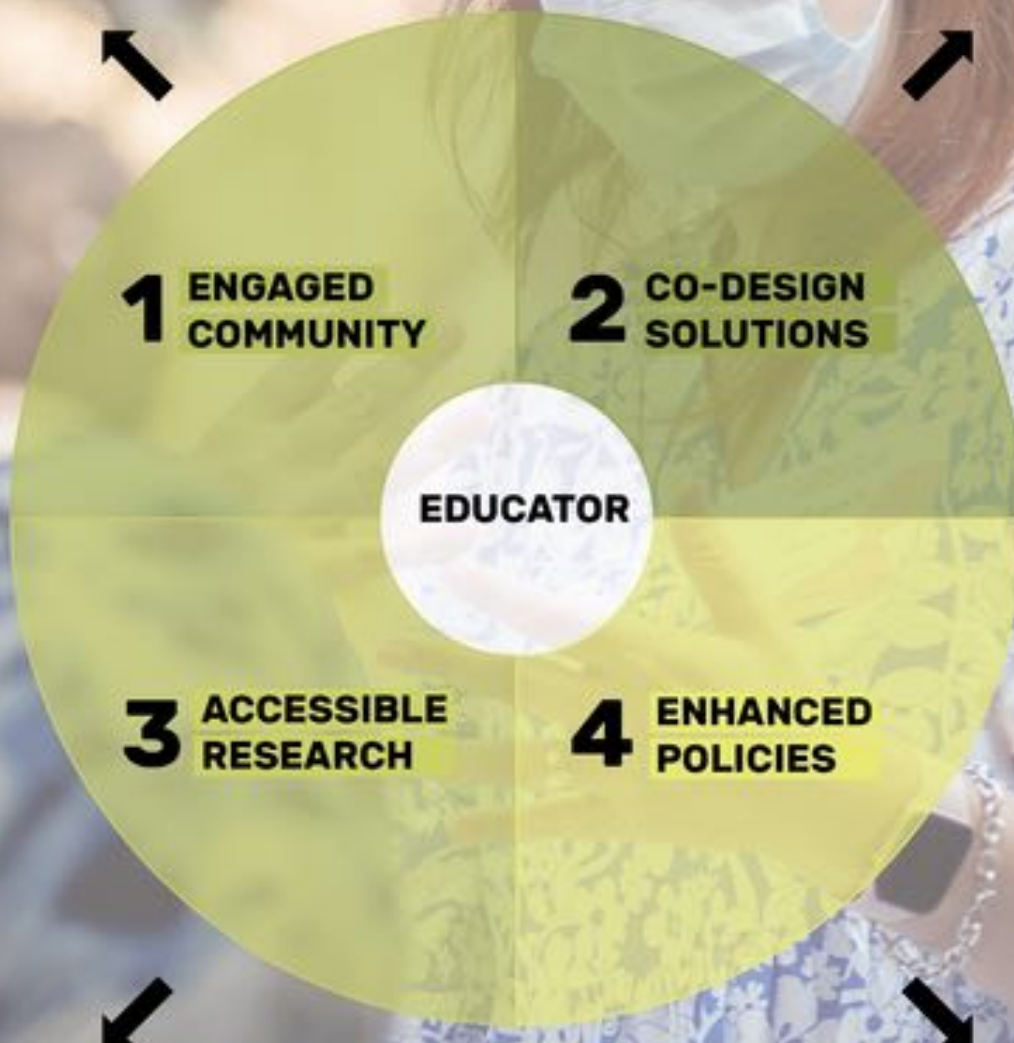
The importance of this report lies at the heart of Learning Land's Methodology. Learning Land aims to not only create a community of educators, but also co-create solutions, provide accessible research, and impact practices and policies on a school level and nation level. Through accessible research,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

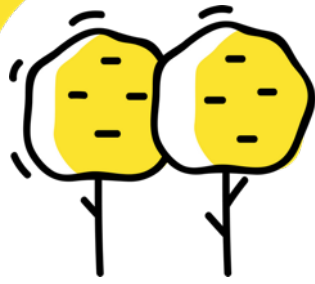


We provide easy-accessible research, centered on teaching and learning, for the education ecosystem players to drive evidence-based decision making.

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



54
Attendees



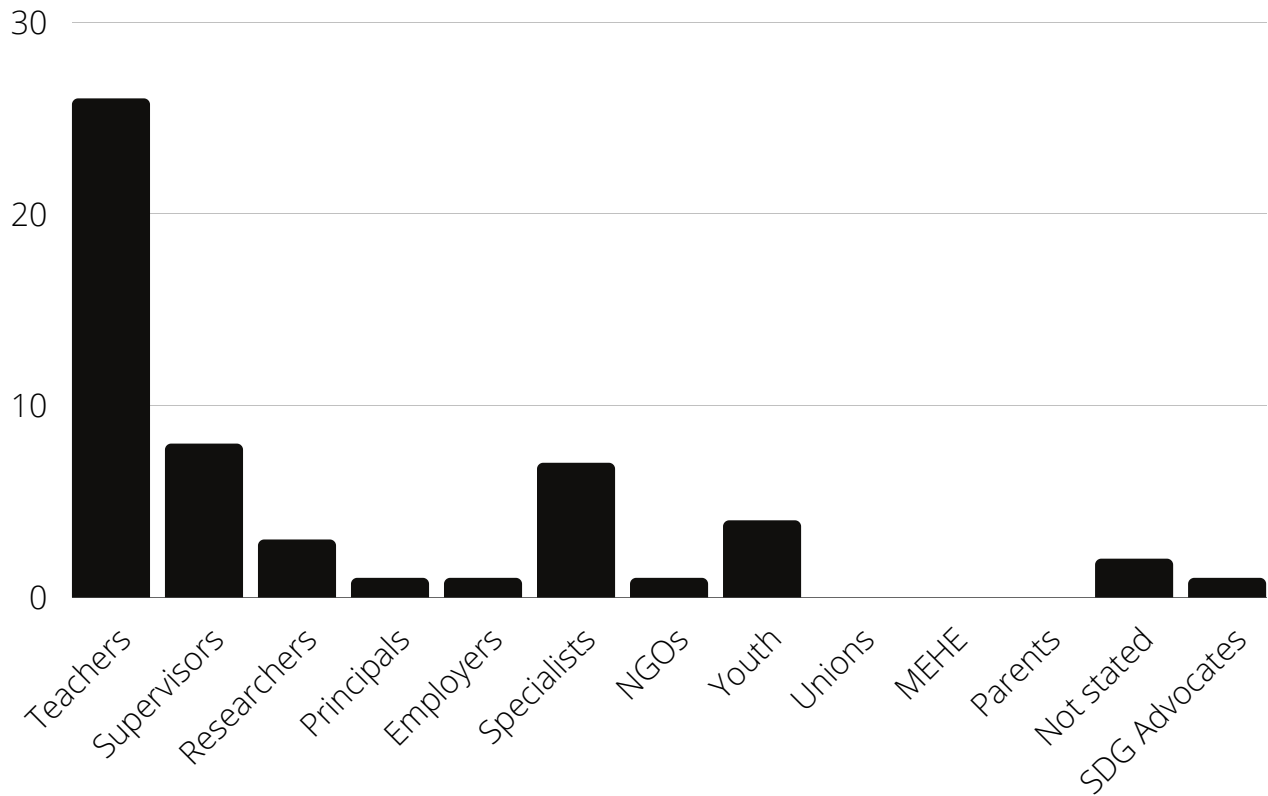
9
Dialogue
Facilitators



5
Team
Members

54 ATTENDEES:

BACKGROUND

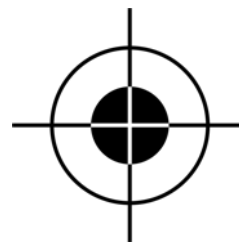


1/4

**WHY & WHERE
OF EDUCATION**



Why and Where of Education



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

Aims of the curriculum



Personal development

Participants considered the development of the child to be the primary aim of the curriculum. They believed that the curriculum should instill values in addition to knowledge, where both play a role for developing the child into a well-rounded human being. They considered raising critical awareness and promoting agency as main outcomes of a successful curriculum.



Societal development

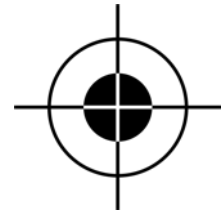
Participants also linked the curriculum with societal change and development. They claimed that the curriculum should provide students with the knowledge, skills, and drive towards improving their society, leading to change and improvement at the national level.



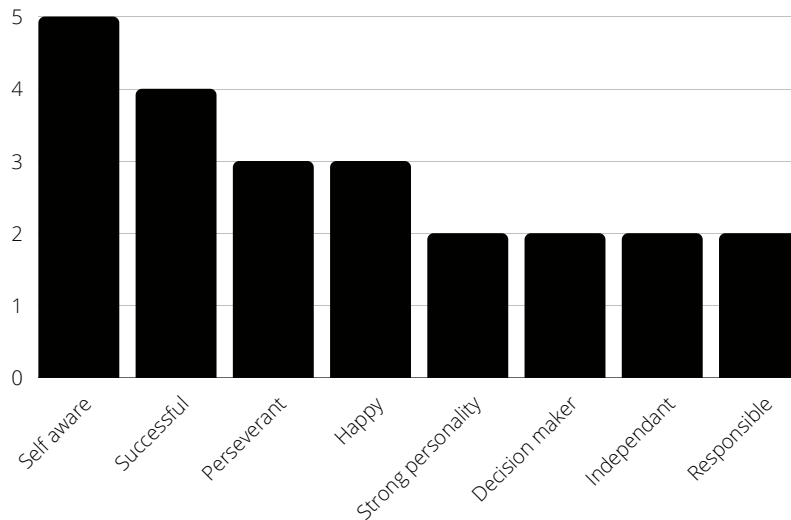
Career development

Finally, a small number of participants mentioned that the curriculum should aim to arm students with the knowledge they need to become competitive in the market place. They considered technological knowledge as essential.

Why and Where of Education



Successful student profile



Top 6 Values the curriculum should promote:

- Respect
- Acceptance
- Religious
- Loving
- Integrity
- Cooperative



Participants were asked about their thoughts regarding social venues, in addition to schools, where those values could be acquired and further promoted which will aid in the construction of the student profile they seek. The following venues were the most mentioned and are placed in order. Unfortunately, participants did not make explicit the link between the venues and the values they believed would be promoted.

Additional learning venues

- Nature
 - Gardens
- Religious venues
- Home
 - Kitchen
- Markets
- Care facilities
 - Orphanages
 - Elderly homes
- Art facilities and theaters



Researchers' Insights:



A larger number of participants considered societal and personal development as the main aim of the curriculum. This could be attributed to the prominence of social values especially in rural areas. This reflects in the student profile and additional learning venues the participants highlighted.

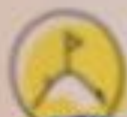
منهجنا

رؤية منهجنا



إبراز المنهج الحقيقي للمنهج الدراسي والعمل
على تغيير السياسات التربوية القائمة حيث يصبح هذا
المنهج للمنهج دقيقاً وفعالاً.

مهمة منهجنا



مسارات داعمة للحوار حول
التحدي.

غير - للناس ومن الناس

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 guide the curriculum developers in what 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:

- Develops student capacity / allows the student to develop
- Builds personal knowledge
- Discovers and develops each student's capabilities and promotes his or her ambitions and hopes
- Includes specialization orientation according to abilities
- Builds character
- Builds a cooperative human being
- Touches the student's interests
- Strengthens skills
- Strengthens the character
- Embraces creative students
- Unleashes student creativity
- Promotes learner's self development
- Builds personality
- Searches for human advancement
- Builds a educated human being
- Includes a whole human being holistic approach

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

- It is adopted by the state to standardize education in the schools of the country as a whole.
- It is the embodiment of society's goal and aspirations.
- It attempts to unite.

What is a Curriculum?



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

- Educational, cultural, and religious plans
- Drawn plan
- A Plan/ Written plan/ Action plan
- Educational plan
- Planned strategies to reach the goal

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 a specific set of 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 believed that the learning experience could be delivered through different teaching strategies, teaching environments, and teaching tools.

Teaching Strategies:

- Problem solving
- Brainstorming
- Concept maps
- Laboratory and application
- Active and new learning methods
- Diversity in teaching methods

What is a Curriculum?



Teaching Environment:

- Provides the appropriate place to teach each subject
- Creates a close relationship between the student, the teacher, and the school
- Creates connections to real life
- Creates experiences organized inside and outside the school
- Provides arrangement of mental reasoning
- Allows for dynamic interactions
- Facilitates activities within the school and within the educational community that lead to positive change
- Includes activities
- Includes a theater (for personal development)
- Includes activities for behavior modification

Teaching Tools:

- Books
- Applications
- Technology
- Interactive software
- Teaching aids / materials
- A tool to bring about a desired change in the student's behavior
- Development tool
- Educational books
- Demonstration tools

What is a Curriculum?



2.2.3 Curriculum Content: Participants elaborated that the curriculum content could include general knowledge, skills, and values. Participants elaborated on the importance of autonomy and independence as skills that should be gained throughout the curriculum. Values ranged between moral values, religious, and of freedom. They specified that curriculum could be delivered based on a subject-matter division.

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 as 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:



Include
electives

Participants stated that students should have a choice in selecting some of their classes. They highlighted high school to be more suitable for electives, whereas primary levels should provide the basics that all students need. Those electives were considered necessary to further promote interests that students have developed, which could help them to make an informed choice regarding their future career.



Traditional
subjects

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. Some participants stated that the Arabic language should be further promoted. Many participants believed that less time should be granted to those topics, especially in middle school and high school to allow space to teach life skills and introduce new subjects.

What is a Curriculum?



Teach
various
skills

Participants stressed the importance of teaching different skills as part of the new curriculum. Many participants stated that the new curriculum should teach 21st century skills, life skills, and technology literacy. Other subjects that were mentioned dealt with enabling students to learn how to become future leaders who are capable of solving problems, resolving conflict, and addressing the various environmental problems facing our planet as a whole.



Contact
hours

Participants observed that there is a need to reconsider the number of contact hours according to the cycle the student is in. There seemed to be a consensus that students spend a long time in classes and that time needs to be reduced. Participants believed that the typical school day should include no more than 4 contact hours for lower cycles.

Researchers' Insights:



Participants acknowledged that the curriculum should go beyond subject matter and expose students to different soft and hard skills they would need later on. Participants advocated for a balance between the importance of teaching traditional subject matter while including new innovations.

What is a Curriculum?



2.2.4 Curriculum Evaluation:

Curriculum evaluation is concerned with the strategies, tools, and tasks 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 students capabilities?”



Assessing What?

- Linked to the students’ daily life
- Competencies
- Skills
- Creativity
- Different Types of Intelligence
- Community Service



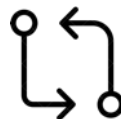
Issues in Assessment

- Focus should be on quality not quantity
- Assessment should completely shift to being a means and not an end
- Should be adaptable to the current socioeconomic challenges in Lebanon
- Should not be focused on grades



Assessment Strategies

- Student-Centered
- Differentiated/ Individualized
- Research Based
- Practice-Based
- Online-Based
- Brainstorming
- Team-Based
- Lab-Based



Assessment Tools & Tasks

- Technology
- Surveys
- Oral Assessments
- Portfolios
- Observations
- Case studies
- Presentations
- Critical Writing



Issues in Official Exams

- Questions style in official exams should change.
- Official exams should be canceled.
- Make official exams simple.
- Brevet exam should be canceled.



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

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

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, and their feedback of the curriculum development process that was carried out back then.

Who was not represented?

- Parents
- Students
- Psychologists
- Education experts
 - Researchers
 - Teachers
 - Trainers
 - University Deans

Describe the 1997 curriculum development process



Limited/no knowledge: 17 participants either did not share any input regarding the 1997 curriculum development process or stated that they did not know how the process occurred.

Curriculum Development Process



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



Subject oriented

Participants stated that the curriculum focused on the subject more than it did on the learner. This resulted in adding a lot of material that was not related to societal needs or the students' needs or levels. They added that this led to a negative effect on students' abilities and performance.



Decontextualized

Participants stated that the curriculum development process took into consideration the needs of the minority rather than the majority of the community. They added that only particular schools were asked for feedback which resulted in a curriculum that does not address the needs of all areas in Lebanon.



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 that we need to include?
- How can we ensure developing 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 and parent committees
- Students
- Education experts
 - Researchers
 - Teachers
 - Curriculum experts

Curriculum Development Process



Who should have the main role in developing the curriculum?



Policymakers



Education professionals

Researchers' Insights:



Participants believed that education professionals should play a main role in curriculum development. However, they also believed that CERD and MEHE should lead the process. This echoes an acceptance of a decentralized curriculum development process.

What the curriculum development process should look like:



Student based

Participants stated that they believe that the curriculum development process should be student based. This could be done through focusing on the contextual needs of students, in addition to surveying their needs and thoughts.



Collaborative

Participants stated that they believe the curriculum development process should be collaborative where all stakeholders have a role to play. Participants stated that such collaboration could be achieved through disseminating surveys on stakeholders to gather feedback to be studied by MEHE and CERD.

Curriculum Development Process



Research based

Participants stated that they believe the curriculum development process should be based on research conducted by curriculum and educational experts. The research will form a base to construct the new curriculum upon.



Consider market needs

Participants stated that they believe that the curriculum development process should take the market needs into consideration. This would manifest in removing unneeded material and subjects, and substituting that with opportunities to create a competitive individual capable of functioning in the work sector. This in turn will help her play a role in societal development and advancement.

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 needed to uphold so that they could increase the chances of success in the curriculum. The answers are as follows:



Knowledge

- Teach based on educational foundations with knowledge of modern theories
- Believes in continuous professional development and training
- Plays the role of a facilitator, not just knowledge transmitter
- Familiar with pedagogical methods
- Holds related university degree(s)

Educator Profile

Educators' Characteristics



Skills

- Ability to learn and self-develop
- Classroom management skills
- Ability to evaluate himself or herself in many ways
- Construction of the student's personality
- Creative, intellectual, emotional intelligence
- Constant communication
- Confidence in explaining the lesson
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Application of a variety of learning methods
- Critical thinker
- Development seeker
- Leader
- Motivator
- Problem solving skills
- Ability to communicate positively
- Flexibility
- Good preparation for the lesson
- Good command of language used in class

Values

- Open-mindedness
- Tolerance
- Objectivity
- Listener
- Justice and Equality
- Modesty
- Passion in relation to education

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:

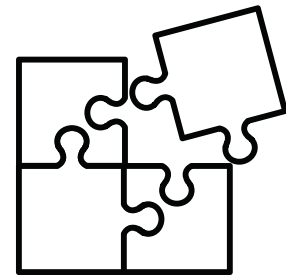
- **Values**

- Understanding
- Supportive (leader, not manager)
- Promotion of positive values in school
- Humility
- Belief in empowerment



- **Skills**

- Collaborative
- Supervision of educational process
- Teacher support
- Guidance
- Capability of facilitating teacher training
- Capability of building school capacity
- Motivation and encouragement of school members
- Ability to identify teachers that fit the school profile for recruitment.
- Inspirational



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:

Mental Health

- Free coaching sessions
- Constant encouragement
- Options to seek professional help
- Not overwhelming the teacher
- Establishment of clubs, restaurants, and hospitals for teachers to attend
- A healthy psychological environment



Rewards

- Financial support
- Paid leave
- Motivation and appreciation



Professional Development

- Continuous training courses, especially in technology
- Innovation and training on new learning methods
- Sharing experiences between teachers
- The ability to obtain funding for educational projects



Teacher Rights

- Salary that is equitable in relation to the teachers' educational degrees
- Taking into account the teachers's rating - rank



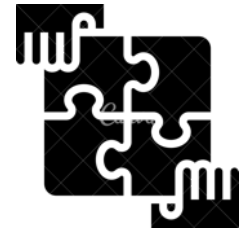
School-Based Autonomy

- Trusting teachers capabilities
- Rehabilitating schools or the school environment and allowing the teacher to take initiative and develop
- Trusting the teacher and not dealing with students as a customer





COLLABORATORS & CO-CREATORS



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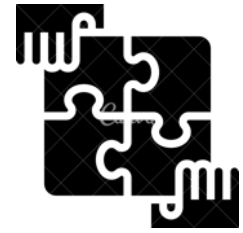
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Disclaimer:

This is a Center for Lebanese Studies and Inspiration Gardens joint work funded by Open Society Foundation.

We would like to thank our Dialogue Facilitators who have been pivotal to the success of this report.

To cite this work, please use the below:

Jamaledine, F., Talhouk, N., Al Zahab, A., Ardati, S., El Ayoubi, N., Abu Moghli M. & Shuayb, M. (2021). *Manhajna: North Lebanon WonderLand report 5/8*. Beirut, Lebanon