

CHILD PROTECTION AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE RAPID ASSESSMENT IN LEBANON, MARCH 2018

BRIEFING

In March 2018, a Child Protection and Gender Based Violence Rapid Assessment was conducted in Lebanon by Plan International with support from War Child Holland. The assessment was informed by 521 surveys and 23 focus group discussions conducted in December 2017 and January 2018 in Akkar, Northern Bekaa and Tripoli. The study aimed to focus on child labour and child marriage amongst adolescent girls and boys aged 12 to 18 years old and at identifying the scale of existing capacities and resources, risks and needs in child protection and gender based violence. Another objective of the study was to set geographic and programmatic priorities for an effective response in Lebanon among Lebanese host communities and Syrian refugee communities across North Lebanon (Tripoli and Akkar) and Northern Bekaa.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Education

The study found that 64% of adolescent girls in the sample group have continued with their learning as compared to 56% of adolescent boys. This means that nearly a ratio of one in two adolescent boys has to drop out of school, most likely to seek job opportunities.

Child labour

The research results indicate that 33% of adolescent children in vulnerable communities are currently working. This number is highest among adolescent boys, almost half of whom (48%) have already entered the workforce. One of the major causes that led adolescents to work is to supplement family income in order to cover basic needs (69%) as they live in poor socio-economic conditions.

Some of the children who took part in the study are undertaking forms of child labour that present

physical and health hazards such as picking potatoes, olives, eggplants and harvesting tobacco.

Additionally, some children reported working in fields for five consecutive hours without a break. Some child respondents who are working also reported that their landlord/boss does not offer them food or water when they are hungry or thirsty. Some girls who are working in fields reported being yelled at by the landlord to work faster.

Children interviewed as part of the research who are working also reported that they are not allowed to use toilets and are exposed to either verbal or physical abuse and are punished with hard objects or tools for their mistakes.

Child Marriage

The research found that it is more common for adolescent girls to marry compared to boys of the same age (14% and 3% respectively). The causes of marriage were reported as follows: out of love; to relieve economic burdens on their families; due to agreement between families.

Adolescents who were married were asked if they knew the ways to avoid pregnancy; 50% were not aware of contraception. The authors of the study suggested this was due to cultural barriers and religious reason.

Regarding SRHR, the study found that: 85% of respondents were not aware of the availability of services when it came to testing for HIV; 69% were not aware on the availability of services on miscarriage and post abortion care service; and 85% were not aware on services that provide insights and information on family planning.

64% of adolescent girls and boys identified the community, outside of the home, school and work as being the environment of highest risks.