

This Q&A should be used as a reference to help explain and answer questions about the Cash For Education (CFE) program by several players in the program including:

- Front line workers / NGO staff / enumerators to help them address questions from the target population
- Staff of humanitarian hotlines / Call Centers in Lebanon.

This Q&A SHOULD NOT be distributed in printed version to refugees as this document may change and become outdated.

## UNICEF Cash for Education Programme 2021-2022 Questions and Answers (Q&A)

### Background

Several indirect education-related costs, including transportation to school, are often reported by parents as major barriers to enrolment and retention in schools. Since 2019, poverty has been increasing owing to a decline in economic activity and widespread political instability. These combined shocks, compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic and the aftermath of the massive August 2020 Beirut Port explosions, have led to a decrease in the living conditions of a significant proportion of people in Lebanon, and resulted in deprivation in several areas and basic needs, including education. Hundreds of thousands of children in Lebanon are at risk of not acquiring the necessary educational attainment they require.

The aim of the “Cash for Education Programme” is therefore for UNICEF to support eligible non-Lebanese – primarily Syrian – children enrolled in specific grades of second shift public schools with monthly cash assistance for the duration of the 2021-22 school year, to cover indirect costs of education, such as transportation and daily allowances/snacks, with the aim to increase school retention and attendance. Only eligible children that have registered in the Cash for Education Programme will receive the cash assistance, and the cash assistance will be provided for two months at the same time.

### 1. What is the “Cash for Education Programme”?

The ‘Cash for Education Programme’ is a monthly cash assistance programme provided by UNICEF to children enrolled in specific grades in second shift public schools – who fit the eligibility criteria specified in Question 2 - in Lebanon during the 2021-22 school year, to cover indirect costs of education- such as transportation, daily allowances, and school supplies – to help them stay in school and attend school regularly.

### 2. Who will benefit from the programme?

Non-Lebanese – primarily Syrian refugee – children enrolled in second shift public schools during the 2021-22 school year, and which **meets at least one of the eligibility criteria** described below:

- **Children with disabilities** enrolled in any grade in any **second shift public school**
- Children enrolled in **Prep-ECE** in any **second shift public school**
- Children enrolled in **Grade 1** in any **second shift public school**
- Children enrolled in **Grade 2** in any **second shift public school**

- Children enrolled in **Grade 6** in any **second shift public school**
- Children enrolled in **Cycle 3 – either Grade 7, 8 or 9** – in any **second shift public school**

Please note that only children that fit one of the categories above can possibly qualify for the cash support. At this moment, UNICEF unfortunately do not have the resources to cover all children enrolled in every grade of second/afternoon shift public schools. If this changes, and UNICEF receives extra funding to cover additional children enrolled in other grades in second shift public schools, this will be communicated to the relevant parents and caregivers at the appropriate time.

### **3. Are all children with disabilities in second shift public schools eligible to receive the cash assistance regardless of their grade?**

Yes. Any child with disability that is enrolled in any 2<sup>nd</sup> shift public school, in any grade from Prep-ECE until Grade 9, is eligible to receive the cash assistance through the Cash for Education program.

If your child has at least one of the disabilities specified in Question 4, and is enrolled in a second shift public school, and you were not contacted or notified by the school or the NGO partners to register your child in the cash for education programme, please contact your child’s school or school director and ask them to include the name of your child or forward the name of your child to the UNICEF NGO partners that is responsible for registration, so your eligible child can be registered to the cash for education programme.

### **4. What are the types of disabilities?**

Any child that has at least one of the following disabilities, and are enrolled in second shift public schools, are eligible for the cash for education support:

- Difficulty walking / motor or mobility impairment: Limping, walking with crutches or prosthesis; can only walk short distances (e.g. 100 meters)
- Difficulty seeing / Visual impairment: Has low vision, but can see and read with glasses
- Difficulty hearing / Hearing impairment: Can hear only when people speak loudly
- Difficulty speaking / being understood / Speaking impairment: Can speak with difficulty, but it is possible to understand what he/she is saying
- Difficulty with self-care: Can eat, dress, use the bathroom with difficulty, but on their own
- Difficulty learning new things (Intellectual disability): Learning difficulties (dyslexia, attention deficit disorder, etc.).
- Difficulty interacting with others
- Other: Mental health/psychiatric problems, or medical/chronic health problems

### **5. If my child has a disability and is enrolled in a first shift school, will he/she be eligible for the Cash for Education program?**

No. Only children with disabilities that are enrolled in a second shift public school can benefit from the Cash for Education assistance for this school year of 2021-22.

**6. My child is in Grade 3, 4, or 5 in a second shift public school, and we live far away from school? Why isn't he/she getting any cash assistance?**

While the cost of transportation remains one of the key barriers to education for children attending second shift schools, the Cash for Education program can only target selected categories of children, due to funding constraints. The Cash for Education programme targets children in 2<sup>nd</sup> shift public schools enrolled in the following grades: Prep-ECE, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8 and Grade 9, and children with disabilities in any grade in second shift.

At this moment, UNICEF unfortunately do not have the resources to cover all children enrolled in every grade of second/afternoon shift public schools. If this changes, and UNICEF receives extra funding to cover additional children enrolled in other grades in second shift public schools, this will be communicated to the relevant parents and caregivers at the appropriate time. UNICEF will also notify the school directors, and will plan another registration round for parents to come and register their children.

**7. Is my child in Hard-to-Reach schools? Why are you not specifically targeting children in Hard-to-Reach schools anymore?**

The hard-to-reach classification is no longer valid. So, UNICEF is not targeting children for the cash for education support based on the hard-to-reach criteria anymore, as it was creating multiple issues.

The Cash for Education programme targets children in 2<sup>nd</sup> shift public schools enrolled in the following grades: Prep-ECE, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8 and Grade 9, and children with disabilities in any grade in second shift.

**8. Why is my neighbor/friend/cousin getting cash assistance and not me when both of our children go to the same schools?**

The Cash for Education programme targets children in 2<sup>nd</sup> shift public schools enrolled in the following grades: Prep-ECE, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8 and Grade 9, and children with disabilities in any grade.

UNICEF cannot at this stage cover all grades. However, and in case more funding is available, UNICEF will expand the selection criteria to include more grades. UNICEF will then notify the school directors and will plan another registration round for parents to come and register their children.

**9. My child is eligible but is not included in the Cash for Education program.**

The Cash for Education programme targets children in 2<sup>nd</sup> shift public schools enrolled in the following grades: Prep-ECE, Grade 1, Grade 2, Grade 6, Grade 7, Grade 8 and Grade 9, and children with disabilities in any grade in second shift.

In case your child is eligible (according to the eligibility criteria specified in Question 2) to receive assistance from the Cash for Education programme and you were not contacted or notified by the school, please contact your child's school or school director and ask them to include the name of your child or forward the name of your child to the UNICEF NGO partners that is responsible for registration, so your eligible child can be registered to the cash for education programme.

### **10. Why is the Cash for Education Programme not targeting 1<sup>st</sup> shift students? Why are only 2<sup>nd</sup> shift school children benefiting from it?**

UNICEF works to support all vulnerable children in Lebanon no matter what their nationality. To support re-opening of schools, we provide enrolment fees, learning materials, fuel for heating during winter months, health and hygiene supplies and support for School Funds so that schools have the resources they need for safe school operations. UNICEF's Cash for Education programme is designed to support vulnerable second shift students who are at risk of never enrolling or dropping out of education altogether. UNICEF understands the impact of increased poverty on children in first shifts and their families. We understand that registration is now open for the "Emergency Social Safety Net (ESSN)" cash assistance programme for eligible Lebanese families and their children (aged 13-18) enrolled in public schools.

### **11. Will Aarsal 2<sup>nd</sup> shift school children benefit from the cash for education assistance for 2021-22 school year?**

Yes - children attending second shift public schools in Aarsal will benefit from cash for education assistance this year based on the same eligibility criteria as in other regions (see Question 2), since OMT branches are available in the area. They will no longer get free bussing.

### **12. I have already received other kinds of cash assistance; will this affect my eligibility?**

Yes. A child cannot be enrolled in the Cash for Education programme and in UNICEF's other social assistance programme called HADDI. Additionally, if the child is receiving cash for education assistance from another organization, the child cannot receive cash for education assistance from UNICEF's cash for education programme. The child will remain in the cash assistance programme that he/she initially registered in.

This only relates to other cash for education programmes, and not overall cash assistance programmes that are for other purposes. So, if the household is receiving other types of cash assistance, such as from UNHCR or WFP, then the eligible child can also receive UNICEF's cash for education assistance, as the cash assistance programmes are for different purposes.

### **13. How to use the assistance?**

UNICEF will provide cash assistance to the parents or caregivers of the eligible children. The decision on how to use the cash assistance is up to each child's parents or caregivers. However, UNICEF highly recommends that eligible families use this cash assistance to support that their child can attend school by covering the cost of transportation to school or any other educational needs required for the child to participate in school regularly.

### **14. How much is the assistance? How, when and for how long is it provided?**

Children who are enrolled in 2<sup>nd</sup> shift public schools and are eligible against the selection criteria specified in Question 2, will each be entitled to a monthly cash assistance amount of 20 USD.

The cash assistance will be provided in USD through OMT, for a period of 6 months, starting from January 2022, until June 2022, which is when the school year is expected to end.

The eligible children will receive two months of assistance at the same time. In other words, the cash assistance payment will be disbursed every two months. Parents or caregivers of the eligible children will receive SMS from

UNICEF notifying them of payment collection, which will also include instructions on how they can retrieve the cash assistance. The SMS will be sent to parents or caregivers every time there is a payment, which will be every two months, as two months of cash assistance will be provided at the same time.

The first payment is expected to be transferred at some point in February 2022, which will include the cash assistance amount for each eligible child for two months, which is January and February 2022.

In case the registration period is extended, newly enrolled children who are eligible for the cash for education programme will start receiving payments later, after the required registration is completed.

Parents or caregivers of eligible children can withdraw their cash assistance free of charge at any OMT agent in Lebanon. The cash assistance is provided in USD.

### **15. How do I register for the cash for education programme if my child fits the eligibility criteria?**

School Directors and UNICEF partners will be contacting the parents or caregivers of all eligible children, and inform them about the date and time of the programme registration in schools. You might also receive SMS messages informing you about the registration days. On the registration days, parents or caregivers of eligible children will be able to approach the “cash for education” registration desks at the schools to sign up their children for the cash assistance, if they meet the program eligibility criteria.

UNICEF partners will only be available to register children during the dates and times communicated by school principals and NGO partners. This schedule will be communicated to you by your child’s school administration/director, and by the NGO partner in charge of the registration.

Make sure you provide your updated phone number to the school where your child is enrolled. It is also recommended to provide a secondary phone number on which you can also be reached in case your primary phone number might be unreachable or out of service, so you can be informed of the registration dates.

Do not worry if you miss our call the first time, we will call you again.

### **16. What documents do I need to register my child for the programme?**

If you are registered with UNHCR, you should bring the following documents with you for the registration:

- Valid UNHCR Certificate or UNHCR Bar-code (Shifra)
- Your National ID or valid Passport
- Family book is recommended for child validation.

If you are not registered with UNHCR, you should bring the following documents with you for registration:

- Your National ID or valid Passport
- Family Book is recommended for child validation

Please provide the registration officer with your correct name, as it is stated exactly in the ID document, and with your updated phone number as you will be receiving an SMS from UNICEF every time a payment is transferred into your account if your child is eligible for the cash assistance.

If you have any questions, please ask the registration officer or call UNICEF hotline on 04727300, any time from Monday to Friday, from 9h00 am until 6h00 pm.

### **17. What are the requirements for one to continue receiving the Cash for Education assistance?**

Your child must be enrolled in a 2<sup>nd</sup> shift school and must fit the criteria of eligibility specified in Question 2. Enrollment will be verified against the school's official enrollment lists. Close follow-up will be conducted on eligible children that are absent from school by UNICEF's NGO partners.

### **18. Should I use the cash assistance for transportation only?**

The cash assistance can be used for any purpose, as needed by the household to help their eligible children attend school. The use of the cash assistance is the decision of the child's parents or caregivers. UNICEF highly recommends that eligible families use this cash assistance to support that their child can attend school by covering the cost of transportation to school or any other educational needs required for the child to participate in school regularly.

### **19. We will be prioritizing spending this cash assistance to cover our child's school transportation fees, but the driver we are engaging with is asking for a greater amount than the cash assistance amount.**

Due to financial constraints, and in order to support a higher number of children, UNICEF considers the Cash for Education assistance as a contribution to support your eligible child accessing and attending the second shift school. Also remember that it remains the responsibility of parents or caregivers to ensure that their children get to and back from school safely.

### **20. How can I redeem my assistance? And what documents do I need to present?**

You can redeem your assistance from any OMT agent.

To successfully redeem the assistance, the OMT agent will be kindly requesting from you to present some identification from the following list:

- An original copy of your:
  - National ID (applicable for all nationalities)
  - Or Valid Passport (applicable for all nationalities)
  - Or UNHCR Certificate if you are UNHCR-Registered (applicable for non-Lebanese UNHCR-Registered families only)
  - Or Palestinian refugee card (blue card issued by the Lebanese Government)
  - Or valid residency card (for non-Lebanese only)

(!) Photocopied IDs are not accepted for assistance withdrawal.

- The payment SMS you receive from UNICEF every two months will include your Payment Reference Number and a One Time Password.

For assistance withdrawal related information or issues, you are kindly requested to contact us through:

- The UNICEF Call Centre on 04-727300 from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm.
- OR The OMT Customer service on 01-391000 from Monday to Sunday, from 8:30 am till 7:00 pm.

### **21. Who from my family can receive/collect the assistance from OMT?**

The Cash for Education recipient is mentioned in the SMS that you are/will be receiving from UNICEF when payment is ready to be collected. The cash assistance recipient is the parent or caregiver that registered their eligible child at the registration desk during registration days at the school.

If the selected recipient cannot withdraw the assistance him/herself for any reason, we kindly advise you to contact the UNICEF call centre on 04-727300 to submit a request accordingly.

### **22. Can a woman receive the cash assistance?**

Yes, the cash assistance recipient can be a man or woman. However, the Cash for Education recipient will be the family member (whether a woman or a man) indicated in the payment SMS that you will be receiving from UNICEF. The cash assistance recipient is the parent or caregiver that registered their eligible child at the registration desk during registration days at the school.

If the selected recipient cannot withdraw the assistance him/herself for any reason, we kindly advise you to contact the UNICEF call centre on 04-727300 to submit a complaint accordingly.

### **23. Will I receive my assistance in USD?**

Yes. The Cash for Education assistance amount is transferred in USD, and therefore, you receive it in USD. You cannot collect it in LBP.

If the agent wants to disburse the amount in LBP, please do not redeem assistance and submit a complaint through:

- The UNICEF Call Centre on 04-727300 from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm.
- OR The OMT Customer service on 01-391000 from Monday to Sunday, from 8:30 am till 7:00 pm.

### **24. I am the selected recipient of the Cash for Education assistance, but I am disabled and cannot withdraw it myself. What can I do?**

If you are the selected recipient for the Cash for Education assistance but you are not able to access any of the OMT agents, we kindly advise you to contact the UNICEF Call Centre on 04727300.

The Call Center operator will ask you to select any family member/person that you trust to collect the assistance on your behalf. To do so, you will be kindly asked to provide full name, mother name, date of birth and phone number of the alternative recipient that you have selected.

### **25. The OMT agent has identified a misspelling/typo error in my (assistance recipient) full name and/or Date of birth and therefore I couldn't redeem my assistance. What shall I do?**

If you couldn't withdraw assistance due to a misspelling/typo error in your full name or date of birth, you are kindly requested to call the UNICEF Call Centre on 04-727300 from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm and submit an update request by providing your full name and date of birth exactly as written on your National ID or valid passport.

**26. I do not have the original copy of my National ID or Valid passport and therefore, I couldn't redeem my assistance. What shall I do?**

If you are the assistance recipient and you do not have your original National ID or original valid passport, UNICEF will be giving you the option to change recipient by selecting a person you trust - preferably a relative from within the same household – who has an original National ID or valid passport to redeem assistance on your behalf.

For a change recipient request, you are kindly advised to call the UNICEF Call Centre on 04-727300 from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am till 6:00 pm, through which you will be requested to:

- Confirm your biodata for identity verification purposes.
- Provide biodata of the alternative recipient that you selected to redeem assistance on your behalf: Nationality, ID number, full name, Mother name and Date of birth.
- Confirm your relationship to the alternative recipient that you selected.

Reviewing and processing the change recipient requests take up to 4 weeks. To be able to redeem your assistance, please wait until you receive another payment transfer SMS from UNICEF with the new recipient's name.

**27. The OMT agent which I visited does not have enough USD and is asking me to withdraw my assistance in LBP instead. What shall I do?**

We advise you to please decline redeeming your assistance in LBP and to instead call the OMT Customer Service on 01-391000 who will guide you to the next nearest OMT agent with the USD.

**28. How can I find the nearest OMT agent to my location/residence?**

You are kindly requested to contact the OMT Customer service on 01-391000 who will provide you with all the details you need to find the nearest OMT agents to your location/residence.

**29. The OMT officer is a relative/friend/neighbour/landlord and I do not feel comfortable collecting the cash assistance from him/her. I prefer not to let him/her know that I am benefiting from a cash assistance.**

We completely understand your concern. We advise you to visit any other near OMT agent to your area to collect your payment. Please feel free to contact the OMT Customer service on 01-391000 who will provide you with all the details you need to find the nearest OMT agents to your location/residence.

**30. Is the assistance free of charge? The OMT agent or an NGO staff asked me to pay him/ her in order to get the assistance.**

The cash assistance is free of charge. If anyone asks you for money or a service in exchange of the cash assistance you should decline and contact the UNICEF call centre to report the incident on 04-727300 from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm.

This will not affect your inclusion in the cash assistance programme, meaning you will still receive the cash assistance if you reported the incident. UNICEF will closely follow-up to avoid similar issues for the coming months, making sure your complaint will be shared with OMT without leaking your identity.

### **31. What can I do if I am being subjected to violence and harassment on the way to receive the cash assistance from OMT?**

The violence and harassment you were subjected to is not your fault. You can contact the below organizations who are willing to support you to deal with the violence you faced in a confidential way. You can miscall them, and they will call you back.

**HOTLINES OF ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING GBV SUPPORT CAN BE SEEN IN SEPARATE ANNEX**

What happened is not your fault; however, sometimes there are a few actions you might be able to take that could lower the risk of violence. One of these actions can be: taking a different route, try to find an agent near you, or take a different route that seems safer, or ask someone you trust to accompany you. You are more aware of options you might have to try to lower the risk of violence and abuse. The organizations included here can also help you to find safer ways to receive the assistance by trying to put safety plans with you.

### **32. My husband and/ or his family are taking all the money I am receiving from the cash assistance and using it for their own benefit instead of spending it on our child's education needs.**

You can contact the below organizations who are willing to support you to deal with the situation in a confidential way. You can miss-call them, and they will call you back.

You can also decide to change the name of the recipient by submitting a change recipient request through the UNICEF Call Centre. UNICEF will review all requests and do the necessary follow-up and get back to you. Your family will not be excluded from the cash assistance if you request this change.

However, it is important for you to think about your husband and his family's reaction if you decide to change the recipient's name, and whether this might cause a violent reaction. You know more what works in your situation, and the organizations listed below can support you in deciding what actions to take.

**HOTLINES OF ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING GBV SUPPORT CAN BE SEEN IN SEPARATE ANNEX**

### **33. I am separated/divorced from my husband and the children are with me. He is the recipient of the cash assistance. How can I change it so that I become the recipient?**

You can decide to change the name of the recipient by submitting a change recipient request through the UNICEF Call Centre. UNICEF will review all requests and do the necessary follow-up and get back to you. Your family will not be excluded from the cash assistance if you request this change.

However, it is important for you to think about your husband and his family's reaction if you decide to change the recipient's name, and whether this might cause a violent reaction. You know more what works in your situation, and the organizations listed below can support you in deciding what actions to take.

**HOTLINES OF ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING GBV SUPPORT CAN BE SEEN IN SEPARATE ANNEX**

### 34. Important

#### Tips to be given at the end of interaction:

- The cash assistance is provided to you in banknotes in USD from any OMT branch across the country, all the 1,100 agents. Avoid going to the store if crowded or if it is close to large gatherings of people.
- Always maintain a safe distance when in store, keep your mask on and disinfect your hands after receiving the money.
- Avoid redeeming your assistance at late hours.

Beware of people claiming to be from UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP or any other humanitarian organization who ask you to give them your identity documents in return for assistance or services. Your identity documents belong to you. You may be asked to show them to UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP or to humanitarian organizations, but they are not allowed to keep them.

If you gave your identity documents to an individual or an organization you are suspicious of, please inform UNICEF hotline immediately at 04-727300 from Monday to Friday, from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm.