



Delivering Education and Psychosocial Support to Palestinian Refugees in Lebanon, 2025



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Acknowledgements

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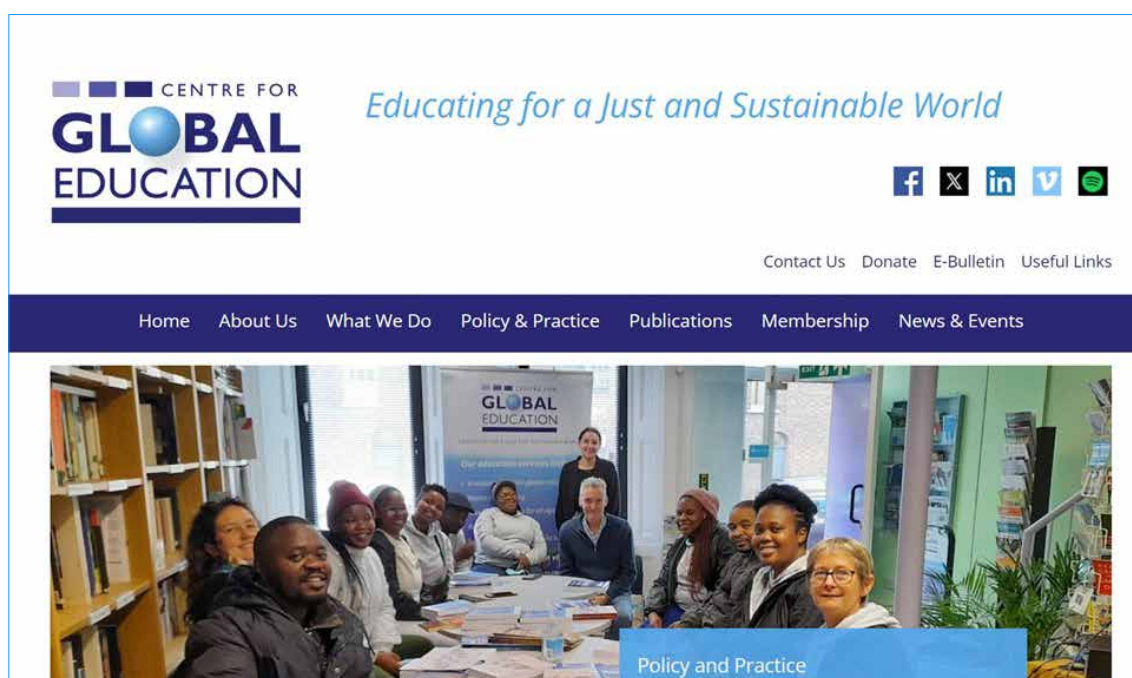


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1 Centre for Global Education

The Centre for Global Education (CGE) is a development non-governmental organisation based in Belfast that was established in 1986 to provide education services that enhance awareness of international development issues. Its central remit is to provide learning that will enable individuals and organisations to address the causes of poverty, inequality, and injustice at local and global levels. The Centre believes that in the current era of accelerating climate breakdown, racism, authoritarianism, inequality, and neoliberalism, we need global education to understand and tackle the root causes of these problems. Global education enables individuals and organisations to understand the cultural, economic, social, and political influences on our lives that result from our growing interdependence with other countries and societies. It also provides learners with the skills, values, knowledge, and understanding necessary to facilitate action that will contribute to poverty eradication and social justice both locally and globally.



CGE endorses the United Nations' definition of global education as enabling 'people to participate in the development of their community, their nation and the world as a whole'. Global education practice is based on active learning methodologies that support analysis, reflection, and debate on social and economic justice issues, and enable action toward positive social change. CGE provides training and resources that tailor global education content and practice to their needs. The Centre supports the view that we can learn more about ourselves and local communities by extending our knowledge and experience of the wider world. We deliver our services to learners in formal and informal education sectors and work with partners at local and global levels to increase knowledge and understanding of global issues. The participative, active learning methodology that underpins our work is based on the radical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, the Brazilian educator and philosopher. Freire's concept of *praxis* supports critical consciousness, reflection, and action to enable learners to actively address the root causes of poverty and inequality.

CGE's current activities include publishing the bi-annual, peer-reviewed, open access [journal](#) *Policy and Practice: A Development Education Review*, an internationally renowned publication that has been in production for twenty years. We also provide global education training to post-primary [schools](#), which aims to provide teachers with the skills, confidence, and resources to teach global issues in the classroom. CGE also carries out [research](#) on global issues, organises learning seminars and, since 2011, has delivered education programmes for Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip and Lebanon.

2 Women's Programs Association

The Centre for Global Education's project partner in Lebanon is the Women's Programs Association (WPA), a non-governmental, non-profit organization established in 2008 and operating in seven Palestinian camps in Lebanon. The WPA's mission is to provide support to Palestinian refugee women and youth and other vulnerable groups in Lebanon to develop their capacities, realize their rights, and fulfill their needs through Protection, Education, Livelihood, and Humanitarian Aid. The WPA is immersed in the refugee camps where it operates and works directly with families and community members. Its programmes and activities include: delivering education support services to children at risk of dropping out or out of school; providing young women with professional and vocational training; women and youth empowerment; career guidance; and leadership and entrepreneurial skill-building activities.

3 Project Summary

This is a report on formal education activities delivered as part of a nine-month project (2024-2025) in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp in Saida, southern Lebanon. The project was jointly managed by the Centre for Global Education (CGE), a development non-governmental organisation (NGO) based in Belfast, and the Women's Programs Association (WPA), a Palestinian NGO based in Lebanon. The project was funded by the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) Solidarity Fund. The activities described in this report were delivered from 01 December 2024 to 29 August 2025.



Palestinian children participating in an arts and craft class in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp as part of the CGE / Women's Programs Association project in Lebanon from December 2024 to August 2025. Photo 14 May 2025.

The project's overriding aim was to provide formal education training and psychosocial support to 45 Grade Six (Elementary) Palestinian children aged twelve years living in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp who are at risk of leaving school for a range of reasons, including social and mental health problems, financial pressures, and bullying. Lebanon has been experiencing a deep and sustained economic crisis since 2019, which has resulted in a massive devaluation of the Lebanese pound and sharp increases in the prices of daily necessities, including food, fuel, transportation, and utilities. For Palestinian refugees already living in extreme poverty, the economic crisis has meant that many children are at risk of leaving school because of transport costs or the need to work to supplement the family income. Most of the children in Ein El-Hilweh receive a part-time education. This is because the majority of schools in the camp double-shift, which means that school buildings are shared by two different student cohorts, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. The INTO project, therefore, supplemented students' education by providing additional classes when they were not at school.

The content of the educational activities delivered in Ein El-Hilweh focused on Mathematics, Arabic, and English, core components of the school curriculum. The project also provides psychosocial care to help tackle mental health problems among the children caused by exposure to extreme poverty, using

interactive group activities and one-to-one counselling from a social worker. Psychosocial care sessions were also delivered to the children's parents to discuss the social dimensions of mental healthcare and how therapy and support can be extended to the household. The project social worker compiled psychosocial assessments of the students, and those with acute learning difficulties, family issues, and behavioural problems were monitored as part of casework management or referred to specialized psychological services provided by various NGOs in the local area.

The forty-five children recruited to the programme are resident in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp in Saida, southern Lebanon. Each child attended two educational classes a day that covered a mix of Arabic, English, Mathematics, Science, and Life Skills. The classes were delivered in WPA facilities in Ein El-Hilweh, and the sessions were facilitated by four WPA staff, including a social worker. The level of training delivered to the children was based on pre-delivery assessments of each child and consultations with their former or current teachers. The class content is aligned with the curriculum standards set out by the Lebanese Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). The project targeted a results-driven approach to teaching that ensured the learning needs of all students were appropriately addressed, and each child received the necessary foundational skills and tailored support necessary to foster academic progress across the core curriculum subject areas.

In addition to curriculum-based classes, the children had opportunities to participate in arts and crafts sessions, cultural workshops focused on Palestinian history and culture, and structured play activities. The children were also taken on a day trip to the Hitteen Water Park for a much-needed escape from the camp and their daily routines while engaging in enjoyable group activities, games, and swimming. In May 2025, CGE Director Stephen McCloskey visited the camp and met the facilitators and young people participating in the programme. He also met the staff team of the Women's Programs Association to discuss how the project could be effectively followed up on in 2026.



Children who participated in the INTO project in Ein El-Hilweh Camp, 29 August 2025.

4 Background to the Project

For the past six years, Lebanon has suffered from an economic crisis that has seen the Lebanese currency collapse against the United States' Dollar and prices for food, fuel, energy, and other essentials surge beyond the reach of the majority of people. According to the World Bank, 44 per cent of Lebanese live in [poverty](#), triple the number of a decade ago. The crisis began in October 2019 when the government tried to impose austerity measures on an already impoverished population, which resulted in widespread protests and upheaval. In March 2020, Lebanon's economy was sent spiralling into freefall when the state [defaulted](#) on a \$1.2 billion Eurobond debt repayment, which triggered a 90 per cent depletion in the value of the Lebanese pound, which was trading at LPB90,000 to the Dollar in May 2025. The World Bank has [described](#) this brutal contraction as one normally associated with 'conflicts or wars'. And then the economic crisis deepened further when Beirut was [rocked](#) by 'one of the largest non-nuclear explosions in history' at its port when 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate, recklessly stored in a warehouse, ignited on 4 August 2020, killing 217 people and injuring 7,000. The blast left 300,000 people homeless, and the cost to the economy was estimated at USD \$15 billion.



A memorial calling for justice for the victims of the Beirut Port explosion on 4 August 2020.

The port explosion has compounded the hardship experienced by Lebanese citizens, with Save the Children [finding](#) a year after the blast that 'hundreds of thousands of children are going to bed hungry, often without having eaten a single meal that day'. The weakness of Lebanon's pound has caused a 508 per cent spike in transportation costs, and the prices of food and non-alcoholic beverages surged by 304 per cent by October 2021. Palestinians were already living on the margins of Lebanese society before the crisis, being [excluded](#) from 40 occupations and forced into low-paying jobs in the informal sector. A third of Lebanon's 180,000 Palestinian refugees depend on quarterly cash assistance from UNRWA, and 62 per cent [experienced](#) a drop in income during the COVID-19 pandemic. While people across Lebanon are suffering from the economic crisis, it is particularly impacting Palestinian refugees, who are denied the property, employment, and citizenship rights of the Lebanese. A socio-economic protection monitoring [report](#) carried out by UNRWA in September 2022, involving interviews with 498 Palestinian refugee households, found that 93 per cent of individuals live below the poverty line, mostly as a result of the spike in consumer prices caused by the economic crisis. Sixty-two per cent of families had reduced the number of meals consumed within the previous week, and half of the families consulted had started to incur debt over the previous three months. In June 2023, the Centre for Global Education

published a Working Paper with the Development Studies Association of Ireland (DSAI) on the impact of Lebanon's economic crisis on Palestinian refugees. This report was based on field visits carried out in May, September, and November 2022 to nine Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon and is available [here](#). Israel's war on Gaza over the past 22 months – described as a [genocide](#) by Francesca Albanese, the UN Rapporteur for the Occupied Palestinian Territories – is threatening the services provided to Palestinian refugees in Lebanon by UNRWA. Around 3,500 Palestinians are [employed](#) by UNRWA in Lebanon, and the agency provides services at 150 sites for \$180 million per annum. These jobs and services have been jeopardised by the withdrawal of the United States' funding from UNRWA following unfounded Israeli [allegations](#) that 12 UNRWA staff were involved in the Hamas attacks on Israel on 7 October 2023. As UNRWA's biggest donor, the withdrawal of US funding could result in job losses for Palestinians and cuts to vital services. These cuts further jeopardise the economic situation of Palestinians in Lebanon.

4.1 Palestinians in Lebanon

There are 489,292 registered Palestinian [refugees](#) in Lebanon living in 12 camps operated by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). UNRWA is the UN mission established to provide for the welfare of Palestinian refugees following the [ethnic cleansing](#) of Mandate Palestine in 1948. In the absence of a census, UNRWA estimates based on take-up of its services that [180,000](#) Palestinian refugees are residing in-country. The difference in the number of registered and in-country Palestinian refugees is most likely the result of emigration to other parts of the Middle East or outside the region. There are an [estimated](#) 29,000 Palestinian Refugees from Syria (PRS) who fled to Lebanon after the start of the war in Syria in 2011, most of whom are living in UNRWA camps. This has increased pressure on camp services, particularly in the crucial areas of health and education. PRS are often competing with Palestinian refugees from Lebanon (PRL) for employment in low-paid, manual jobs, which perpetuate poverty. UNRWA provides 61,000 out of Lebanon's 180,000 Palestinian refugees and the 29,000 PRS with monthly cash assistance. The arrival of 29,000 PRS has exacerbated a marginal existence for Palestinians in Lebanon who have never been naturalised despite fleeing to the country in 1948.

According to [UNHCR](#), Palestinians are denied access to 40 professions, including medicine, farming, fishery, and public transportation, which forces them into 'menial, low-paying jobs in the informal sector'. They are also prohibited from owning property, which contributes to their exclusion from key aspects of social, political, and economic life in Lebanon. These discriminatory laws mean that Palestinians remain stuck with a permanent 'foreigner status', unable to elevate their socio-economic position in Lebanese society.

4.2 Israel's War on Lebanon

Since the Hamas attack on southern Israel on 7 October 2023 that [killed](#) 1,200 people, Israel has launched a [genocidal](#) attack on Gaza that has [resulted](#), at the time of writing, in 63,746 Palestinian deaths, of whom 18,430 are children. The civilian infrastructure in Gaza has been decimated, and the people have been subjected to a complete siege that includes food, water, medicines, and fuel. According to the UN, 641,000 people in Gaza are experiencing 'catastrophic' levels of food insecurity after a famine was declared in August 2025. The conflict in Gaza has also had a devastating impact on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon over the past two years.

Hezbollah started firing rockets into Israel in October 2023 in support of Hamas, and Israel launched air strikes, mostly on southern Lebanon. However, the conflict sharply escalated in late September 2024, when Israel launched one of the most intense aerial bombardments in recent history as well as a ground offensive in the south of the country. Since 8 October 2023, around 4,000 people have been [killed](#) in Lebanon and 17,000 injured. More than 965,000 citizens, mostly from southern Lebanon, were internally displaced, and 93,000 people remain displaced today.

Israel's escalation in September 2024 led to the internal [displacement](#) of 3,757 Palestinian refugees or 1,074 families in Lebanon who were hosted in eleven emergency shelters established by UNRWA. While

the majority of Palestinians have returned to their homes since the ceasefire announced by Israel on 26 November 2024, some families remain displaced because their houses were destroyed by Israeli strikes on Palestinian refugee camps, mostly in southern Lebanon.



Marwan Taher Mabel from Rashidieh camp in Tyre (southern Lebanon), who suffered wounds to his foot and shoulder in an Israeli strike on his home, was displaced and forced to take refuge in an emergency shelter in Nahr El-Bared refugee camp, northern Lebanon, in November 2024.



According to the UN, 641,000 people in Gaza are experiencing ‘catastrophic’ levels of food insecurity after a famine was declared in August 2025. The conflict in Gaza has also had a devastating impact on Palestinian refugees in Lebanon over the past two years.

5 Project Delivery

The INTO-funded project was delivered in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp in Saida, southern Lebanon. It provided formal education classes in core areas of the school curriculum to 45 Palestinian children aged twelve years who are at risk of dropping out of school. It also provided psychosocial support to address students' personal and behavioural needs through assessments, counselling and referral services, in addition to psychosocial support sessions for the students and their parents. This holistic approach contributed to the progress and well-being of the participants during the project. The project's tailored approach to teaching and student support yielded positive outcomes, underscoring the significance of addressing the multifaceted needs of marginalised youth within educational environments. The detailed findings are presented below.



Children in an English class as part of the INTO-funded project in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp, 2025. 14 May 2025.

Project aim

To provide formal education training and psychosocial support to 45 Grade Six Palestinian children aged 12 years living in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp in Saida, southern Lebanon.

Project Objectives

The project objectives were as follows:

- To provide forty-five Palestinian children, aged twelve years, with nine months of formal education in a community setting to prevent their drop-out from the education and support their retention in school;
- To deliver formal education classes in core areas of the school's curriculum: Arabic, English, Science and Mathematics.
- To provide every child with a Personal Intervention Plan (PIP) tailored to their learning and mental health needs based on consultations with their parents and teachers.
- To provide the children with psychosocial support, counselling, stress management, and where necessary, referrals for further support to address behavioural and mental health problems.

- To enable the children to develop higher levels of aptitude in talking, listening, discussion, and life skills, which are key areas of education in the school curriculum.
- To provide structured play activities that support teamwork and skills in extra-curricular areas such as arts and crafts, song and dance, culture, and role play.
- To provide the children with a daily snack for the duration of the project.
- To provide the children with a field trip outside the camp.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

1. Project Timetable

The project was delivered over nine months from 1 December 2024 to 29 August 2025. It was originally scheduled for delivery from 1 September 2024 but the start of the project was delayed until December because of the war, which meant the end date changed to 29 August 2025. The project was implemented over five days per week, Monday to Friday, and the students attended two hours of training per day, alternating between morning and afternoon shifts depending on their monthly school shift. A pre-project assessment of the children’s level of abilities was carried out to ensure that the training delivery was aligned with their needs for 6th-grade curriculum. The children were referred by UNRWA principals in coordination with the school counsellors from three schools.

The WPA staff implemented a blended approach to training delivery designed to provide differentiated learning experiences that could effectively address the diverse needs of the students, including those students who demonstrated more advanced knowledge and skills.

The learning timetable for the project in the Ein El-Hilweh was as follows:

INTO - Weekly Schedule - 2025							
Morning Shift							
(Qibya school)			Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Session 1	10:00 - 10:55	Agenda* (Math & Sciences)	Arabic	English	Agenda	Life Skills (11:30-1:00)
	Session 2	10:55 - 11:50	English	Agenda	Agenda	Arabic	
Morning Shift							
(Marj Ben Amer School)			Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Session 1	12:30 - 1:25	Agenda	Agenda	Agenda	Agenda	Life Skills (1:00- 2:30)
	Session 2	1:25- 2:35	English	Arabic	English	Arabic	
(Safad School)			Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
	Session 1	12:00 - 12:55	English	Arabic	English	Arabic	Life Skills (10:00- 11:30)
	Session 2	12:55- 1:50	Agenda	Agenda	Agenda	Agenda	

The children received classes that covered key areas of the school's curriculum, including Arabic and English, strengthening their skills and supporting them with their homework in other subjects, including Mathematics and Science, and in Life Skills. The children attended English, Arabic, Science and Maths classes that were specifically tailored to their needs and designed to make learning engaging and fun. The methodology used by the project was participative and group-based, designed to support talking, listening, and discussion.



Children participating in the INTO-funded project in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp. 14 May 2025.

The facilitators developed comprehensive monthly and daily lesson plans for each subject, based on the results of the pre-assessments and tailored to address the identified needs of students. The WPA Education Coordinator, Rayyan Wehbe, conducted classroom observations and evaluations for all facilitators, followed by individualised feedback sessions, where the observations and evaluations were discussed with each facilitator. The goal of this process was to provide constructive feedback and support the teachers in their continuous professional development, ultimately enhancing the quality of instruction and learning outcomes for the students.

2. Psychosocial support

The social worker in Ein El-Hilweh conducted comprehensive social and psychological assessments of the children to enhance their educational and social environments. These assessments evaluated each student's personal, behavioural, and family situations, which informed the development of individualised and group intervention plans. Every child was provided with a Personal Intervention Plan (PIP) tailored to their learning and mental health needs based on consultations with their parents and former teachers.



A group psychosocial support session in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp. 28 August 2025.

All students participated in support groups and psychosocial sessions covering topics such as emotional regulation, anti-bullying, negotiation, health and personal safety, and self-love. The various effective interventions and group support led to significant enhancements in overall student behaviour and self-confidence, reflecting the project's success. The project also organised a series of parent awareness sessions to educate caregivers on various topics related to providing support to children and adolescents. These sessions aimed to equip parents and guardians with the knowledge and skills necessary to better support the mental well-being and development of the children and adolescents under their care, and the importance of education to their children.

3. Arts and Crafts

All of the children had the opportunity to participate in classes focused on arts and crafts-based PSS, including drawing, journaling, collage and paper crafts. Artistic expression was encouraged that allowed children to unleash their self-expression, imagination, creativity and develop their fine motor skills.



Children displaying art produced as part of the INTO project in Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp. 28 August 2025.

4. Day Trip

The INTO project provided a day trip that aimed to provide children with a much-needed escape from the camps, offering them a break from their daily routines while engaging in enjoyable group activities, games, swimming and others. The key objectives included:

- Strengthening social bonds: Fostering connections among children through recreational activities that promote friendship and cooperation.
- Refreshing psychological energy: breaking the academic routine, allowing students to rejuvenate and recharge their mental well-being.
- Encouraging teamwork and cooperation: creating a safe and organized environment where children can collaborate and work together, enhancing their social skills.
- Promoting a positive atmosphere: cultivating a fun and joyful environment, helping to improve overall mood and provide relief from the challenging conditions in the camps.

The day trip for children enrolled on the INTO project was on 21 August 2025 to Hitteen Water Park. The schedule included swimming and water-based team games:

- Free Swimming: Multiple sessions for relaxation.
- Acting Circle Activity: Role-playing in groups to build social skills.
- Bucket and Water Activity: A relay game promoting teamwork.
- Balloon Activity: Passing balloons while answering questions for fun and learning.
- Sponge and Water Activity: A competitive game requiring focus and teamwork.

The trip was a resounding success, with students expressing immense enjoyment and satisfaction. Feedback from both students and parents was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting how this experience provided a much-needed outlet for stress relief amidst the challenging security and economic situation in Lebanon.



Children and facilitators from Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp are enjoying a day trip to Hitteen Water Park on 21 August 2025.

5. Daily Snack

The WPA provided children with a daily healthy snack, funded by a different source during the project period. This intervention positively impacted the children's regular attendance and concentration.

6. Summary of Project Outcomes

The learning outcomes achieved by the INTO programme in 2025 included the following:

- Enhanced formal education provision to 45 children aged 12 years in key areas of the schools' curriculum - Arabic, English, Science, Mathematics and life skills. Students demonstrated measurable improvements across Arabic, English, Math, and Science, with the greatest gains in Math (+10.71%) and Science (+17.56%).
- Students received a pathway to retention in the education system in Lebanon. The project achieved a 100% retention rate.
- Improved communication and interpersonal skills contributing to students' confidence, expressiveness, and social engagement.
- Multiple group and one-to-one psychosocial support sessions to students, with referrals for more specialised care for students who needed it.
- Sessions for parents and carers on the provision of psychosocial care in the household. Parents reported higher levels of motivation and improved behaviour at home.
- Personalised learning by grouping students according to their educational levels that supported tailored instruction, improving understanding, retention, and academic performance.
- Enhanced cultural awareness through special events celebrating important dates in the Palestinian calendar.
- Lastly, the project not only strengthened academic skills but also enhanced emotional well-being through a multi-disciplinary approach, creating a holistic model of educational support.

7. Evaluation

In May 2025, CGE Director, Stephen McCloskey, visited Ein El-Hilweh camp to meet the WPA team, and the students and facilitators. He also visited the Women's Programs Association head office in Beirut and met with Leila Kaissi (Director) to discuss plans for programme delivery in 2026.

8. Future Plans

The Centre for Global Education and Women's Programme Association aim to ensure continuity and support for the students who participated in the project through a follow-up programme that includes:

- Continued provision of individualised psycho-social support for students as needed.
- Continued working, as far as possible, with the same cohort of students to embed and deepen the progress made in 2025.
- Maintaining contact with students to retain their involvement in the programme through periodic recreational activities and group support sessions that will be delivered by WPA social workers and volunteers.
- Carrying out a pre-delivery assessment of the students in advance of any future programme to assess their level of training delivery.
- To provide ongoing liaison with parents and carers on the provision of psychosocial care for children in the household.
- To encourage students on the programme, to remain in formal education. CGE and WPA will implement an outreach strategy that includes personalised counselling sessions and workshops featuring guest speakers from educational institutions. These sessions will highlight the importance of continued education and provide insights into available opportunities. We will also continue our collaboration with UNRWA schools and training centres to ensure smooth transitions and support for the students who drop out, empowering them to pursue their educational goals.

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Appendix 1: WPA Team in Ein El-Hilweh Camp, Sidon, Lebanon in 2025

Name	Position	Camp
Marwa Abu Jamous	Project Supervisor	Ein El-Hilweh
Rania Ghadban	Arabic Teacher	Ein El-Hilweh
Elham Hussein	English Teacher	Ein E-Hilweh
Yasmin Ismail	Maths and Science Teacher	Ein El-Hilweh



From left to right: Marwa Abu Jamous (Supervisor), Rania Ghadban (Arabic Teacher), Elham Hussein (English Teacher) and Yasmin Ismail (Maths and Science Teacher), Ein El-Hilweh refugee camp. 14 May 2025.

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