

Supporting education for all

Chris Rampling | The Daily Star 26-9-2018

I arrived in Lebanon three weeks ago. One thing that has been immediately obvious to me is that education is a high priority for Lebanese families, and as an area of focus for the Lebanese government. It is for me too, and not only because of my own children. As a Lebanese friend told me recently, education is power. It promotes tolerance. At its core, education is the future.

The U.K. along with international partners is a committed donor to education in Lebanon.

Every child has the right to an education and I am proud to say that the progress since the London Conference in 2016 that the government of Lebanon has made to ensure every child in Lebanon has access to a quality education, is a source of hope.

Four hundred thousand vulnerable Lebanese and refugee students are already receiving their education across public schools thanks to the partnership between the Education Ministry and the international donor community. In 2016-2017, the number of children who benefited from U.K. funding reached over 103,000.

That is why our strong partnership with Lebanese and international partners on education quality reforms on teaching, learning and inclusion will continue so that every child in Lebanon fulfills their potential.

In May this year Lebanon launched its child protection policy and in July, Lebanon participated in the Global Disability Summit, in London, aimed at mobilizing new global and national commitments on disability.

Lebanon has committed to developing a national strategy on inclusive education by enhancing collaboration between ministries and governmental institutions. In the new school year, Lebanon will start piloting different approaches to inclusive education in 30 public schools that the British Council will support, including promoting gender awareness and inclusion of refugee children.

That is why supporting inclusive education for all children with special education needs is another key topic in Lebanon delivered under the Connecting Classrooms program, which is the British Council's foremost global education program in partnership with the Department For International Development.

Over the next decade, a billion more young people around the world will enter the jobs market, but over 130 million girls are currently missing out on getting the education they need to develop essential skills.

The U.K. government is leading the way in helping millions of girls around the world with 12 years of quality education so that they can fulfill their potential and help lift themselves and their countries out of poverty. However, we can't do this alone governments, donors and organizations must all work together if we want to see real, lasting change.
#LeaveNoGirlBehind

When it comes to girls' education, we see fairly equal participation in Lebanon between boys and girls. In some cases, girls perform better than boys in areas like literacy, and in the secondary and tertiary stages there are more girls attending school than boys.

Despite the Syria crisis and the burden placed on Lebanon's education system, this crucial balance has remained.

However, this doesn't always follow through to what girls and young women do when they leave school. According to the World Bank data, in 2017 the labor force consisted of 24.4 percent women.

So this year, girls' education, disability and inclusion are important themes at the 73rd U.N. General Assembly, which has just opened. The U.K. will co-host with Canada, France, Jordan, Kenya and Niger, as well as leading multilateral agencies and civil society organizations, an important event on girls' education.

The U.K. is very proud to be a partner in paving the way to better education opportunities for all students in Lebanon.

Education, economic opportunities and improving livelihoods continue to be at the core of what we do in and for Lebanon.

I look forward to continuing that work during my time here.

Chris Rampling is the United Kingdom's ambassador to Lebanon.