

The background of the entire page is a photograph of a multi-story building that has been severely damaged, likely by conflict. Debris is piled up in front of the building, and the structure is partially collapsed. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

A Generation at the **Crossroads:** Youth Amid Conflict and Aspirations

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Executive Summary

The 2024 conflict between Lebanon and Israel has profoundly impacted youth in Lebanon, reshaping their mental health, educational opportunities, economic prospects, and political and civic engagement. The conflict began on September 23, 2024, following months of escalating tensions along the Lebanese-Israeli border. It intensified rapidly, with ground operations launched by Israel in southern Lebanon. Reports indicate that the escalation of hostilities led to widespread displacement, psychological distress, and disruptions in essential services, particularly for young people¹.

This report, which was developed under the framework of the She Leads project, led by Plan International, examines these effects in detail.

The research executed during March and April 2025 utilized a mixed-methods approach to gather comprehensive and reliable data, incorporating key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and an online survey. Fifteen in-depth interviews provided valuable insights from stakeholders involved in youth projects, while five FGDs with a diverse group of 67 youth participants enriched the data. An online survey targeting individuals aged 15 to 24 garnered 186 responses, quantifying the impact of the conflict on youth.

Key findings reveal several critical challenges:

Mental Health Challenges: The conflict has led to significant mental health issues among Youth in Lebanon, with 68.3% reporting anxiety and 60.8% experiencing fear. The psychological toll is especially acute for young women, highlighting the urgent need for accessible mental health support services.

Educational Disruption: The conflict has severely disrupted educational systems, resulting in a marked decline in academic performance. Approximately 38.7% of youth reported a drop in their academic results, with financial barriers and societal norms particularly affecting young women's access to education. Many expressed the need for financial aid, psychological support, and access to digital learning tools.

Economic Impact and Employment: The conflict has intensified Lebanon's economic instability, causing substantial job losses and uncertainty about economic prospects. Many youths, with 39.2% feeling uncertain about their future, are compelled to consider emigration as a means of escape from their circumstances. Structural barriers, such as unemployment and gender disparities in the job market, further complicate the situation.

Civic Engagement: Youth in Lebanon feel marginalized, with only 15.6% believing their voices are adequately heard in public decision-making. However, there is a strong desire for greater involvement in governance, particularly at local levels. Youth are increasingly aware of their potential to influence change, but face systemic barriers that hinder their participation in decision-making such as the reluctance of political decision-makers to support young candidates in parliamentary and municipal elections, the exclusion of youth from public policy design processes, and the lack of institutional mechanisms that actively encourage their engagement in governance.

Government and Parliamentary Role: The government's response to youth needs during the conflict has been viewed by some as insufficient in fully addressing their concerns and priorities, leaving many young people feeling that local and international organizations have had to fill the gaps. Youth perceive the government as primarily responsible for providing the necessary support and resources.

¹ <https://www.humanium.org/en/lebanons-children-in-the-aftermath-of-2024-hostilities/>
and <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/11156/file/Caught%20in%20cross%20fire%20EN%20.pdf>

To address these multifaceted challenges, the report outlines several actionable recommendations:

- **Mental Health Support:** Establish nationwide youth-friendly mental health initiatives, and integrate psychosocial support services into schools and universities. Address stigma through awareness campaigns, and ensure targeted support for young women.
- **Educational Reform:** Implement scholarships and financial aid programs for vulnerable students. Expand digital learning initiatives, and modernize curricula to align with evolving labor market needs.
- **Employment Initiatives:** Introduce vocational training programs tailored to high-demand sectors, expand youth employment initiatives, and facilitate entrepreneurship opportunities through grants and mentorship. Address gender inequalities in hiring practices, ensuring young women receive equal access to economic opportunities.
- **Civic Engagement:** Strengthen youth councils, legislate youth representation quotas at municipal levels, and enhance platforms for youth advocacy in policy-making. Address political exclusion and clientelism that hinder young people's access to leadership positions.
- **Government Accountability:** Update and implement the National Youth Policy, improve coordination with international organizations, and prioritize youth involvement in decision-making processes.

In conclusion, the findings of this report serve as a critical call to action for policymakers, NGOs, and community leaders. By prioritizing the needs and voices of Youth in Lebanon through mental health support, educational access, economic opportunities, and political engagement, Lebanon can empower its young generation to contribute to a more resilient and prosperous future. Addressing these challenges is vital for individual well-being and the nation's recovery and development in the aftermath of conflict.

About Plan International Lebanon

Plan International is an independent development and humanitarian organization that advances children's rights and equality for girls. We believe in the power and potential of every child. But this is often suppressed by poverty, violence, exclusion, and discrimination. And it is girls who are most affected. Working together with children, young people, our supporters, and partners, we strive for a just world, tackling the root causes of the challenges facing girls and all vulnerable children. We support children's rights from birth until they reach adulthood. And we enable children to prepare for – and respond to – crises and adversity. We drive changes in practice and policy at local, national, and global levels using outreach, experience, and knowledge. We have been building powerful partnerships for children for over 75 years, and are now active in more than 70 countries.

Plan International Lebanon (PIL) has had an operational office in Beirut since 2017 and received its registration in October 2019. Across the country, we work in partnership with local, national, and international organizations to strengthen capacities and address the needs of Lebanese and refugee children in Lebanon. With a focus on adolescent girls and young women, PIL implements projects in the sectors of child protection (CP) and Gender-based violence (GBV), Reproductive Health and Rights (RHR), Education, Youth economic empowerment, and participation. The organization also promotes gender equality by addressing the root causes of discrimination against girls and young women.

Plan International is currently in the last year of implementing the She Leads project, a five-year gender-transformative program which aims to increase the sustained influence of GYW on decision-making and the transformation of gender norms in formal and informal institutions. This project operates at national, regional, and global levels and involves working on three key levels: grassroots, community/civil society, and policy advocacy.

Introduction



The recent conflict between Lebanon and Israel that took place in 2024 has significantly affected Lebanese society, with its youth experiencing profound and lasting impacts. The disruption caused by the conflict, compounded by ongoing political instability, economic collapse, security concerns since 2019, and the Beirut Blast in 2020 has reshaped the lives and futures of young people in Lebanon. This report under the She Leads Project, commissioned by Plan International provides a detailed analysis of these impacts by examining the mental health, educational, economic, and gender-related challenges faced by Youth in Lebanon. By integrating qualitative and quantitative data, the report seeks to offer actionable insights and recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders, aiming to support the resilience and empowerment of Lebanon's youth.

Aim of the Study

The primary objectives of this study are to examine the impact of the 2024 conflict on various aspects of youth life, including livelihoods, education, and mental health and well-being, and to understand how the conflict influenced youth activism in Lebanon, particularly in areas of civic engagement, institutional representation, and gender equality. The study adopts a gender-sensitive approach to address the unique challenges faced by young men and women, providing targeted recommendations for the humanitarian sector, policymakers, and decision-makers to advocate for the status and well-being of youth in Lebanon.

Contextual Background

The conflict between Lebanon and Israel has had a lasting impact on the socio-political landscape of Lebanon, particularly affecting its youth. The 2024 conflict has exacerbated existing issues and created new challenges, resulting in a complex environment that influences the mental health, education, and economic prospects of young people².

Since 2019, Lebanon has faced a compounded crisis characterized by political instability, economic collapse, and social unrest. The country has been grappling with a severe economic downturn, marked by hyperinflation, skyrocketing unemployment rates, and a depreciating currency. According to the World Bank, the economic crisis has led to an estimated 82% of Lebanon's population living below the poverty line by 2024 (World Bank, 2024)³. This economic collapse has drastically affected the livelihoods of families, pushing many young people into unemployment or informal work without legal protections or benefits⁴.

In addition to the economic crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic further strained Lebanon's already fragile healthcare system and economy. The pandemic exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and disrupted essential services, including education and healthcare. Schools were forced to close, and many students faced significant challenges transitioning to remote learning due to a lack of resources and internet access. The effects of the pandemic have been particularly severe for young people, who often rely on educational institutions not only for academic development but also for social interaction and support systems⁵.

The Beirut port explosion in August 2020 added another layer of trauma and disruption to the lives of Lebanese citizens, resulting in over 200 deaths, thousands of injuries, and widespread damage to infrastructure. The blast displaced approximately 300,000 people and destroyed numerous schools, hospitals, and homes⁶. The aftermath of the explosion has left many families struggling to rebuild their lives, further compounding the mental health crisis among youth.

The conflict with Israel escalated in October 2023 with cross-border hostilities intensifying in Southern Lebanon. By mid-September 2024, violence had spread deeper into Lebanese territory, causing widespread displacement and civilian casualties⁷.

The conflict has led to significant internal displacement, with approximately 1.2 million individuals displaced by early October, predominantly affecting children and adolescents⁸. This mass displacement disrupted family ties and community networks, which are vital for the healthy development of youth. The sudden upheaval has forced many young individuals into unfamiliar environments, often with limited support systems, increasing their vulnerability to a host of challenges.

2. <https://www.humanium.org/en/lebanons-children-in-the-aftermath-of-2024-hostilities/>
and <https://lebanesestudies.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Covid-19-report.pdf>
and <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/11156/file/Caught%20in%20cross%20fire%20EN%20.pdf>

3. World Bank. (2024). LEBANON POVERTY AND EQUITY ASSESSMENT.

<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099052224104516741/pdf/P1766511325da10a71ab6b1ae97816dd20c.pdf>

4. Ibid.

5. <https://lebanesestudies.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Covid-19-report.pdf>

6. UNICEF. (2020). Beirut Port Explosion: Humanitarian Impact and Response.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/lebanon/unicef-lebanon-situation-report-no-1-beirut-explosions-5-august-2020>

7. <https://www.humanium.org/en/lebanons-children-in-the-aftermath-of-2024-hostilities/>

8. Sallon, H., & Zerrouky, M. (2024). Beirut is caught in the crossfire, its inhabitants split between apathy and solidarity with refugees. *Le monde*,

https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2024/10/14/beirut-is-caught-in-the-crossfire-its-inhabitants-split-between-apaty-and-solidarity-with-refugees_6729349_4.html

Educational institutions have been severely affected, with the Lebanese Ministry of Education reporting that around 40% of the country's 1.25 million students have been displaced due to ongoing conflict, along with 18,792 public school teachers and 16,798 private school teachers⁹. Many schools have either been damaged or converted into shelters for displaced families, leading to significant interruptions in academic progress. This disruption not only deprives young people of educational opportunities but also hinders their social development, which is vital for their future prospects. As of November 2023, a UNICEF survey revealed that an alarming 16 percent of families were sending their children to work to supplement household income; only 40.4% of individuals aged 5-24 attended school, and many youths can no longer afford education and are forced to drop out to seek work¹⁰.

The mental health repercussions of the conflict are alarming. UNICEF has reported that psychological distress among children has reached critical levels due to daily exposure to violence and instability¹¹. Symptoms of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder are increasingly prevalent, yet mental health services in Lebanon remain insufficient to meet the growing demand. The mental health of children and adults has been significantly impacted.

Results from the January 2025 UNICEF Child Focus Rapid Assessment¹² show that 72% of caregivers reported their children being anxious or nervous before the ceasefire. After the ceasefire, this decreased for 80% of them, compared to 59% in 2023. Similarly, 62% of caregivers reported their children being depressed or sad before the ceasefire, and this decreased for 81% of them after the ceasefire. Furthermore, 66% of caregivers reported that their children's well-being improved after the ceasefire, while 30% reported it remained the same. The long-term effects of this trauma can hinder not only individual well-being but also the overall resilience of communities.

Economically, the conflict has compounded Lebanon's already precarious situation. According to the World Bank's "Lebanon Poverty and Inequality Assessment 2024," poverty levels have surged, with 82% of households now classified as multidimensionally poor¹³. This economic downturn has led to soaring youth unemployment¹⁴ rates and an increase in informal employment, leaving many young people without legal protections or social security benefits. The combination of economic instability and limited job opportunities has prompted many to consider emigration as a means of escape, reflecting a broader trend of youth seeking better prospects abroad.

Furthermore, the UNICEF Rapid Gender Analysis conducted in November 2024 showed that displaced women and girls' main concerns were lack of privacy, unsafe access to sanitation, deterioration of mental health, restrictions on girls' movements, and lack of awareness of GBV and PSEA reporting mechanisms. The rapid gender analysis also reported an increase of unpaid care work for women and girls during the conflict¹⁵.

9. UNICEF- Lebanon Humanitarian Situation Report No. 10 (2024).

<https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/12606/file/UNICEF%20Lebanon%20SitRep%20#10%20EN.pdf>

10. <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-hit-ever-harder-lebanons-unrelenting-crises>

11. UNICEF- Lebanon Humanitarian Situation Report No. 10 (2024, op.cit).

12. UNICEF (2025). Child-focused Rapid Assessment (CfRA).

13. World Bank. (2024). LEBANON POVERTY AND EQUITY ASSESSMENT, op.cit.

14. As per OECD youth unemployment refers to the percentage of young people, typically aged 15–24, who are actively seeking work but unable to find employment.

<https://www.oecd.org/en/data/indicators/youth-unemployment-rate.html>

15. Rapid Gender Analysis | UNICEF Lebanon

Politically, the youth's engagement has been marked by both frustration and resilience. A study conducted by the Collective Identity Project at Madan Studio- Beirut revealed a significant decline in political participation, with only 18.5% of youth feeling informed about domestic politics¹⁶. This disconnect is exacerbated by a lack of trust in government institutions, with 86.5% of respondents expressing little or no confidence in the government. However, amid this disenchantment, many young people have shown a proactive stance towards civic issues, as exemplified by the 2024 Youth in Lebanon Climate Manifesto, which calls for youth-led initiatives on environmental sustainability. Additionally, young people played a crucial role in volunteerism during the conflict, organizing and participating in relief efforts, including distributing food and medical supplies, assisting displaced families, and supporting mental health initiatives for affected communities¹⁷.

In summary, the interplay of conflict, economic instability, and political disenfranchisement presents a daunting landscape for Youth in Lebanon. Understanding this context is essential for addressing the specific needs of Youth in Lebanon and developing targeted solutions that empower them to navigate their environment effectively. By acknowledging their resilience and amplifying their voices, this research aims to provide valuable insights into their lived experiences, particularly in the aftermath of the 2024 conflict. One of the primary objectives of this study is to assess the impact of the conflict on various aspects of youth life, including livelihoods, education, and mental health and well-being. The study also seeks to understand how the conflict influenced youth activism in Lebanon, particularly in areas of civic engagement, institutional representation, and gender equality. By filling the existing gap in data on youth experiences—especially those of girls and young women—this research will contribute to more targeted policy recommendations and interventions that align with the evolving needs of Lebanon's younger generations.

16. <https://www.freiheit.org/lebanon/collective-identity-project-youth-politics>

17. <https://www.anera.org/blog/youth-play-part-responding-to-war-in-lebanon/>

Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to gather comprehensive and reliable data from various sources. The research design included Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and an online survey, strategically sequenced to maximize the depth and breadth of data collection.

Key Informant Interviews (KIIs)

Fifteen KIIs were conducted with stakeholders directly and indirectly involved in youth-targeted initiatives. The questions focused on assessing the impact of the 2024 conflict on Youth in Lebanon, particularly in terms of education, employment, activism, and mental health, while exploring government policies, youth-led recovery efforts, and gender-specific challenges. They also examined the role of NGOs, international organizations, and legislative measures in supporting youth and addressing post-conflict obstacles. Participants included key project officers from local and international NGOs, members of parliament from the youth and sports committee and the children and women committees, officials from the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and youth activists involved with Plan International Lebanon (PIL).

Participants included:

- Members of Parliament: 2 interviews
- Local Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): 3 interviews
- Municipalities: 1 interview
- International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): 3 interviews
- Youth Activists: 4 interviews, representing diverse backgrounds—two males and two females, aged 23 to 34 years old, from Sidon, Hasbaya, and Rashaya.
- Ministries: 2 interviews

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Five FGDs were conducted with youth aged 15 to 21, from Lebanon's five historical governorates (Beirut, North, South, Bekaa, and Mount Lebanon). These discussions involved male and female participants who had previously participated in PIL projects or PIL partners. The FGDs enriched the data by providing diverse viewpoints and allowing for interactive exploration of themes identified in the KIIs. The questions in the FGDs explored how the 2024 conflict has shaped Youth in Lebanon's experiences, focusing on education, employment, activism, and mental health. They also examined the effectiveness of governmental policies, support systems, and youth-led recovery efforts, alongside the role of NGOs and civil society in addressing post-conflict challenges. The findings from the FGDs contributed to the development of the online survey questionnaire. The FGDs included a total of 67 participants, with a breakdown as follows:

FGD	Number of participants	Male participants	Female participants
Mount Lebanon	27	10	17
Beirut	8	0	8
South	13	8	5
North	7	4	3
Bekaa	12	0	12
Total	67	22	45

An online survey was designed based on the insights from the KIIs and FGDs and distributed to several youth networks, NGOs, and universities. The survey included 186 respondents, predominantly female (71%) and Lebanese (87.1%), with a smaller representation of Syrian and Palestinian nationals. Age distribution ranged from 15 to 24 years, with the largest groups being 15–17 (40.9%) and 21–24 (39.8%). Most participants were single (87.1%), and a minority reported having disabilities affecting daily life (3.8%). The majority resided in Baalbek (36%) and were either school (43.5%) or university students (32.3%). Educational attainment varied, with 41.4% holding a bachelor's degree, while others had intermediate, secondary, or technical education¹⁸.

The diverse geographical and socio-economic backgrounds provide valuable insights into the challenges faced by youth across Lebanon

Data collection was facilitated using Kobo Toolbox, ensuring accessibility amid logistical challenges. The survey data were analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 27.

Overall, this methodological triangulation ensured a holistic understanding of the conflict's impact on Youth in Lebanon. The findings from these diverse data sources informed targeted recommendations aimed at addressing the immediate and long-term needs of youth. By identifying critical areas for intervention, this report serves as a valuable resource for policymakers, NGOs, and other stakeholders committed to empowering Youth in Lebanon and fostering resilience in the face of ongoing challenges.

Limitations of the Study



While this study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by youth in Lebanon in the aftermath of the 2024 Lebanon-Israel conflict, several limitations must be acknowledged that may affect the overall findings and conclusions.

One significant limitation of the study is the reliance on an online survey, which received responses from only 186 participants. Notably, 36% of these respondents were from Baalbeck, a region that may not accurately represent the diverse experiences and perspectives of youth throughout Lebanon. This over-representation raises concerns about the generalizability of the findings, as the distinct socio-economic and cultural dynamics of other regions may not be adequately captured. Additionally, it is important to consider that 71% of the respondents were female, which could further skew the results and limit the applicability of the findings to the broader youth population.

Additionally, the research team encountered difficulties in securing interviews with the heads of the parliamentary committees on youth and sports, and on children and women. While interviews with committee members still yielded valuable insights, future research could benefit from engaging higher-level decision-makers to gain deeper visibility into policy priorities and institutional responses affecting youth.

The timing of data collection coincided with academic examinations and the holy month of Ramadan, which created further obstacles for participation in FGDs. These overlapping commitments likely resulted in lower engagement rates, reducing the overall robustness of the qualitative data collected.



In summary, while this study sheds light on critical issues affecting Lebanese youth, the aforementioned limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings. Future research should aim to address these gaps by ensuring a more representative sample and incorporating diverse perspectives to capture the full scope of youth experiences in Lebanon.

Findings and Insights

This section explores the significant impacts of the 2024 Lebanon-Israel conflict on Youth in Lebanon, drawing from key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and an online survey. The conflict has had a profound effect on mental health, with 68.3% of youth self-reporting anxiety and 60.8% experiencing fear¹⁹. Educational disruptions are also severe, with many young people experiencing declines in academic performance and a significant number ceasing their studies due to financial barriers. Economically, the conflict has intensified instability and job losses, leading many youth to consider emigration as a viable option for a better future. This reflects a tension between hope for change within Lebanon and the desire to seek opportunities abroad. Civic engagement remains a critical issue, with many young people feeling disenfranchised and believing their voices are not adequately represented in decision-making. Despite this, there is optimism about local governance, as youth express a desire for greater involvement in addressing community needs.

The role of the government during the conflict has come under scrutiny, with many youths perceiving a lack of adequate support. They feel that local and international organizations have had to step in to fill the void left by governmental inaction.

As these findings illustrate, there is an urgent need for comprehensive strategies to address the myriad challenges facing Youth in Lebanon. By focusing on mental health, education, economic opportunities, and civic engagement, stakeholders can empower young people to contribute meaningfully to Lebanon's recovery and future development.

1. Impact of the Conflict on Youth Mental Health

The recent conflict has had a profound impact on the mental health of Youth in Lebanon, with 65.6% (122 participants) identifying mental health concerns as the most significant issue they face, as shown in Table 1. Among the 122 respondents who identified mental health as one of the main impacts of the conflict, the largest share was aged 21–24 (n = 50; 41.0%), followed by those aged 15–17 (n = 46; 37.7%), and 18–20 (n = 26; 21.3%). The second most common impact reported was a sense of hopelessness about the general situation, with 60.2% (112 respondents) indicating this concern. This feeling of hopelessness is closely related to mental health struggles and can exacerbate issues such as depression and disengagement from societal participation²⁰.

The impact of the recent conflict on Youth in Lebanon is further illustrated in Table 2, which details the emotions most frequently experienced during this period. Among the respondents, 68.3% reported feelings of anxiousness, while 60.8% expressed fear. A female youth activist from Rachaya poignantly remarked, "The conflict has not only robbed us of our sense of security but also our mental well-being. It's challenging to focus on the future when the present is so unstable." This sentiment captures the essence of the psychological challenges faced by young people in Lebanon today. Another male youth activist articulated a similar perspective, stating, "There was a constant state of psychological pressure due to the instability, fear of bombardment and destruction."

19. It is important to note that no formal diagnoses of anxiety were made as the data were based on qualitative interviews and self-reported experiences.

20. Abramson, L. Y., Metalsky, G. I., & Alloy, L. B. (1989). Hopelessness depression: A theory-based subtype of depression. *Psychological review*, 358, (2)96. and Beck, A. T., Brown, G., Berchick, R. J., Stewart, B. L., & Steer, R. A. (2006). Relationship between hopelessness and ultimate suicide: A replication with psychiatric outpatients. *Focus*, 296–190, (2)147.



Table 1: Main Impacts of the Recent Conflict on Respondents (Multiple Responses)

1. What are the main impacts of the recent conflict on you? (You can select up to three)

Mental health: e.g., feeling afraid, lost, or uncertain about the future	65.6%
Feeling hopeless about the general situation, lack of safety	60.2%
Study interruption	25.8%
Price increases	22.0%
Increased social tensions between Lebanese IDPs and host communities	17.7%
Work stoppage	17.2%
Lack of mobility	16.1%
Professional development halted	5.9%



Table 2: Emotions Most Frequently Experienced During the Recent conflict (Multiple Responses)

17. What emotions did you experience the most during the recent conflict? (You can choose 3 answers)

	%
Anxiety	68.3%
Fear	60.8%
Sadness	38.7%
Academic/professional stress	38.7%
Anger	31.2%
Hope	15.1%
Loneliness	11.3%
None of the above	2.2%

The focus group discussions (FGDs) revealed a pervasive concern for mental health among Youth in Lebanon, significantly exacerbated by the recent conflict. Across all sessions, participants highlighted the psychological toll of conflict, with many reporting feelings of anxiety, fear, and depression. However, it is important to note that these reflections are self-reported experiences rather than clinical diagnoses. The accounts shared in the FGDs reflect individual perceptions of emotional distress, providing valuable insight into youth mental well-being, but not medical evaluations conducted by professionals. The North FGD specifically noted "several reported mental health strains, including anxiety and fear, and difficulty regaining momentum afterward," illustrating the enduring impact on daily life. Similarly, the Mount Lebanon FGD participants described "psychological distress, fear, and mental health struggles (feeling tired and pressured) due to overcrowding in their regions from displacement," underscoring the compounded effects of conflict and displacement. The Bekaa FGD further emphasized "psychological pressure, fear for family members, anxiety attacks, and trauma caused by bombings". As the South FGD participants echoed these sentiments, citing "deteriorating mental health, fear, worry about movement, and depression" as critical issues.

Gender Differences in Psychological Challenges: The recent conflict has exacerbated gender-specific challenges, as shown in Table 3, where 72.7% of female respondents reported higher levels of emotional distress compared to 48.1% of males. Furthermore, feelings of hopelessness are more prevalent among females (63.6%) than males (51.9%). These statistics can highlight the significant psychological toll the conflict has taken on young women, suggesting that their experiences of fear, uncertainty, and emotional distress are more acute than those of their male peers. Findings from KIIs, FGDs reveal multiple factors contributing to this disparity, including heightened displacement-related anxiety, increased unpaid care burdens, restrictions on mobility, financial insecurity, and exposure to gender-based violence risks.

Table 3: Main Impacts of the Recent Conflict by Gender
(% within Gender)

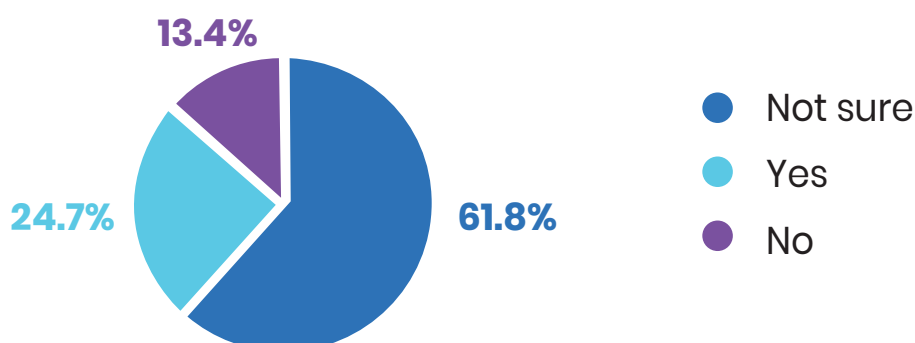
17. What emotions did you experience the most during the recent conflict?
(You can choose 3 answers)


Impact	%	
	♂	♀
Mental health (e.g., feeling afraid, lost, uncertain)	48.1%	72.7%
Feeling hopeless about the general situation, lack of safety	51.9%	63.6%
Work stoppage	20.4%	15.9%
Professional development halted	7.4%	5.3%
Lack of mobility	16.7%	15.9%
Study interruption	29.6%	24.2%
Price increases	16.7%	24.2%
Increased social tensions between Lebanese IDPs and host communities	22.2%	15.9%

However, when participants were asked whether men and women face different psychological challenges due to social expectations, the responses revealed a more nuanced perspective. Among the respondents, 115 participants (61.8%) were unsure, 46 participants (24.7%) believed that differences exist, and 25 participants (13.4%) answered no, as shown in Figure 1. This divergence in perceptions indicates a lack of consensus on the role that gender plays in shaping psychological experiences during the conflict, noting that only 30% of the total number of respondents are male. While this does not necessarily indicate an underrepresentation, it is important to consider how this gender distribution may have influenced perceptions of psychological challenges related to social expectations.

Figure 1: Perceptions of Gender Differences in Psychological Challenges

15. Do you think men and women face different psychological challenges due to social expectations?






For those who believed there were differences, open-ended responses highlighted recurring themes. Participants cited social pressure and patriarchal societal norms that compel men to suppress their emotions while placing caregiving burdens on women. Additionally, economic hardship, fear of the future, and unequal opportunities were mentioned as contributing factors to the psychological stress experienced by both genders. These narratives reveal how traditional gender roles can amplify psychological challenges differently for young men and women in times of crisis.

Despite this lack of consensus from the survey on whether men and women faced different psychological challenges during the conflict, qualitative insights from the FGDs provide a deeper understanding of these disparities. Many young women expressed that fear and insecurity prevented them from continuing work, while displacement disrupted career development due to limited access to essential needs and transportation barriers. Some reported that social and religious restrictions further limited professional opportunities, with religious attire and identity influencing employment prospects in displacement areas. Others, particularly those in regions not directly impacted, felt that life continued as usual, leading to minimal changes in job accessibility. Participants emphasized that the conflict significantly reduced employment opportunities, particularly those providing financial returns, while many training programs were halted. Young women faced greater pressure to remain at home compared to men, particularly in sectors where social norms dictated different expectations. A female participant noted, "Fear dominated all aspects of life," underscoring the psychological toll that extended beyond employment struggles.

Additionally, young women highlighted the emotional burden of caregiving responsibilities, which increased due to displacement and economic hardship. As one participant explained, economic hardships forced many young women to leave school, as societal expectations and family duties took precedence over their education. In contrast, some male participants acknowledged that they were expected to suppress their emotions, which may explain why survey responses showed uncertainty in recognizing psychological differences.

A youth programme specialist with an INGO working in Lebanon emphasized the unique psychological toll on young women, stating, "The conflict's psychological toll on young women was immense and unique compared to their male peers. Displacement uprooted them from their familiar environments, causing anxiety, insecurity, and a deep sense of alienation." Similarly, an Operations Manager with a local NGO noted that women in humanitarian fields, such as the Red Cross, experienced heightened psychological distress. Expanding on this theme, another Project Manager at a local NGO highlighted the broader implications of these challenges, stating, "There's a pervasive sense of uncertainty and anxiety about the future, particularly for young women. They often lose confidence in their ability to build stable, secure lives, which significantly reduces their desire to engage in political and economic life".



In summary, while the data indicates that women experience greater emotional distress and hopelessness due to the conflict, there remains a complexity in how gender shapes psychological challenges. The mixed responses regarding perceived gender differences reflect the varying experiences and expectations faced by Youth in Lebanon, highlighting the need for targeted support that considers these nuances in their mental health and well-being.

Moreover, it is important to consider that self-perception may differ from reality. Despite the data showing that women are more impacted psychologically, many do not acknowledge a significant difference in their experiences compared to men. This discrepancy may be related to issues of awareness, stigma, and a reluctance to express feelings openly due to societal expectations. Such feelings of shame and shyness can hinder individuals from recognizing and articulating their emotional struggles. Therefore, addressing these barriers is crucial for fostering an environment where both men and women feel empowered to communicate their mental health challenges and seek the support they need to overcome them.

Psychological Support Needs: The need for psychological support among the Lebanese population has been strikingly highlighted in recent assessments. During the conflict, 60.2% of respondents reported a significant need for psychological support (Figure 2), which decreased to 50.5% post-conflict (Figure 5). However, a concerning gap exists, as only 21% of individuals received support during the conflict (Figure 3) and only 12.4% of individuals sought help after the conflict (Figure 6), which could be revealing barriers such as stigma, lack of awareness, and accessibility issues.

Figure 2: Need for Psychological or Emotional Support During the Conflict

18. At any point during the war, did you feel the need for psychological or emotional support?

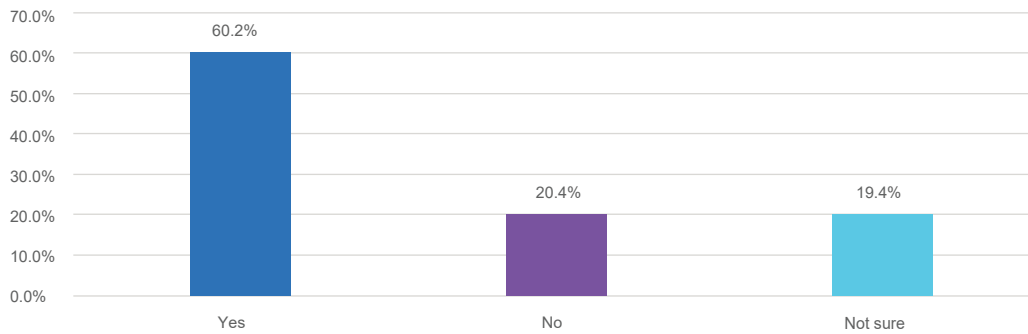


Figure 3: Receipt of Support or Assistance During the Conflict

3. Did you receive any support or assistance to overcome the challenges caused by the war?

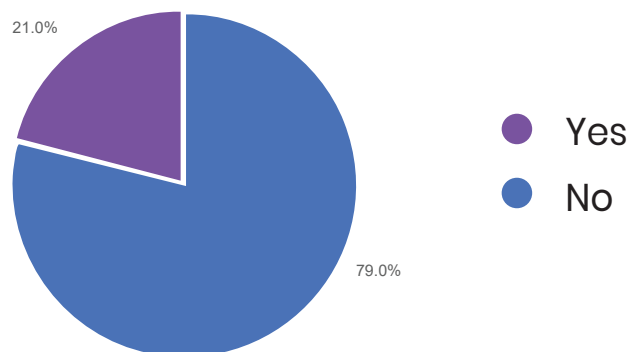


Figure 4: Types of Support Received During the Conflict

4. What kind of support did you receive? (You can select more than one)

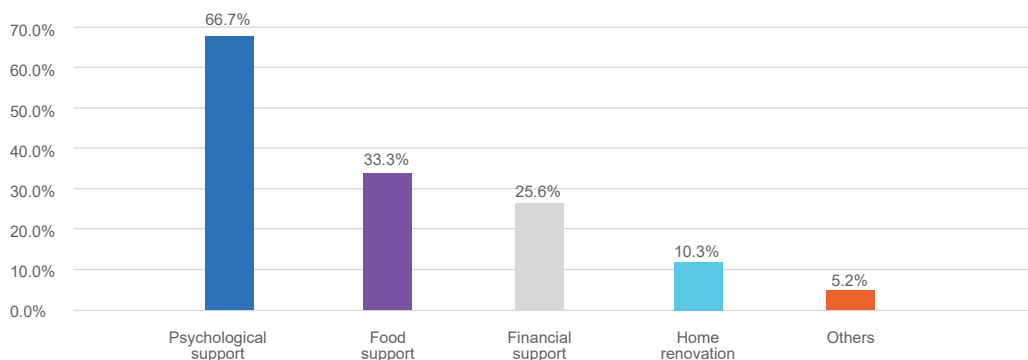


Figure 5: Increase in Psychological Support Needs After the Conflict

19. Did your need for psychological support increase after the recent war?

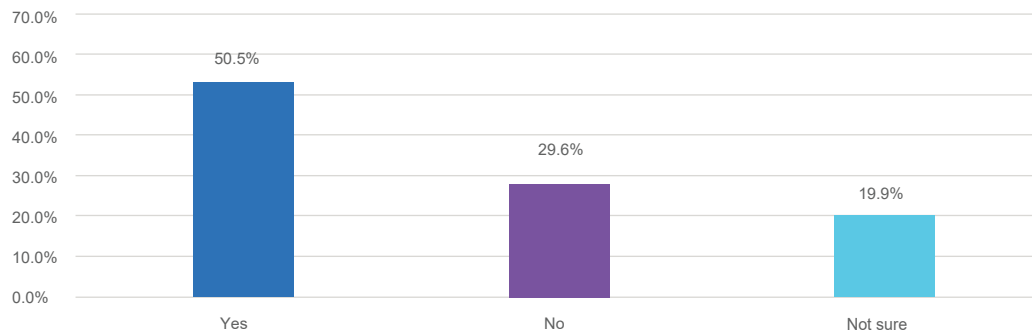
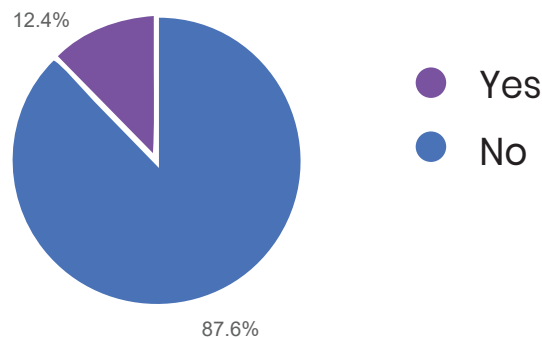


Figure 6: Seeking Psychological Support After the Conflict

20. Did you seek psychological support after the war?



Among the respondents who did receive support during the conflict, psychological support emerged as the most commonly reported type, with 26 participants (66.7%) indicating they received this form of assistance (Figure 4). Food support followed as the second most frequent type of aid, reported by 13 participants (33.3%). Other forms of assistance included financial support (10 participants; 25.6%), home renovation (4 participants; 10.3%), payment of university fees (1 participant; 2.6%), and educational empowerment programs (1 participant; 2.6%).

Figure 7: Awareness of Access to Psychological Support Services

21. Do you know where and how to access psychological support?

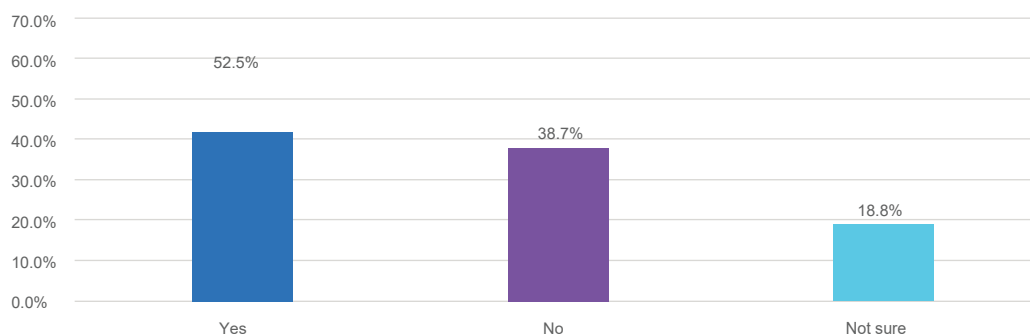




Table4: Awareness of Accessing Psychological Support by Gender

Response	♂ %	♀ %
Yes	27.8%	48.5%
No	50.0%	34.1%
Not sure	22.2%	17.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Knowledge of how and where to access psychological support varies significantly by gender as shown in Table 4. Among females, nearly half (48.5%) reported knowing how to access such support, compared to just 27.8% of males. Conversely, 50.0% of males reported not knowing how to access support, compared to 34.1% of females. These results suggest that females are generally more informed than males about psychological support services. A chi-square test revealed a statistically significant association between gender and knowledge of accessing psychological support ($\chi^2 (2) = 6.843, p = 0.033$), indicating that awareness levels differ meaningfully by gender.

When asked about the availability of psychological or social support at school to help them cope with challenging conditions, the majority, 99 participants (53.2%), reported not receiving any support (Figure 8). Additionally, 33 participants (17.7%) stated they did not need support, 29 participants (15.6%) were unaware of the existence of support services, and only 25 participants (13.4%) confirmed that they received psychological and social support at school.

Figure 8: Receipt of Psychological or Social Support at School

24. Did you receive psychological or social support at school to help you cope with difficult conditions?

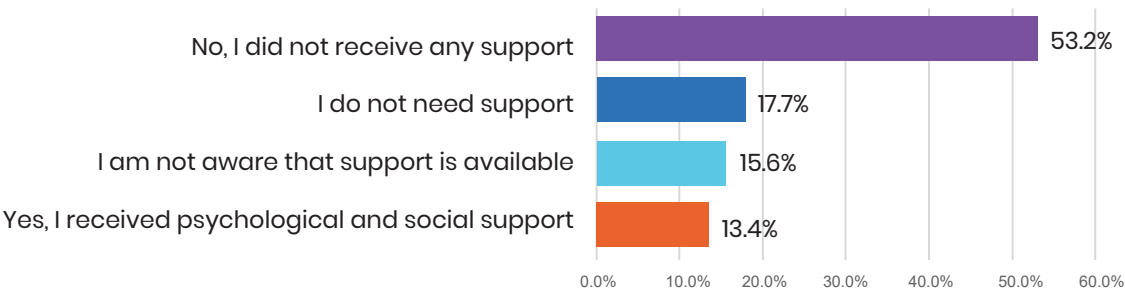


Table5: Receipt of School-Based Support by Gender

Response	♂ %	♀ %
Yes, I received psychological and social support	11.1%	14.4%
No, I did not receive any support	55.6%	52.3%
I am not aware that support is available	14.8%	15.9%
I do not need support	18.5%	17.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 5 shows that there are minimal gender differences in reports of receiving psychological or social support at school. Just 14.4% of females and 11.1% of males reported receiving support. Over half of both males (55.6%) and females (52.3%) stated they did not receive any support. Awareness of available support was low and consistent across genders, and roughly the same proportion in both groups felt they did not need support. A chi-square test did not reveal a significant association between gender and reported receipt of school-based support ($\chi^2(3) = 0.440, p = .932$), suggesting that responses were not significantly different by gender.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) further highlighted the critical gap in adequate mental health support. For example, participants from the South FGD remarked that while "psychological support was provided," it was still "insufficient," indicating a broader need for comprehensive mental health services. Collectively, these discussions underscore the urgent call for tailored psychological support programs to address the profound mental health needs of Youth in Lebanon in the aftermath of conflict. The need for a structured and accessible approach to mental health services is essential to foster resilience and recovery among this vulnerable population.

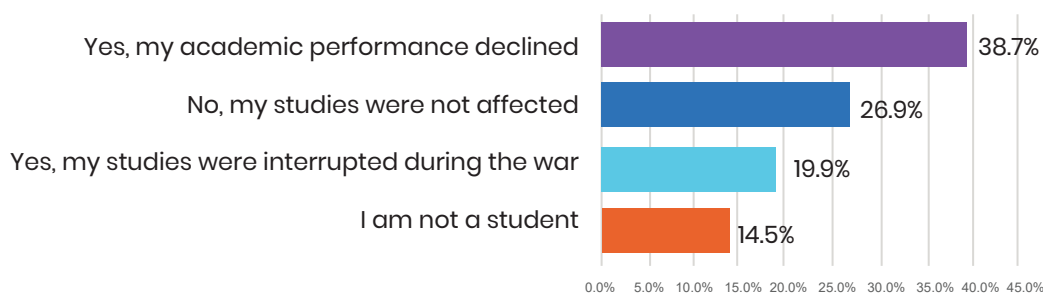
In conclusion, the interviews conducted with various stakeholders revealed a widespread consensus on the urgent need for psychological support among Youth in Lebanon affected by the ongoing conflict. Many respondents highlighted the profound impact of mental health challenges, emphasizing the necessity for accessible resources and programs. To address these challenges, organizations like the YMCA have stepped up by implementing mental health initiatives that include art therapy and psychological support specifically designed for youth volunteers. An Operations Manager with a local NGO underscored the significance of these programs, particularly for young people engaged in relief efforts, stating, "Our programs aim to provide a therapeutic outlet and support system for youth, helping them cope with the psychological impacts of the conflict and rebuild a sense of hope for the future." However, despite these commendable efforts, a persistent challenge remains: raising awareness about the available support services, ensuring that those in need can access the help they require.

2. Impact of the Conflict on Education and Academic Performance

Academic Decline and Disruption: The ongoing conflict in Lebanon has severely disrupted the educational landscape, causing a marked decline in academic performance among Youth in Lebanon. The online survey data reveal that 38.7% of respondents experienced a decline in their academic results, while 19.9% ceased their studies entirely (Figure 9). This disruption highlights the conflict's profound impact on the ability of young people to maintain their academic progress. Additionally, 14.5% were not engaged in any educational activities at the time of the survey, reflecting the widespread nature of these educational setbacks.

Figure 9: Impact of the Conflict on Education and Academic Performance

22. Did the recent war affect your education or academic performance?



Impact of the Conflict on Education by Educational Level: The impact of the conflict on education varied significantly by educational level, as shown in Table 6. Those with primary and intermediate education were the most likely to report having stopped studying (38.9% and 40.0%, respectively), indicating a high rate of educational dropout or disruption among younger or early-stage learners. In contrast, individuals with secondary education or higher were more likely to report that their studies were not affected or that they had declined academic performance rather than completely stopping.

Among university bachelor's degree holders, 40.3% stated that their studies were unaffected, while 29.9% noted a decline in performance, and 20.8% reported they were not currently studying, suggesting both resilience and dropout risk at this level. Those in technical education showed the highest percentage not currently studying (40.0%), potentially due to training center closures or economic reasons.

A chi-square test showed a statistically significant association between educational level and how education was affected by the conflict ($\chi^2(15) = 52.45$, $p < .001$), confirming that the type of educational attainment influenced the extent of disruption experienced.

Table 6: Impact of the Conflict on Education by Educational Level

Impact on Education	Primary (%)	Intermediate (%)	Secondary (%)	Bachelor (%)	Higher Ed (%)	Technical (%)
My studies were interrupted during the conflict	38.9%	40.0%	9.7%	9.1%	26.7%	0.0%
Academic performance declined	55.6%	50.0%	45.2%	29.9%	20.0%	40.0%
Studies not affected	5.6%	5.0%	35.5%	40.3%	26.7%	20.0%
I am not a student	0.0%	5.0%	9.7%	20.8%	26.7%	40.0%

Impact of the Conflict on Education by Age group: Among youth aged 15–17, a significant proportion experienced educational disruption: 32.9% reported having stopped studying, and 52.6% reported a decline in academic performance (Table 7).

In comparison, only 5.6% of those aged 18–20 and 13.5% of those aged 21–24 had stopped studying. The 21–24 age group was most likely to report that they were not currently studying (35.1%), reflecting potential graduation, dropout, or disengagement. Those aged 18–20 showed greater academic stability, with 50.0% indicating that their studies were not affected.

A chi-square test revealed a statistically significant association between age group and how education was affected by the conflict ($\chi^2(6) = 70.11$, $p < .001$), indicating that the impact of the conflict on education varied substantially by age.

Table 7: Impact of the Conflict on Education by Age Group

Impact on Education	15–17 (%)	18–20 (%)	21–24 (%)
My studies were interrupted during the conflict	32.9%	5.6%	13.5%
Academic performance declined	52.6%	44.4%	21.6%
Studies not affected	13.2%	50.0%	29.7%
I am not a student	1.3%	0.0%	35.1%

Infrastructure and Displacement Challenges: The conflict has devastated educational infrastructure across Lebanon. A female Member of a Municipality in the South emphasized, "Education was the most affected sector for youth. From my personal experience and the experiences of those around me, I can confirm this." This has led to significant geographic disparities in educational access, with regions like the South experiencing more severe disruptions than others. A female Youth activist shared, "The biggest challenge was that the conflict disrupted my ability to pursue higher education. The collapse of communication and transportation networks affected both educational and professional opportunities." This underscores the necessity for integrated academic recovery programs that address not only educational needs but also the emotional well-being of students.

Financial Barriers to Education: Financial constraints have become a significant barrier, with 46% of youth citing affordability issues as the primary reason for discontinuing formal education, according to UNICEF Child-focused Rapid Assessment (CfRA) of February 2025²¹. A ministry official stated, "The conflict has set us back years. Without access to education, our youth's prospects dim significantly." Tuition hikes and increased transportation costs have further limited access to education, especially for young women. This financial strain needs immediate attention to ensure that education remains accessible to all. According to a ministry official, "The inability to complete the academic year and the closure of educational institutions, compounded by conflict-related destruction, have severely impacted the educational opportunities and aspirations of our youth."

Supporting this analysis, data from Table 8 highlight the urgent academic support needs identified by respondents after the conflict. Among the various forms of assistance needed, 43.5% indicated a need for financial support for school or university fees, which underscores the critical role of financial resources in enabling students to continue their education. Additionally, 31.7% of respondents expressed the need for psychological support to resume studies, indicating that mental health is closely tied to educational attainment. Other substantial needs included access to digital learning tools (31.2%) and remedial or compensatory education (30.6%), which are essential for overcoming the educational gaps exacerbated by the conflict.

Table 8: Urgent Academic Support Needs Identified by Respondents After the Conflict (Multiple Responses)

23. What kind of academic support do you think you urgently need after the conflict? (You can select more than one)

Financial support for school/university fees	43.5%
Psychological support to resume studies	31.7%
Access to digital learning tools (internet, laptop)	31.2%
Remedial or compensatory education	30.6%
Transportation to school	19.4%

Cultural and Societal Influences on Female Education: In regions such as Beirut and Bekaa, where many participants in the FGDs were predominantly female, access to education is significantly hindered by financial barriers and societal norms. Young women often face economic constraints that restrict their educational pursuits beyond a certain age, typically around the time they are expected to marry. This financial strain is exacerbated by societal expectations and traditional beliefs that prioritize the education of males over females, leading to higher dropout rates among young women.

21. <https://www.unicef.org/lebanon/media/12731/file/CFRA-UNICEF-Lebanon-2025-Report-EN.pdf.pdf>

Societal norms and family pressures play a substantial role in limiting educational opportunities for young women. In Beirut, participants noted that religious beliefs and societal expectations frequently discourage families from investing in their daughters' education, particularly after they reach puberty. Similarly, in Bekaa, traditional family dynamics and the scarcity of public educational facilities further restrict access for young women, causing many to leave their studies prematurely. These cultural pressures necessitate targeted interventions to ensure that educational opportunities are equitable and accessible for all genders.

Gender-Specific Impact of Conflict on Education: An analysis of the impact of the conflict on education by gender, as seen in Table 9, reveals some notable differences between male and female respondents. Interestingly, male respondents appeared to be more severely impacted in terms of ceasing their studies, with one in three males (33.3%) reporting that they had stopped studying, compared to only 14.4% of females. However, the proportion of those who experienced a decline in academic performance was relatively similar between males (37.0%) and females (39.4%).

Table 9: Impact of the Conflict on Education by Gender

Impact on Education	Male (%)	Female (%)
My studies were interrupted during the conflict	%33.3	%14.4
Academic performance declined	%37.0	%39.4
Studies not affected	%22.2	%28.8
I am not a student	%7.4	%17.4

Despite these similarities, females were more likely to report that their studies were not affected by the conflict (28.8% vs. 22.2%). Conversely, a greater share of females (17.4%) indicated they were not currently studying, compared to 7.4% of males. This suggests that while young women may have more resilience in continuing their education during conflict, they also face significant barriers that prevent them from actively engaging in studies, possibly due to societal and familial expectations.

A chi-square test confirmed a statistically significant association between gender and the impact of the conflict on education ($\chi^2 (3) = 10.23$, $p = .017$). This statistical significance highlights the need for gender-sensitive educational interventions that address the unique challenges faced by both males and females in conflict-affected regions, ensuring that all youth have equitable access to educational opportunities.

Urgent Support and Recovery Needs: There is a strong demand for financial assistance, digital learning tools, and remedial education. In response, organizations like UNICEF have initiated efforts to provide Accelerated Competency-Based Training and establish digital hubs. A youth programme specialist with an INGO working in Lebanon stated, "We tackled challenges by strengthening coordination with key ministries and collaborating closely with municipalities. The importance of having a ready-to-deploy response plan and maintaining flexible management practices to adapt to evolving situations cannot be overstated." However, more comprehensive support is needed to address the multifaceted challenges faced by youth.

The findings reveal that the recent conflict has severely disrupted the educational paths of many Lebanese youth. A significant portion of respondents experienced a decline in academic performance (38.7%) or faced a complete halt in their studies (19.9%). Financial barriers were identified as the most pressing need, with many respondents also emphasizing the necessity of psychological support, access to digital learning tools, and remedial education to restart their academic journeys. Despite these urgent needs, more than half of the respondents reported not receiving any psychological or social assistance from their educational institution, as shown in Figure 8.

These findings align with challenges outlined in MEHE's emergency response strategy²², which calls for integrated approaches to address access, equity, and psychosocial support in education. Further attention is needed for inclusive education, as youth with disabilities may face compounded barriers due to accessibility and safety concerns. Addressing these multifaceted challenges requires a comprehensive academic recovery framework that tackles financial, emotional, and technological obstacles to ensure continuity in education following conflict.

Efforts to mitigate these challenges should include enhancing the education system to equip young people with practical skills and reforming curricula to meet the nation's evolving demands. Additionally, targeted interventions are crucial, such as providing scholarships and transportation subsidies to reduce financial burdens, scaling up remedial learning and catch-up programs, and equipping schools with digital tools and psychosocial support mechanisms. By implementing these measures, Lebanon can ensure that its youth have equitable access to education and the resources needed to thrive academically despite adversity.

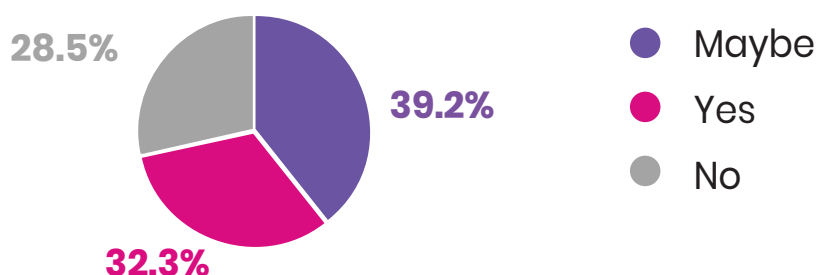
3. Impact of Conflict on Youth Employment

The conflict has intensified Lebanon's economic instability, leading to substantial job losses and limited employment opportunities for the youth.

Survey results echo these findings, showing a strong sense of uncertainty among Youth in Lebanon regarding their economic prospects. When asked about their chances of improving their economic situation, 39.2% of respondents answered "maybe," while 28.5% expressed a definitive "no." These findings highlight a strong sense of uncertainty among youth regarding their economic prospects, with only one-third expressing clear optimism (Figure 10). This uncertainty is compounded by systemic barriers such as the poor economic environment, lack of job opportunities, and discrimination.

Figure 10: Perceived Chances of Improving Economic Situation in Lebanon

25. Do you feel you have a real chance to improve your economic situation in Lebanon?



22. <https://www.mehe.gov.lb/ar/SiteAssets/Lists/News/AllItems/Revised-Education%20Emergency%20Costed%20Response%20Plan%28%20ECCRP%20%29September%20%202024Crisis%20in%20Lebanon%28%20dated%29.pdf>

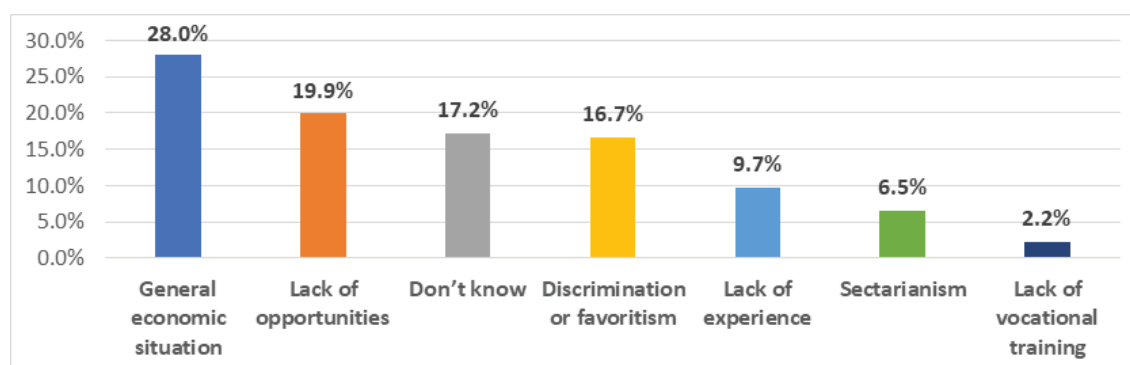
Barriers to Employment: Participants in FGDs consistently identified unemployment and lack of job opportunities as critical challenges. In the North FGD, youth expressed a desire to emigrate due to "unemployment and lack of job opportunities," a sentiment echoed by a ministry official, who noted that the "desire to emigrate, even to less developed countries, just for work" reflects the dire economic conditions. Key informants highlighted several structural barriers contributing to this situation. Another ministry official emphasized that "pre-existing issues such as unemployment, emigration, and healthcare were exacerbated by the conflict." Additionally, the lack of alignment between educational outcomes and market needs presents a significant hurdle. A ministry official stressed the importance of "career guidance focused on sectors with high demand to align education with job market needs."

These observations illustrate not only the scale of the challenges, but also reveal that ministries are acutely aware of the issues—yet remain constrained in their ability to act. This ultimately underscores the limited capacity of government institutions to resolve systemic dysfunction, particularly amid compounded crises.

Participants identified several main barriers to securing employment (Figure 11). The most commonly cited obstacle was the general economic situation (52 respondents; 28.0%), followed by lack of opportunities (37 respondents; 19.9%). Other barriers included uncertainty about job opportunities (32 respondents; 17.2% responded that they don't know what are the barriers to getting a job, discrimination or favoritism (31 respondents; 16.7%), lack of experience (18 respondents; 9.7%), sectarianism (12 respondents; 6.5%), and lack of vocational training (4 respondents; 2.2%). These results emphasize the broad systemic and structural challenges young people face when entering the workforce.

Figure 11: Biggest Barriers to Employment Among Respondents

26. What is the biggest barrier to getting a job?



The general economic situation remains one of the largest employment barriers across all age groups, but is often perceived more critically by older individuals who face financial responsibilities and long-term career stability concerns.

Table 10: Perceived Barriers to Employment by Age Group

Barrier to Employment	15–17 (%)	18–20 (%)	21–24 (%)
Lack of opportunities	15.8%	33.3%	17.6%
Lack of experience	5.3%	16.7%	10.8%
General economic situation	27.6%	19.4%	32.4%
Lack of vocational training	0.0%	0.0%	5.4%
Discrimination or favoritism	14.5%	16.7%	18.9%
Sectarianism	6.6%	8.3%	5.4%
Don't know	30.3%	5.6%	9.5%

Regional Trends in Employment Barriers: Perceptions of job barriers varied across governorates, as shown in Table 11. The general economic situation was the most frequently cited barrier overall, especially in Nabatieh (33.3%), Beirut (31.6%), and Baalbek-Hermel (29.5%).

Discrimination or favoritism was prominently reported in Mount Lebanon (32.1%), North (23.1%), and Nabatieh (23.8%), suggesting local governance or political influence might affect hiring perceptions in these areas. In Bekaa, lack of experience (23.1%) stood out as a key barrier, while “Don’t know” was a common response in Baalbek-Hermel (26.9%) and Beirut (26.3%), reflecting either uncertainty or disengagement from the labor market discussion.

However, the chi-square test showed no statistically significant association between place of residence and perceived employment barriers ($\chi^2(36) = 42.40$, $p = .214$), suggesting that while differences are observed between regions, they are not statistically strong or consistent across the dataset.

structural challenges young people face when entering the workforce.



Table 11: Perceived Barriers to Employment by Governorate

Barrier to Employment	Baalbek -Hermel (%)	Beirut (%)	Bekaa (%)	Mount Lebanon (%)	Nabatieh (%)	North (%) 7.7%	South (%)
Lack of opportunities	24.4%	10.5%	23.1%	17.9%	19.0%	15.4%	21.4%
Lack of experience	6.4%	10.5%	23.1%	14.3%	9.5%	15.4%	0.0%
General economic situation	29.5%	31.6%	23.1%	25.0%	33.3%	0.0%	28.6%
Lack of vocational training	1.3%	0.0%	0.0%	3.6%	4.8%	23.1%	7.1%
Discrimination/favoritism	7.7%	15.8%	15.4%	32.1%	23.8%	23.1%	21.4%
Sectarianism	3.8%	5.3%	7.7%	3.6%	4.8%	15.4%	14.3%
Don't know	26.9%	26.3%	7.7%	3.6%	4.8%		7.1%

Out of the 186 respondents, 32 individuals (17.2%) answered “Don’t know” in Figure 13 when asked to identify the biggest barrier to getting a job. A closer look at their profile reveals a distinct demographic pattern (Table 10). The majority were young females (59.4%) and predominantly in the 15–17 age group (71.9%), reflecting their limited exposure to the labor market, such as hiring challenges, workplace discrimination, or economic influences. Most were Lebanese nationals (93.8%), single (90.6%), and had no disability affecting daily life (90.6%). In terms of location, two-thirds (65.6%) resided in the Baalbek-Hermel Governorate, specifically with nearly half residing in Baalbek (46.9%) alone. This geographic concentration may signal either reduced job market visibility or insufficient career guidance in the region. Educationally, over half had only intermediate education (53.1%), and three-quarters were still school students (75%), underscoring their likely lack of experience with job-seeking processes. The high proportion of “Don’t know” responses among this group suggests a strong need for early career orientation programs, particularly in under-resourced regions and among school-aged youth.



Table 12: Profile of Respondents Answering “Don’t Know” (N = 32)

Characteristic	Most Frequent Category	%
Gender	Female	59.4%
Age Group	17–15 years	71.9%
Nationality	Lebanese	93.8%
Marital Status	Single	90.6%
Disability Status	No	90.6%
Governorate of Residence	Baalbek-Hermel	65.6%
District of Residence	Baalbek	46.9%
Civil Registration Place	Baalbek	46.9%
Economic Situation	School student	75.0%
Educational Level	Intermediate	53.1%

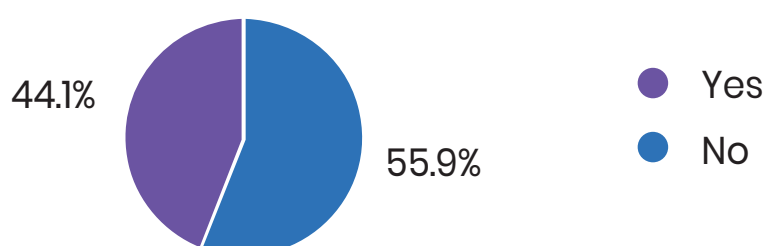
Gender-Specific Challenges in Employment Opportunities: The conflict has exacerbated gender disparities in employment opportunities illustrating the additional barriers women face in maintaining employment during and after conflicts. A youth programme specialist with an INGO working in Lebanon noted, "The conflict and Lebanon's broader crisis have particularly impacted young women's professional aspirations and access to job opportunities." A project Manager at a local NGO observed that young women often feel more constrained by cultural limitations, which reduce their ability to relocate for work opportunities compared to their male counterparts.

In regions like Bekaa and the South and Beirut, societal expectations and economic challenges further constrain employment opportunities for young women. A participant in the Beirut FGD observed, "The economic pressures led to higher school dropout rates among young women due to societal expectations and family responsibilities." Conflict and security concerns have heightened these issues, limiting women's access to jobs and increasing their vulnerability to unemployment. Focus group discussions (FGDs) in these areas underscored the need for targeted vocational training and employment support to bridge these gaps. Interestingly, at the same time, the economic crisis has also pushed more women into the workforce. This shift highlights the need for targeted support in female education and vocational training while challenging traditional gender norms.

Perceptions of gender equality in the labor market reveal ongoing concerns about disparities. More than half of the respondents (55.9%) stated that men and women do not have equal job opportunities in Lebanon, while 44.1% believed that opportunities are equal (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Perceptions of Gender Equality in Job Opportunities in Lebanon

27. Do you believe there are equal job opportunities for men and women in Lebanon?



The impact of conflict on young women was a recurrent theme across all focus groups. Participants noted that the conflict has disproportionately affected women by reducing job opportunities and increasing psychological stress. In the South and Bekaa, displacement and insecurity further limit women's mobility and access to essential services, exacerbating their fear and anxiety. Many young women are unable to continue their careers or education due to safety concerns and societal restrictions. A project Manager at a local NGO highlighted these challenges and noted that young women have been particularly affected by the conflict, stating, "A young woman working on a community project in her village may not have the same freedom as a young man to leave her village for work opportunities in Beirut, due to cultural and societal constraints."

The discussions also revealed that gender equality initiatives have suffered due to shifting priorities toward immediate humanitarian needs during and after the conflict. Many projects supporting women's rights and empowerment were deprioritized or halted, particularly in the South and Mount Lebanon. Participants expressed a strong desire to revive these initiatives, suggesting that they should prioritize individuals who were initially trained in these programs. This revival is crucial for fostering long-term gender equality and empowerment in post-conflict Lebanon.

Addressing the Challenges Faced by Youth in Lebanon: The ongoing conflict has deeply impacted Lebanese youth, disrupting their educational paths, limiting job opportunities, and exacerbating financial and psychological challenges. Several initiatives have been implemented to mitigate these effects, such as vocational training programs and efforts to strengthen municipalities through workshops, cleaning campaigns, and municipal projects, with youth serving as the primary workforce. While these interventions provide essential support, they remain insufficient in addressing the full scope of challenges young people face.

An Operations Manager with a local NGO emphasized the importance of vocational training and practical skill development as a means to prevent youth disengagement, underscoring how targeted programs can equip individuals with the tools needed to access the labor market. Policy recommendations from key informants suggest a clear path forward, advocating for sectoral development, better alignment of education with market needs, and decentralization to empower youth within their communities. Two government officials stressed the urgent need for increased budget allocations to support youth initiatives and enable the effective implementation of the national youth policy.

Additionally, a Project Manager from a relief organization emphasized the broader need for professional and academic advancement, highlighting the necessity of expanding job opportunities, integrating youth into the workforce, and fostering economic initiatives that promote long-term stability. These aspirations underscore the importance of structural economic reforms, long-term investments in employment, and gender-sensitive policies to address disparities in youth labor participation.

To create a more supportive environment for young people, comprehensive interventions must be prioritized. This includes enhancing access to education, reducing administrative bureaucracy, scaling up remedial learning programs, and equipping schools with digital tools and psychosocial support mechanisms. Ensuring financial relief through scholarships and transportation subsidies can also alleviate barriers to education and employment.



4. Impact of conflict on Youth Civic Engagement and Decision Making

Survey data indicates that Youth in Lebanon feel disenfranchised in public decision-making, with only 15.6% believing their voices are adequately heard (Figure 13). However, at the local level, there is significantly more optimism—65.1% of respondents believe youth representation in municipal councils could effectively address their needs (Figure 14). This suggests that while skepticism exists about youth influence on national governance, municipal councils are perceived as a more viable platform for youth engagement.

Figure 13: Perceptions of Youth Voice in Public Decision-Making

28. Do you believe youth voices are heard in public decision-making?

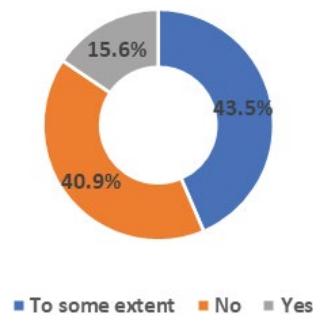
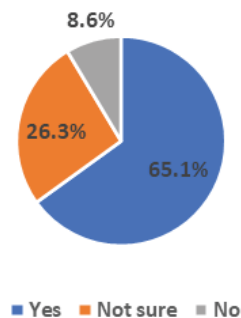


Figure 14: Perceptions of Youth Representation Addressing Local Needs

31. Do you believe youth representation in municipal councils helps address youth needs at the local level?

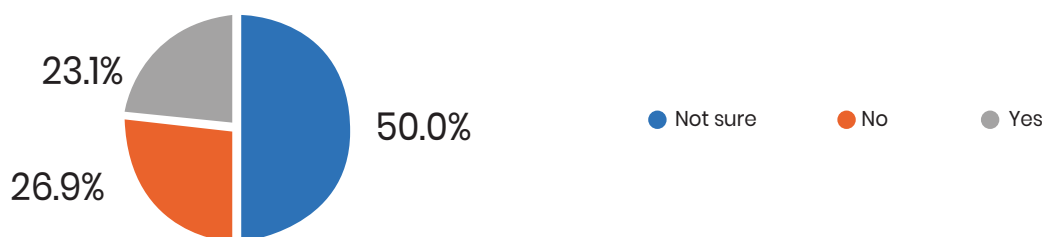


At the time of the data collection and looking ahead, expectations regarding youth representation in the 2025 municipal councils remained uncertain. Half of the respondents are unsure about the extent of youth involvement in these councils (Figure 15)²³, underscoring the need for structured efforts to ensure meaningful participation. The conflict has further complicated these dynamics, as highlighted by a project manager from an international NGO focused on youth initiatives, who emphasized that regional disparities in civic engagement, resulting from unequal access to decision-making hubs and public services—continue to exclude youth in remote areas.

23. At the time of drafting this report, the municipal elections had not yet taken place. As a result, it is regrettable that the number of female or youth candidates cannot be verified. This limitation underscores the need for continued monitoring and analysis of electoral representation once official candidate lists and results become available.

Figure 15: Expectations of Youth Representation in Upcoming Municipal Councils

30. Do you believe youth representation will be high in the upcoming municipal councils?



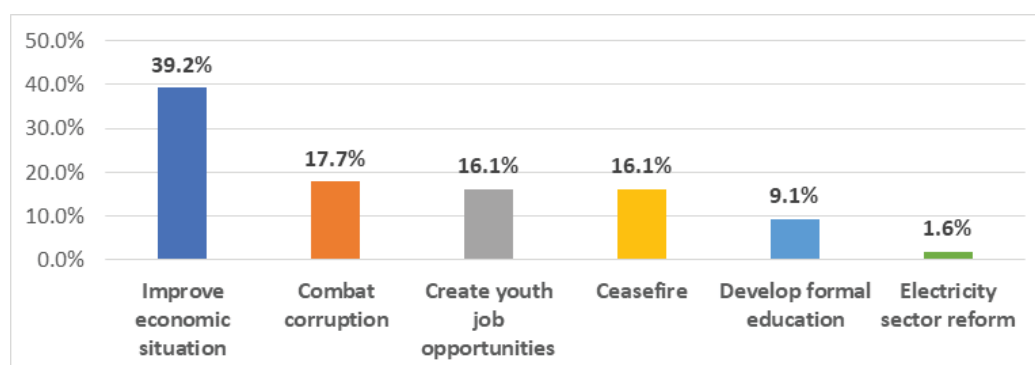
Priorities and Expectations: The economic crisis, exacerbated by the conflict, has significantly shaped youth priorities. Survey results indicate that 39.2% of youth identify improving the economic situation as the new government's top priority (Figure 16). This overwhelming focus on economic survival reflects the urgent challenges facing Youth in Lebanon, who seek tangible improvements in living conditions. Close behind are concerns about combating corruption and creating job opportunities, demonstrating an urgent demand for reforms to restore trust and stimulate growth.

Interestingly, despite their economic concerns, 16.1% of youth also prioritize achieving a ceasefire, illustrating the interconnected nature of political stability and economic recovery. However, youth political representation, lowering the voting age, and broader political reforms did not emerge as top priorities in the survey. This suggests that youth priorities after the conflict remain focused on survival needs rather than structural and policy change.

Similarly, gender justice and equality were not highlighted as key concerns by youth respondents. A youth programme specialist with an INGO working in Lebanon observed that advocacy for gender justice and equality has receded, overshadowed by pressing economic struggles. This dynamic raises questions about the long-term implications of shifting priorities on gender-focused initiatives in Lebanon.

Figure 16: Youth Priorities for the New Government

29. In your opinion, what should be the top priority for the new government?



Barriers to Youth decision-making: Youth in Lebanon encounter significant obstacles to decision-making in the public sphere, including sectarianism, political clientelism, limited transparency, and inadequate civic education. The conflict has worsened disillusionment and disengagement, as highlighted by a Member of Parliament, who remarked: "Youth participation in parliamentary affairs was greater in the past, but it is minimal today."

Survey data reinforces this trend. When asked how they participate in political life, 46% of respondents did not answer (Table 13). This silence suggests a lack of interest or willingness to engage, reinforcing concerns about youth disengagement from traditional political structures. Instead, 23.1% of respondents reported engaging in advocacy towards policy change through social media, reflecting a shift toward digital activism rather than party-based participation. Another Member of Parliament emphasizes the importance of engaging youth in meaningful discussions on topics that matter to them, stating, "Each political group must involve youth more in discussions on topics that matter to them. Addressing youth interests, such as technology, digital transformation, and fostering a business-friendly environment, will encourage their participation and alleviate their concerns."

Table 13: Forms of Political Participation Among Respondents in Lebanon (Multiple Responses)

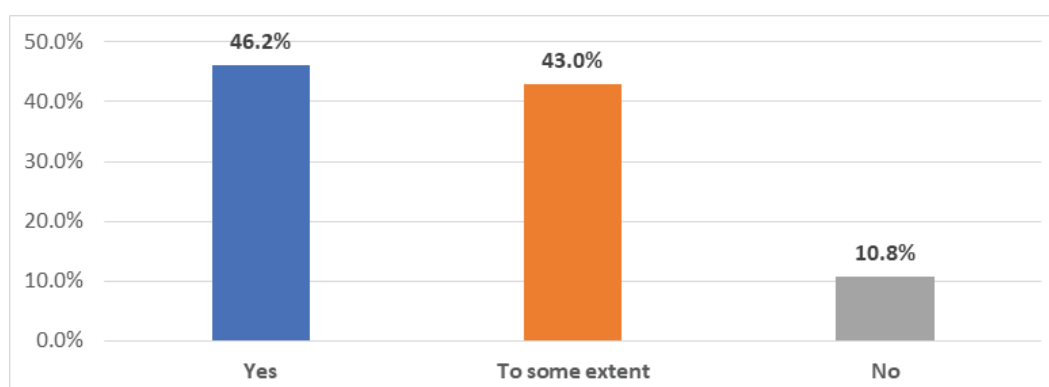
36. How do you participate in political life in Lebanon? (You can select more than one)

No answer	46.2%
By expressing my opinions on social media	23.1%
Through university activities	17.7%
Through the political party I belong to	15.6%
Through school activities	15.6%
Through municipal activities	9.1%

Opportunities for Civic Engagement: While survival needs dominate youth priorities, civic engagement remains relevant, especially for those actively engaged in advocacy and community initiatives. The survey results presented in Figures 17 and 18 provide valuable insights into Youth in Lebanon perspectives on the impact of advocacy and civic engagement post-conflict. Figure 20 reveals that nearly 74.2% of youth respondents believe advocacy and civic actions can bring tangible change, demonstrating optimism in grassroots activism and policy engagement. Additionally, 43% recognize the potential impact to some extent, suggesting a cautious but hopeful attitude toward civic initiatives. However, 10.8% expressed reservations, highlighting concerns about the effectiveness of governance structures and the challenges to meaningful youth participation.

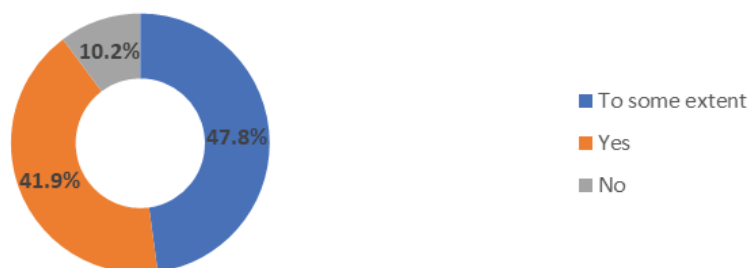
Figure 17: Belief in the Impact of Advocacy and Civic Actions in Lebanon

37. Do you believe advocacy and civic actions in Lebanon can bring change?



Youth Perspectives on Civic Engagement and Participation: Figure 21 highlights how youth's views on civic engagement have evolved post-conflict. While 41.9% now strongly believe in the importance of civic engagement and participation, 47.8% express moderate belief, reflecting uncertainty about its effectiveness in Lebanon's current political and civic space climate. The remaining 10.2% who report no change in perspective may represent those disillusioned by past experiences, such as the October 2019 uprising, reinforcing the broader disengagement trend seen in other survey responses.

38. Do you believe more or less in the importance of civic and political participation after the war?



Despite the stated challenges above, some youth activists remain politically and civically engaged. A young activist with a local NGO noted that activism among youth has increased, particularly in gender equality advocacy. She stated: "Rather than discouraging me, the conflict strengthened my resolve and gave me even more motivation to stay engaged."

This shift is also evident in the growing number of female candidates for municipal elections, as highlighted by a project officer with an INGO. Municipal elections, viewed by many as more accessible than parliamentary politics, represent a critical opportunity for youth to participate in governance. A ministry official further echoed this trend, noting: "Instability has sparked more youth engagement."

While youth participation in national politics remains limited, municipal elections could serve as an entry point for youth representation and local level influence, especially given the optimism expressed in survey findings regarding the potential of municipal councils to address youth needs.

The impact of conflict on youth civic engagement in Lebanon is profound, shaping both their priorities and engagement strategies. While economic survival remains the predominant concern, the findings indicate that youth are increasingly turning to alternative modes of civic participation, particularly digital activism and localized engagement in municipal councils. Despite barriers to formal decision-making, youth have demonstrated resilience through advocacy and volunteerism, with social media emerging as a powerful tool for political expression and mobilization.

The data highlights a paradox: while youth express skepticism about their influence at the national level, they see municipal councils as a more accessible avenue for representation. This shift underscores the need for governance structures to actively integrate young voices in local decision-making processes. Additionally, gender advocacy, though deprioritized in broader economic struggles, has seen renewed activism, particularly through female participation in municipal elections. These trends suggest that while traditional political institutions may struggle to engage youth, grassroots initiatives remain a vital means of empowerment.

The role of NGOs and international organizations has been pivotal in supporting youth through capacity-building programs, leadership training, and relief efforts. However, this reliance on external actors raises concerns about long-term sustainability. The findings reinforce the urgent need for structured policies that not only respond to crises but also establish permanent mechanisms for youth engagement in governance. Moving forward, leveraging e-civic platforms, fostering political inclusion, and addressing economic challenges will be critical in bridging the gap between youth aspirations and institutional responses.

5. Impact of Conflict on Youth Volunteerism

Youth volunteerism in Lebanon has faced significant challenges due to ongoing conflicts, leading to a shift from long-term developmental initiatives to immediate humanitarian relief efforts. This shift hasn't only limited the scope of youth engagement but also affected the sustainability and developmental impact of volunteer initiatives. As a project officer with an INGO noted, "The conflict has reshuffled priorities, halting development projects and redirecting focus toward humanitarian relief efforts." Survey data reveal that 36.0% of youth engaged in volunteer activities during the conflict, primarily focused on food distribution and psychosocial support (Figure 19, Table 14). These findings highlight how urgent community needs took precedence over sustained developmental goals. A male youth activist echoed this shift, emphasizing, "During the conflict, relief efforts became the top priority." Local and international NGOs played a critical role in facilitating youth participation in relief activities. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) confirmed that volunteerism serves as a vital means of empowerment, offering young people a sense of purpose and community amidst the chaos. However, only 36% of the interviewed youth participated in volunteering activities, primarily due to financial and logistical barriers. This highlights the need for better-organized volunteer networks, as identified in the FGDs.

Figure 19: Engagement in Volunteer Relief Activities During the Conflict

9. Did you engage in any volunteer relief activities during the war?

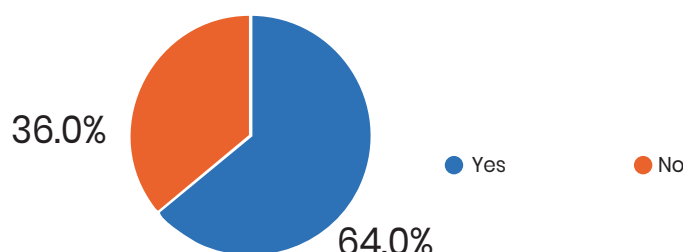


Table 14: Volunteer Activities Participated in During the Conflict (Multiple Responses)

10. If yes to question 9, what activities did you participate in during the conflict? (You can select more than one)

	%
Food and basic needs distribution in the displacement centers	73.1%
Providing psychosocial support to children in displacement centers	49.3%
Providing private lessons for students who have stopped studying	9.0%
Providing safe accommodation and basic needs for displaced people.	6.0%
Helping people repair their cars.	1.5%

Evolving Gender Dynamics in Activism: The conflict has also influenced gender dynamics within youth activism, with an increase in young women's involvement in volunteer efforts. As a representative from a local NGO observed, "Young women have become more involved in volunteerism, with greater influence in politics and media."

In displacement shelters, young women played a crucial role, often becoming more essential than their male counterparts, as highlighted by a youth Activist from the south.

Despite this increased participation, barriers persist. Figure 20 reveals that 9 respondents (4.8%) experienced gender-related limitations in accessing volunteer opportunities. However, 72.0% of survey respondents observed active participation of young women in relief work during the conflict (Figure 21). This signals a significant shift in traditional gender roles, demonstrating that despite enduring gender-based obstacles, young women are increasingly driving meaningful change.

Nonetheless, financial hardships and the fear of violence remain major obstacles, particularly affecting women's ability to engage in activism, as discussed in the FGDs. These concerns highlight the need for targeted support and protective measures to facilitate greater youth engagement in relief efforts.

Figure 20: Gender-Related Barriers to Volunteering Access

12. Did you notice any barriers related to your gender that limited access to volunteering?

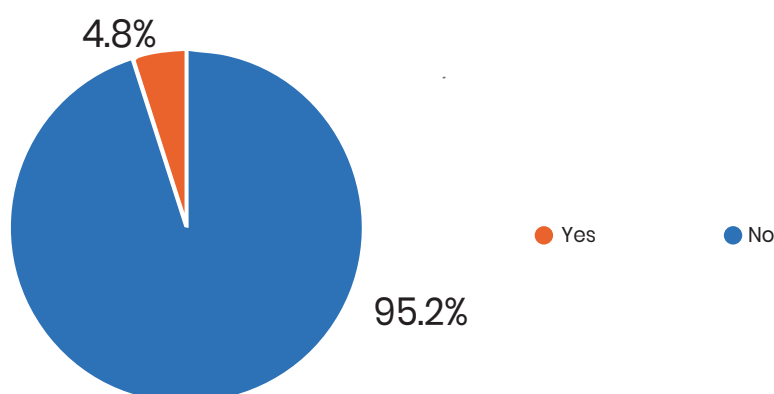
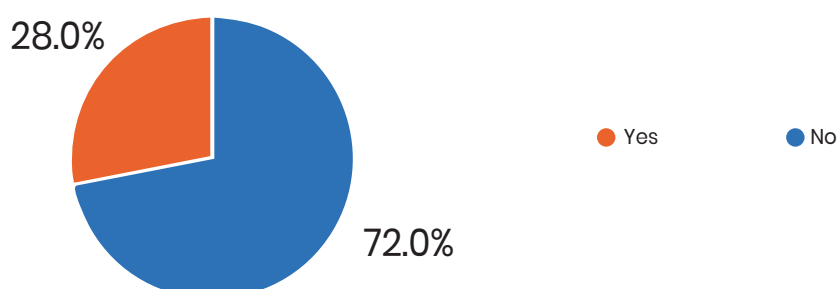


Figure 21: Observation of Young Women's Participation in Volunteer Work During the Conflict

13. Did you witness active participation of young women in volunteer work during the war?



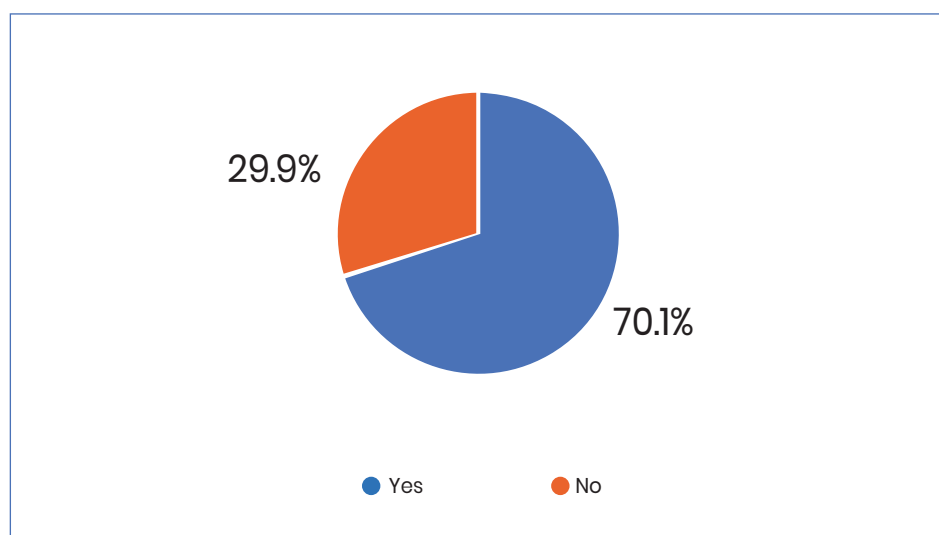
The Role of NGOs and International Organizations: The psychological toll of conflict on Youth in Lebanon is profound, affecting both their motivation and engagement in activism. Recognizing this, NGOs have prioritized mental health initiatives to support young volunteers. An Operations Manager with a local NGO emphasized the importance of psychological support, stating, "The importance of mental health initiatives, particularly for young people working in relief efforts, cannot be overstated." In response, several targeted programs have been implemented to alleviate the emotional and psychological burdens of conflict, including, Psychological support networks and mental health care programs, training sessions on stress relief through activities like art therapy, sustaining initiatives that began before 2019, mental health workshops tailored for young individuals working with displaced communities, ensuring they receive adequate coping mechanisms and psychological support sessions in schools, addressing the emotional and developmental needs of conflict-affected children.

Among those who volunteered in relief work, 70.1% observed that NGOs or initiatives had specific measures to support and include youth (Figure 22). These organizations have prioritized projects that provide vocational training, psychological support, and safe spaces for engagement, strengthening youth resilience.

A youth programme specialist with an INGO stressed the role of NGOs in long-term empowerment, noting, "Empowering women and youth through active community involvement and real opportunities for engagement is the foundation for lasting and meaningful change."

Figure 22: Youth Inclusion Measures in NGO and Initiative Activities

11. If yes to question 9, did the NGOs or initiatives have specific measures to support and include youth in activities?





6. Emigration as a Coping Strategy

The impact of conflict on Youth in Lebanon is profound, shaping their future aspirations and influencing their decision to migrate. The online survey results reveal a stark divide, with 50.0% of Youth in Lebanon considering emigration as a viable path forward. This figure underscores the deep uncertainty surrounding their future, balancing between hope for change within Lebanon and the pursuit of better opportunities abroad. This section examines how economic hardships, social pressures, and the psychological effects of conflict drive emigration intentions.

The FGDs conducted with Youth in Lebanon across various regions consistently highlighted economic hardship and social pressures as primary drivers of emigration. In the North, participants articulated a sense of inevitability about emigration due to scarce employment opportunities and the lingering impacts of conflict. In Beirut, FGDs revealed that financial barriers and societal expectations make life challenging, with emigration perceived as a pathway to escape these constraints.

In Mount Lebanon, FGDs underscored fears about economic instability and prospects, prompting consideration of emigration as a necessity rather than a choice. Similarly, in the Bekaa region, conflict-related disruptions have severely impacted job availability, leading many young people to view emigration as a viable means to secure stability. In contrast, some participants in the South expressed a commitment to remaining in Lebanon despite economic conditions and unemployment, although emigration pressures are notably high.

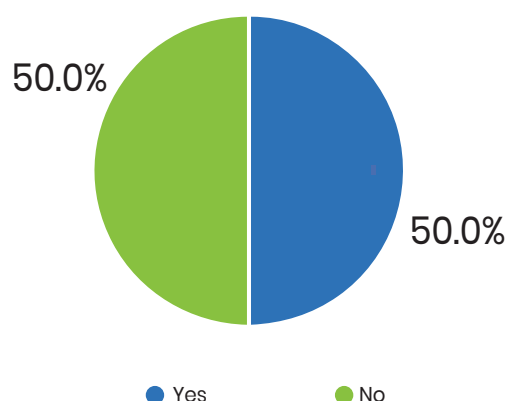
The psychological effects of conflict emerged as a recurrent theme in the key informant interviews (KIIs), highlighting the deep emotional and mental toll on Youth in Lebanon. A Youth activist noted, "The conflict has brought feelings of fear, uncertainty, and instability regarding the future. There is a constant worry about the safety of family and loved ones, as well as a growing sense of despair about the overall situation in the country, leading to thoughts of emigration." This pervasive sense of insecurity is echoed by a Youth Activist, who remarked, "Psychologically, fear and mistrust have taken hold. We are now wary of social media, communication devices, and artificial intelligence, fearing they may be tools used against us rather than for our benefit. While I have some hope due to the new government, my primary goal remains emigration, as experience has shown that conflict returns every 15 years and wipes out everything."

An INGO Youth Project Manager emphasized mental health challenges such as pervasive uncertainty and a lack of faith in the future, which have been significant factors driving some youth to consider emigration or pursue educational opportunities abroad as an escape from current adversities. This sentiment is further supported by a youth programme specialist with an INGO working in Lebanon, who highlighted that widespread emotional stress—including anxiety, fear, and a profound uncertainty about the future—affected their mental health and outlook. For youth cut off from education and employment opportunities, these pressures are particularly acute, pushing them into a state of despair. The overwhelming sense of economic and social stagnation has led approximately 50% of young people to seriously consider emigration as a viable path forward (Figure 23), not merely as a choice but as a necessity dictated by their circumstances. Beyond regional variations, the survey indicates that economic optimism varies by employment status, with self-employed and employed youth showing more confidence in their future compared to students and the unemployed.



Figure 23: Emigration Intentions Among Respondents

34. Are you considering emigration?



The findings underscore the dual challenges of economic instability and the psychological toll of conflict faced by Youth in Lebanon, leading many to consider emigration. The high rate of emigration intentions calls for urgent legislative reforms, economic empowerment policies, and educational improvements to address youth-related issues. By creating an environment that fosters development and provides tangible opportunities, Lebanon can work towards reducing emigration rates and restoring hope among its younger generation.

7. Government and Parliament: Response and Accountability

The recent conflict in Lebanon has highlighted significant gaps in the governmental and parliamentary response, particularly in addressing the needs of the nation's youth. This section explores the roles, challenges, expectations, and disappointments related to governmental and parliamentary actions as revealed through interviews with parliamentarians, ministries, NGOs, and youth during the data collection process, including key informant interviews (KIIs), focus group discussions (FGDs), and survey findings.

1. Government and Parliament: Roles and Challenges

Government's Role During the Conflict: In times of conflict, the Lebanese government is expected to lead initiatives aimed at addressing the conflict's impact on youth, particularly in sectors such as employment, continuity of education, and access to mental health. While efforts were made, youth expectations often exceeded the level of intervention available. As a youth activist emphasized, "The primary responsibility lies with the government," reflecting the widespread belief that stronger action could have mitigated the challenges faced by young people. Similarly, another youth activist noted that NGOs have played a central role in providing support, stating, "Currently, in Lebanon, the responsibility lies mainly with NGOs."

The Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Youth and Sports contributed to post-conflict assessments by engaging in informal discussions and incorporating reports from international organizations such as UNICEF and UNHCR. A government official acknowledged this collaborative approach, explaining, "We relied heavily on the assessments provided by UNICEF and UNHCR to understand the youth situation post-conflict."

Coordination with International Organizations: Coordination with international agencies like UNICEF has been crucial yet largely informal. A youth programme specialist with an INGO marked, "Young people became leaders in recovery, proving that youth engagement is both a moral imperative and a practical necessity for building resilient communities." Despite these efforts, the absence of a coordinated national response plan impeded efficient cooperation. A project officer with an INGO pointed out, "The biggest challenge was the rapid onset of the emergency, which has led to reduced preparedness and uncoordinated efforts at the beginning." An INGO Youth Project Manager's recommendation for improved coordination between international and local NGOs and government leadership directly addresses this shortcoming.

2. Ministries' Actions on Youth Impact

The Ministry of Youth and Sports developed a national youth policy, officially adopted in April 2012, as a guiding framework to address these challenges. Key elements include promoting volunteerism and facilitating youth involvement in decision-making processes, yet effective implementation remains hindered by financial constraints and the need for greater intersectoral collaboration. The ministries acknowledged exacerbated pre-existing challenges, such as unemployment and migration, but lacked cohesive governmental assessment and response. They recognized the need for expanded access to essential services but struggled with implementation due to financial constraints.

3. Expectations from Government and Parliament

Survey Insights on Youth Priorities: The online survey conducted among youth revealed that improving the economic situation was the top priority for the new government, with 39.2% of respondents identifying it as their primary concern. And when asked to rank the entities responsible for supporting Youth in Lebanon after the recent conflict, the Government was overwhelmingly identified as the primary actor (152 participants; 81.7% selected it as the first responsibility). The Parliament was most frequently ranked as the second in responsibility (103 participants; 55.4%), while Organizations were seen as third (88 participants; 47.3%), and Political parties were most often ranked fourth (109 participants; 58.6%). (Table 15)

These results indicate that young people primarily look to state institutions, especially the government and parliament, for leadership and support, while NGOs and political parties are perceived as having secondary or lesser roles in addressing youth needs.

Despite these expectations, there is widespread disillusionment with the government's response, as revealed in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs). Many youth express considerations of emigration due to perceived governmental inadequacies, underscoring a growing frustration with state leadership.

This sentiment is echoed by youth activists and policymakers. An MP emphasized the lack of legislative action, stating: "The Parliament has never convened to discuss such topics," pointing to the absence of structured support for youth post-conflict. Similarly, another MP reinforced the need for proactive governance, remarking: "The Parliament operates in a reactive rather than proactive manner," stressing that forward-thinking legislative strategies are necessary to effectively address youth challenges.

Table15: : Ranking of Main Entities Responsible for Supporting Youth in Lebanon

Entity	First Responsibility (N)	First Responsibility (%)	Second Responsibility (N)	Second Responsibility (%)	Third Responsibility (N)	Third Responsibility (%)	Fourth Responsibility (N)	Fourth Responsibility (%)
Government	152	81.7%	25	13.4%	7	3.8%	2	1.1%
Organizations	12	6.5%	40	21.5%	88	47.3%	46	24.7%
Political parties	12	6.5%	18	9.7%	47	25.3%	109	58.6%
Parliament	10	5.4%	103	55.4%	44	23.7%	29	15.6%

Lebanese youth expect the government to create job opportunities and ensure economic stability, as a female youth activist emphasized, "The government should provide job opportunities for young people who lost their livelihoods due to the conflict." There is also a strong demand for greater civic engagement, with another female youth activist stating, "Greater involvement of young people in political parties" is crucial, alongside the activation of youth councils in municipalities to facilitate participation in governance. Educational reform remains a pressing need, as a male youth activist called for the government to "reform educational curricula to equip young people with skills relevant to the country's evolving challenges." Meanwhile, the psychological impact of the conflict necessitates robust mental health initiatives, as a male youth activist further emphasized, "Prioritizing mental health support to help young people express themselves and cope with ongoing crises" is essential.

Recommendations for Supporting Youth in Lebanon Post-Conflict

The 2024 conflict has left Youth in Lebanon facing severe economic, educational, and psychological challenges. Addressing these requires targeted, collaborative efforts from both civil society organizations (CSOs) and the government/parliament. The recommendations below provide structured guidance to foster recovery, resilience, and sustainable development.

I. Cross-Cutting Recommendations

- **Strengthen Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:** Establish a coordinated framework between government, CSOs, and international partners to maximize impact, reduce duplication of efforts, and create sustainable solutions.
- **Enhance Youth Participation in Decision-Making:** Institutionalize youth councils and advisory boards to ensure young voices influence policy formation, program design, and government accountability.

II. Recommendations for NGOs & Civil Society Organizations

1. Mental Health & Psychosocial Support:

- Expand trauma-informed care services to address the long-term psychological effects of displacement, fear, and loss.
- Integrate gender-sensitive interventions, ensuring young women have access to safe spaces, mentorship, and specialized support.
- Promote mental health awareness through targeted campaigns to seek help.

2. Education & Academic Support:

- Prioritize scholarships and financial aid for vulnerable youth, especially those in underserved regions.
- Enhance digital literacy and technology access to bridge disparities between private and public education institutions.
- Support school-based mental health programs, integrating psychosocial support within educational settings.

3. Employment & Economic Stability:

- Provide entrepreneurship resources, including grants and mentorship, enabling youth-led startups to stimulate local economies.
- Provide support to SMEs
- Improve workforce employability through internships and on-the-job coaching...
- Develop specialized programs to empower women economically, challenging social norms that limit female workforce participation.
- Launch vocational training programs aligned with market demands, focusing on skills development for emerging sectors.

4. Civic Engagement & Activism:

- Support youth-led initiatives through funding, mentorship, and access to platforms that enable advocacy and policy influence.
- Promote equal participation of young women in civic movements, ensuring representation in leadership roles such as municipalities and others
- Strengthen community-based awareness campaigns about the importance of youth involvement in civic spaces, both offline and online.
- Support and expand digital civic engagement platforms.

III. Recommendations for Government & Parliament

1. Mental Health & Education:

- Integrate mental health education into public school curricula.
- Ensure schools provide psychological support services by appointing designated specialists to offer psychosocial assistance to students.
- Strengthen the alignment between education and market demands by integrating labor market insights into curriculum reforms, particularly in vocational training institutions.
- Expand digital equity policies, ensuring all students have internet access, learning devices, and digital literacy training.
- Increase the availability of high-quality public schools, particularly in rural and conflict-affected zones, to bridge educational disparities.
- Enhance civic education curricula to foster engagement and interaction by incorporating more practical and experiential learning opportunities.

2. Employment & Economic Stability:

- Implement job creation programs focusing on sustainable industries and sectors aligned with Lebanon's economic recovery goals.
- Develop youth employment incentives, including tax breaks for businesses hiring young professionals.
- Address gender disparities in the workforce through legislative measures that protect equal pay and workplace rights.

3. Youth Engagement in Political Participation, Representation, and Governance

- Legislate and enforce the establishment of youth councils at the municipal level to ensure active engagement in policymaking.
- Legislate and implement youth quotas to guarantee formal political representation in government structures.
- Facilitate grassroots participation, encouraging community-based youth organizations to engage in policy discussions and advocacy.
- Enhance government transparency mechanisms by ensuring youth participation in monitoring and accountability processes, including reinforcing the implementation of the Access to Information Law to promote greater civic engagement.

4. Updating and implementing the National Youth Policy in Lebanon (adopted in 2012)

This is critical to addressing the evolving needs and aspirations of young people. A comprehensive approach should include the following key actions:

- **Policy Review and Modernization:** Conduct an extensive review to ensure the policy reflects post-conflict realities, economic challenges, and social dynamics affecting Youth in Lebanon today. This process should involve youth consultations to align policies with their actual current needs.
- **Clear Implementation Framework:** Establish specific objectives, measurable indicators, and structured action plans for policy execution. This requires government institutions to define roles and accountability mechanisms to ensure effectiveness.
- **Securing Sustainable Funding:** Allocate dedicated government resources for youth programs under the policy. Additionally, engage international partners and private sector stakeholders to secure long-term financial support.
- **Public Awareness and Engagement:** Launch national campaigns to educate youth, families, and local communities about their rights under the policy. Active youth participation in policy development and advocacy should be enforced.
- **Government Coordination and Oversight:** Strengthen collaboration between parliament, ministries, civil society organizations, and municipalities to ensure the policy is implemented efficiently and adapted to emerging challenges.

5. Crisis Management & Emergency Preparedness

1. Develop youth-focused disaster preparedness programs, training them in emergency response and community resilience.
2. Strengthen youth inclusion in Disaster Risk Management (DRM) plans, ensuring they have a formal role in emergency planning and response.
3. Increase capacity-building initiatives to equip young people with first aid, crisis response, and conflict resolution skills.

IV. Recommendations for Donors & Crisis Preparedness

- Allocate dedicated funding streams for youth-led humanitarian and developmental initiatives, empowering them to play a critical role in emergency response and recovery, in addition to civic engagement and becoming agents and champions of change.
- Support youth-led social enterprises that address crisis-related challenges, fostering sustainable economic opportunities.
- Fund youth-led research and empower youth to generate evidence on the effectiveness of programs from their perspective.
- Support platforms for youth to provide real-time feedback and influence project adaptation.
- Evaluate the extent and quality of youth engagement across funded programs (youth inclusion audit)

By prioritizing youth engagement, policy reform, economic stability, and crisis preparedness, Lebanon can strengthen its support systems for young people in the wake of post-conflict challenges.

Conclusion

The findings of this report reveal that the conflict in Lebanon has deeply affected its youth, shaping their mental well-being, educational opportunities, economic prospects, and political engagement. At the heart of these challenges lies a common thread—the need for support, stability, and empowerment to enable young people to shape their future.

The self-reported psychological toll of conflict is undeniable, with many young people navigating heightened anxiety and fear about their future. However, mental health is not an isolated concern—it is closely intertwined with educational disruptions and economic instability. When schools struggle to provide quality education, and job opportunities remain scarce, young people face uncertainty not just in their personal lives, but in their ability to contribute meaningfully to their communities.

Economic hardship has pushed many youth to consider leaving Lebanon, driven by a lack of employment prospects. However, investing in education and workforce development can break this cycle, ensuring young people have the skills, resources, and opportunities to thrive within their own country rather than seeking stability elsewhere. Similarly, civic participation must be reinforced, giving youth a seat at the table to influence policies that affect their lives.

None of these challenges exists in isolation—mental well-being, education, employment, and civic engagement are all interconnected. Strengthening one area naturally reinforces the others, building a society in which young people are not just passive recipients of change, but active drivers of Lebanon's recovery and future development.

Despite all the challenges, the youth didn't remain passive. Throughout the crisis, they showed resilience, leadership, and commitment, whether through volunteering in relief efforts or advocating for their rights. These strengths and efforts should be recognized and supported.

To achieve this, a coordinated approach is essential. Government institutions, NGOs, international organizations, and community leaders must work together to ensure that youth voices are not only heard but actively integrated into decision-making processes. By prioritizing mental health support, educational reform, workforce development, and political engagement, Lebanon can cultivate a generation that is resilient, empowered, and prepared to face the challenges ahead.

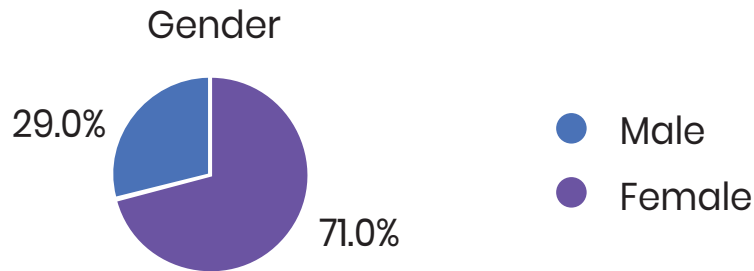
Empowering youth is not just about addressing their immediate needs, it is about laying the foundation for a nation that can heal, grow, and thrive. Building a generation that not only recovers from crisis but also leads the country toward a more resilient and inclusive future. The future of Lebanon depends on its young people, and ensuring they have the support, resources, and opportunities they need today is the key to building a stronger, more just, and prosperous tomorrow

Annex 1: Detailed Demographic Profile of Survey Respondents



Figure 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

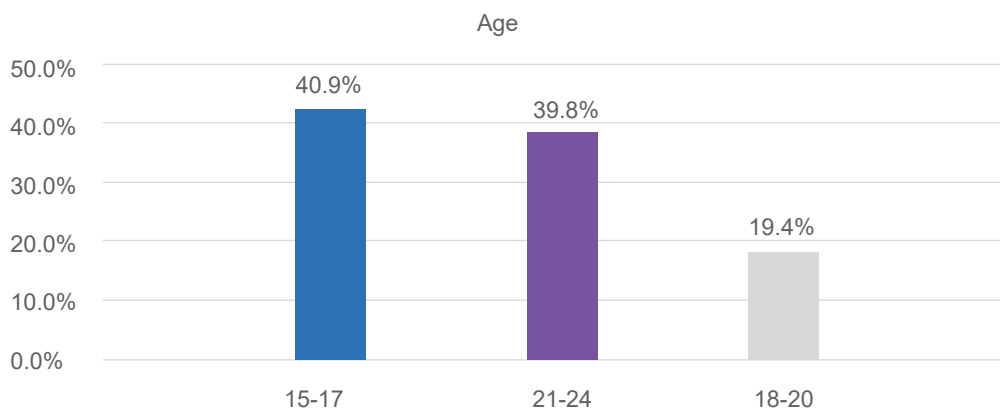
26. What is the biggest barrier to getting a job?



Among the 186 respondents, the majority were female (132 participants; 71.0%), while male respondents accounted for 54 participants (29.0%).



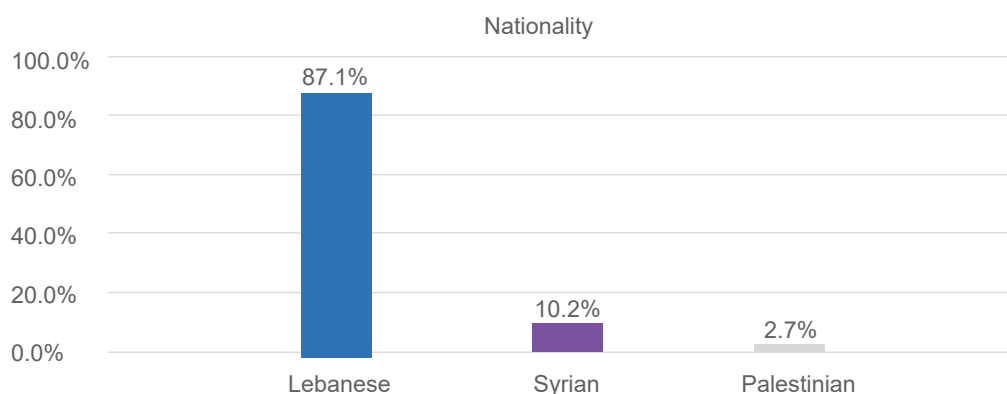
Figure 2: Age Distribution of Respondents



Regarding age distribution, 76 respondents (40.9%) were between 15 and 17 years, 74 respondents (39.8%) were between 21 and 24 years, and 36 respondents (19.4%) were between 18 and 20 years.



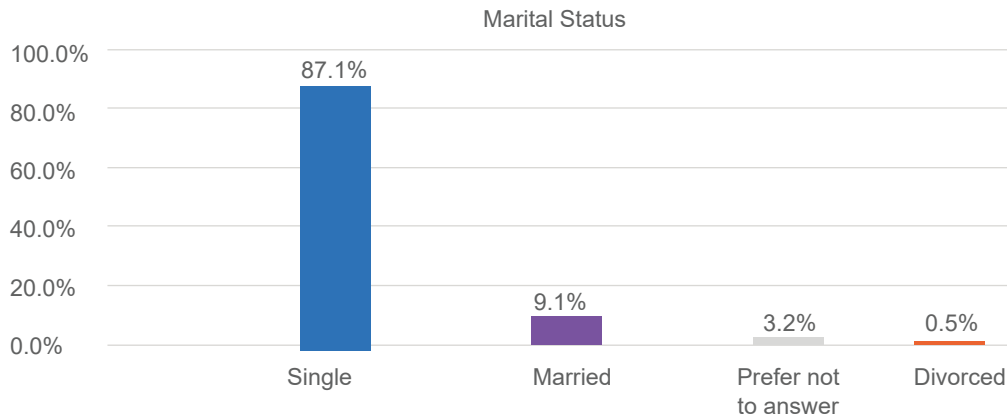
Figure 3: Nationality of Respondents



The vast majority of participants were Lebanese (162 respondents; 87.1%), followed by Syrian nationals (19 respondents; 10.2%) and Palestinian nationals (5 respondents; 2.7%).



Figure 4: Marital Status of Respondents

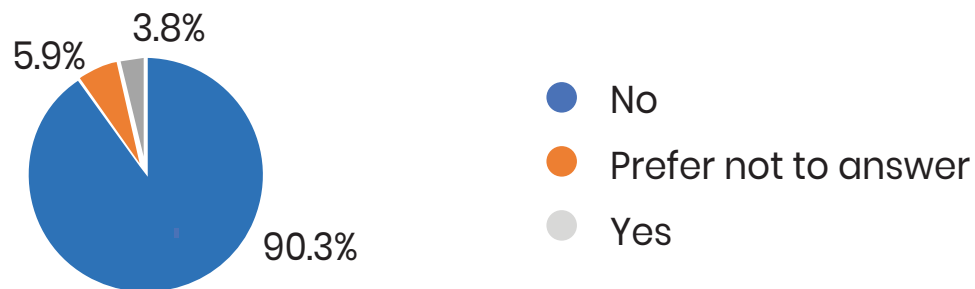


Most respondents were single (162 participants; 87.1%), while 17 participants (9.1%) were married. Additionally, 6 participants (3.2%) preferred not to disclose their marital status, and 1 participant (0.5%) reported being divorced.



Figure 5: Respondents Reporting a Disability Affecting Daily Life

Do you have any disability that affects your daily life?



When asked about disabilities affecting daily life, 168 respondents (90.3%) reported having no disability, 7 respondents (3.8%) indicated they had a disability, and 11 respondents (5.9%) preferred not to answer.



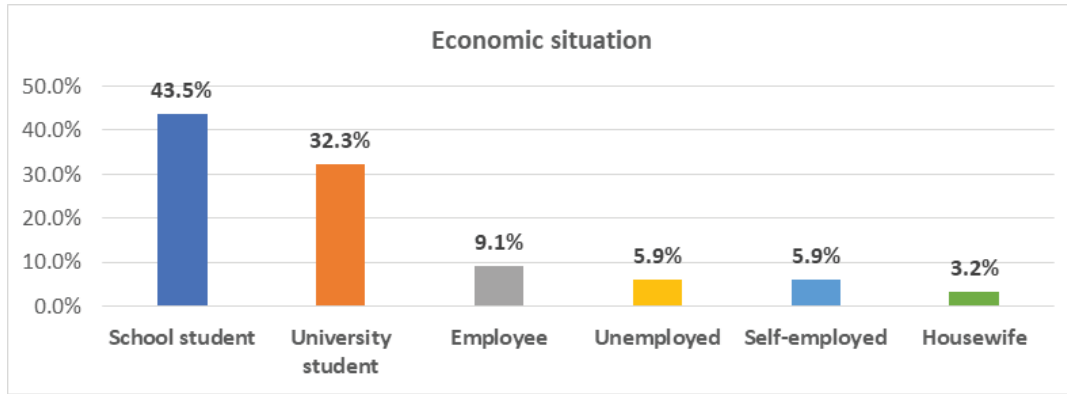
Table 10: Perceived Barriers to Employment by Age Group

Region	Place of Residence (N)	Place of Residence (%)	Civil Registration (N)	Civil Registration (%)
Baalbek	67	36.0%	68	36.6%
Beirut	19	10.2%	9	4.8%
Hasbaya	12	6.5%	12	6.5%
Hermel	11	5.9%	10	5.4%
Matn	10	5.4%	3	1.6%
West Bekaa	9	4.8%	10	5.4%
Tripoli	9	4.8%	6	3.2%
Sour	9	4.8%	9	4.8%
Chouf	7	3.8%	10	5.4%
Nabatieh	7	3.8%	6	3.2%
Aley	6	3.2%	6	3.2%
Saida	5	2.7%	6	3.2%
Zahle	4	2.2%	3	1.6%
Baabda	2	1.1%	3	1.6%
Dinnieh	2	1.1%	3	1.6%
Keserwan	2	1.1%	0	0.0%
Marjeyoun	2	1.1%	6	3.2%
Jbeil	1	0.5%	4	2.2%
Koura	1	0.5%	1	0.5%
Zgharta	1	0.5%	2	1.1%
Bint Jbeil	0	0.0%	3	1.6%
Akkar	0	0.0%	3	1.6%
Bsharri	0	0.0%	1	0.5%
Zahrani	0	0.0%	1	0.5%
Rachaya	0	0.0%	1	0.5%

The distribution of respondents by place of residence and civil registration shows a concentration in specific regions. The largest proportion resided in Baalbek (36.0%), followed by Beirut (10.2%), Hasbaya (6.5%), and Hermel (5.9%). Similarly, civil registration was most common in Baalbek (36.6%), with notable representation from Hasbaya (6.5%), West Bekaa (5.4%), and Chouf (5.4%). Smaller proportions of participants were associated with other regions, reflecting a diverse geographical distribution across Lebanon. This regional spread is important for understanding how the impact of the conflict may vary across different areas.



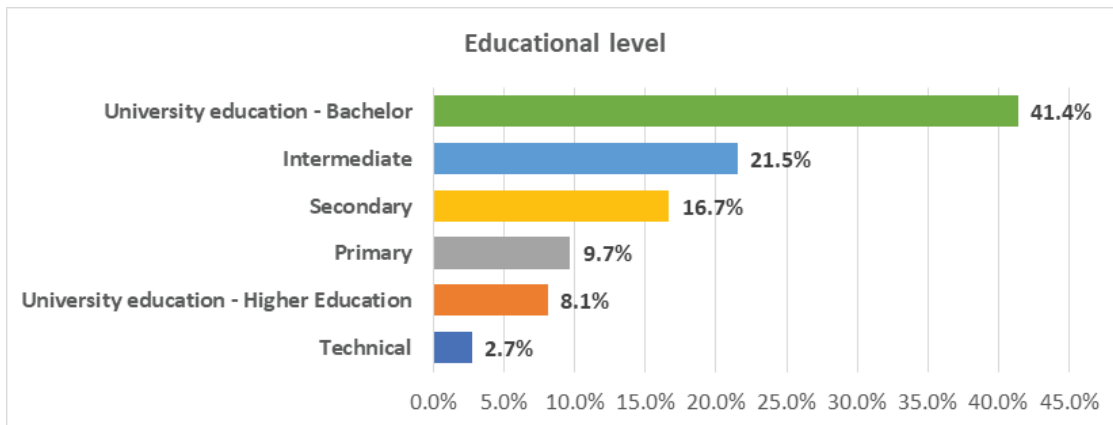
Figure 6: Economic Situation of Respondents



Concerning their economic situation, 81 respondents (43.5%) were school students, 60 respondents (32.3%) were university students, 17 respondents (9.1%) were employees, 11 respondents (5.9%) were unemployed, 11 respondents (5.9%) were self-employed, and 6 respondents (3.2%) were housewives.



Figure 7: Educational Level of Respondents



As for educational attainment, the highest proportion had completed university education at the Bachelor level (77 respondents; 41.4%), followed by those with intermediate education (40 respondents; 21.5%) and secondary education (31 respondents; 16.7%). Smaller groups reported completing primary education, higher education degrees, or technical education.

Acknowledgment

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N.B: No photographs were taken during the assessment, and images featured in the report do not depict the participants involved in the research.

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