



Children's Rights in Lebanon: UPR Fact Sheet

“ This fact sheet provides key evidence and priority asks to support diplomatic engagement with Lebanon toward ensuring that all children enjoy their rights without discrimination, and with access to protection, services, and a dignified life.

1. UPR Context

➤ Lebanon underwent its 3rd Universal Periodic Review (UPR) on 18 January 2021

➤ Received 297 recommendations: 179 accepted

➤ 31 recommendations focused on children's rights:

➤ 22 accepted, 9 noted, mainly related to:

- Prohibiting child marriage and setting 18 as the minimum legal age
- Raising age of criminal responsibility under Law 422/2002
- Lebanon has yet to effectively improve birth registration and legal identity for vulnerable children, hindered by economic, political, and conflict-related challenges.

2. Children Most at Risk

2.1 Palestinian Children – UNRWA Crisis

210,000 Palestinian refugees



~36,000 school-age children



80% poverty projected >90%



⚠ Service Collapse Risk

65+ schools may close

Major cuts: education, health, PSS

Food & cash assistance reductions

⌚ Funding Gap

US\$ 27.3M shortfall

Services could halt mid-2025

⚠ Direct Consequences on Children



Rising child labor



31% drop in vaccination coverage



Increased violence & anxiety



Higher exposure to regional conflict impacts

2.2 Syrian Children – Return, Deportation & New Displacement

195,200 returns from Lebanon to Syria



~60% children, many without protection guarantees

21,000+ new arrivals from coastal Syria



Many children no school / shelter / PSS

2.3 Children and the 2023-2024 War on Lebanon



Displacement

200,000+ displaced



~1/3 children



Casualties



4,047 deaths (316 children)



16,638 injuries (1,250 children)



Education Disruption



500+ schools used as shelters



Learning disrupted



Health Impact



Health infrastructure heavily damaged



Disease outbreaks: Hepatitis A, measles, cholera

3. Thematic Concerns & Priority Recommendations

3.1 Legal Framework

Concerns

➤ Partial UPR implementation

➤ Lebanon has not ratified core CRC protocols

➤ Weak enforcement of child protection measures

Recommendations

➤ Ratify the Optional Protocols (OPAC and OPIC)

➤ Align national laws with all ratified child-rights treaties through legislative reform and implementation

➤ Establish a national complaints mechanism for violations against children.

3.2 Legal Identity & Nationality

Concerns

- Lebanese women cannot transfer nationality to children
- Palestinian refugee women cannot register or provide residency for their children.
- Syrian refugee children face increasing obstacles to birth registration

Recommendations

- Ensure registration and issuance of identity documents for newborns of Palestinian refugees from Syria.
- Amend the nationality law to allow Lebanese women to pass nationality to their children.
- Remove administrative obstacles preventing nationality acquisition for Palestinian refugees married to Lebanese citizens.



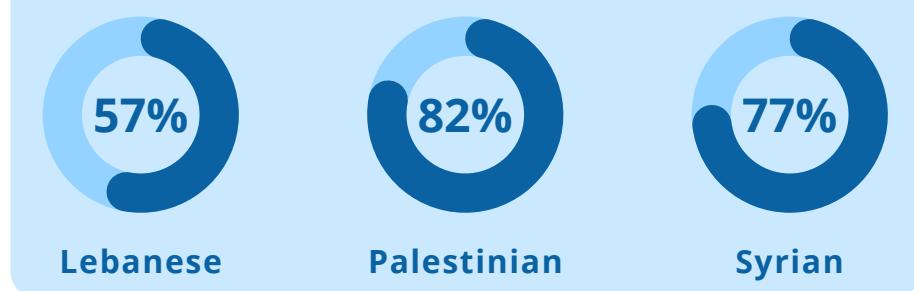
Anti-Trafficking Law 164/2011

Lacks child-centered protection

3.3 Violence, Exploitation & Harmful Practices



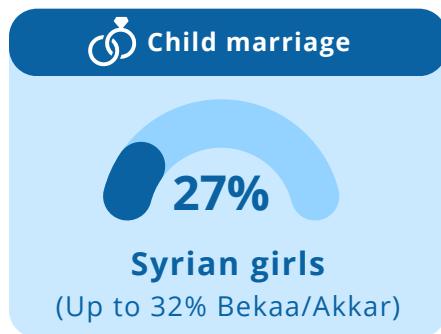
Violent discipline



School Violence



Child marriage



Legal gaps

Penal Code Arts. 505 & 518 enable impunity
No law against child recruitment/use

Recommendations

- Abolish Penal Code Article 186 and define clear measures for recurring violations by parents.
- Ensure protection from sexual exploitation, provide rehabilitation services, and strictly prosecute offenders.
- Eliminate the statute of limitations for sexual violence against children.
- Amend Juvenile Law Article 33 to unify appeals procedures.
- Raise the age of criminal responsibility to at least 13.
- Amend Penal Code Articles 505 and 518 to strengthen accountability for sexual crimes against children.
- Strengthen anti-trafficking protections, amend Law 164/2011, remove criminal liability from victims, and issue supporting regulations.

- Consider the child's developmental condition in all judicial measures.
- Deploy trained, specialized staff for juvenile justice and child victims/witnesses.
- Guarantee family contact and health services for juveniles in conflict with the law.
- Improve school protection by appointing adequate psychosocial and medical staff.
- Prevent child marriage, adopt a unified civil law setting a minimum age, and criminalize early marriage outside religious courts.
- Prohibit and criminalize child recruitment in armed conflict and ensure rehabilitation without prosecution of former child soldiers.
- Increase oversight of childcare institutions to prevent exploitation.
- Establish confidential reporting mechanisms and provide legal, psychological, and social support for victims of trafficking.

3.4 Child Labor

16% of families send children to work (UNICEF 2023)

Recommendations

- Update and fund the National Action Plan to Combat Child Labor.
- Penalize employers hiring underage children and criminalize parental coercion except in extreme necessity.
- Expand social protection programs tied to school attendance.
- Amend Labor Law Article 22 to criminalize employment of children under 15.

3.5 Education

700K out of school • 28% public schools • 500+ shelters • <1% disabilities • 50% Syrian OOS • 36K Palestinian at risk

Recommendations

- Increase public funding for quality education.
- Implement mandatory education (Law 150/2011) and establish monitoring of dropout.
- Adopt an emergency plan to secure the academic year (incentives, transport, supplies, meals).
- Develop an inclusive education strategy, reform Law 220/2000, and train staff.
- Remove barriers to school enrollment for refugee children and children with disabilities.

3.6 Health

System collapsing • 81% cut spending • 66% vaccine dropout • Measles/Cholera/Polio • 10% stunting, 28% anemia

Recommendations

- Ensure universal, non-discriminatory health coverage, including for Palestinian and Syrian children.
- Implement the national healthcare card.
- Strengthen school health programs (screening, vaccination, mental health, nutrition).
- Guarantee vaccine availability and monitor compliance.
- Rehabilitate public hospitals, especially pediatric and emergency units.
- Provide specialized psychosocial support for children affected by conflict, violence, disasters, and disabilities.