Learning on the margins:

An assessment of learner and educator well-being outcomes in the midst of and following contagion and conflict in Palestine

January 2023

Acknowledgements:

Cover photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

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Palestinian student partecipating at the NRC summer camps, in Abu Tamam School, Beit Lahya, North of Gaza, in October 2021. Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Executive summary

The longstanding occupation, coupled with the COVID-19 pandemic and other more recent escalations in both Gaza and parts of West Bank highlight the importance of understanding who is being most acutely affected by these events, and how. This research has tracked learner well-being over the past four scholastic years across a sample of schools in West Bank and Gaza, and teacher well-being in the same schools over the two most recent years (2021-22, 2022-23 scholastic years) through further analysis of data collected as part of NRC's *Better Learning Programme*.

It was found that COVID-19 has had differential impacts on student well-being in Gaza and West Bank. While in West Bank, well-being of students improved significantly during periods of school closures/lockdowns, the opposite was the case in Gaza. Much of this is due to the fact that a much higher percentage of learners in West Bank, compared to Gaza were able to engage in some form of distance learning from home. But beyond that, household conditions and circumstances were markedly different between the two contexts, with higher levels of parental engagement, support and care offered to learners in West Bank and with students much more likely to feel safe at home and able to learn and speak freely with their parents/caregivers about their emotions and feelings. In Gaza, a combination of increased food insecurity and household economic stress during COVID-19, overcrowded living conditions, violence in the home, and a lack of electricity/internet, led to an increasing sense of social isolation and hopelessness on the part of learners. Economic and social risk factors, rather than the risk or prevalence of schools or communities falling under Israeli attack, appear to play a more significant role in impacting on learner's well-being in Gaza during this time.

As students began to return to school, students' well-being in West Bank started to decline again, with this being most significant in schools and communities where settler and military violence and harassment, attacks in and around school, and ongoing Israeli military operations are most frequently experienced by learners. This trend, coupled with the fact that improvements in well-being were most marked in these more vulnerable schools during school closures, suggests that unfortunately, attending school in person is a risk factor for many young children throughout the West Bank.

In Gaza, returning to school fully has not led to improvements in well-being. When students initially returned to school in 2021, they experienced a renewed sense of optimism and connection to those outside the home. Unfortunately, the May 2021 escalation with Israel significantly eroded this sentiment and again trapped students in their homes and with increased insecurity over all aspects of their lives. Hence well-being outcomes amongst young people—in terms of their self-regulation skills, connectedness to caring adults in the home, their sense of safety, and hope for the future—remain concerningly low and in need of wide-scale attention and support.

Additionally, these shifts in well-being have a clear gendered component to them. In West Bank, females are consistently more positive about most aspects of their well-being than their male counterparts. In Gaza, while this was true in 2019, by 2022 this situation has shifted markedly, with females having lower well-being outcomes than

their male counterparts, barring the dimension of connectedness with caring adults where females remain higher than males.

Importantly, these findings suggests that educational vulnerability should be assessed through a deeper investigation of the specific nature of risk factors impacting on learners (and educational personnel) and how individual, household and community level conditions interact to lead to improved/worsened educational outcomes. In Gaza, for instance, a worsening economic, social and political conditions have eroded the capacity for individuals and households to withstand the impacts of the pandemic and recent escalations on children's well-being. Vulnerability was found to be an evolving and complex phenomena—and best understood by measuring learning outcomes of interest—rather than gauging it on access-related constraints alone.

Lastly, in terms of teachers' well-being, there are two areas of concern at present. One is teachers' sense of professional worth—where sizeable numbers of teachers report feeling overwhelmed by their current workload and lacking the motivation to remain in the profession. The other, particularly in West Bank, is teachers' sense of safety in and around schools. A sizeable number of teachers in West Bank report feeling unsafe in around their school, and lacking confidence that if they report these issues they will be sufficiently addressed.

These findings lead to the following key recommendations:

1. There remains an ongoing need to address the impacts of the pandemic on learning and well-being. Psychosocial support and social emotional learning opportunities are most acutely needed across the Gaza Strip. This is likely a matter that needs to be imbued across all areas of the curriculum and with the engagement and involvement of caregivers.

2. In West Bank attention should be given towards restoring and strengthening the sense of safety and security students (and teachers) feel towards both reaching school and being in school. Strengthening protective access measures (including local and international advocacy toward protecting facilities, students and staff from attack), while concurrently addressing some of the other issues which might undermine students' sense of safety in school (violence, bullying) are critical needs at present. In all these efforts, a more gender responsive approach to programmatic efforts is needed.

3. Measuring and then responding to educational vulnerability needs to shift towards regularly assessing and measuring the outcomes of interest for the education sector in Palestine: learning and well-being. Schools where these outcomes are lowest compared to others should be those deemed more vulnerable and provided tailored support. Such analysis needs to be sufficiently disaggregated by location, gender, age of students, disability status, to truly understand where needs are highest.

4. Attention needs to be given to strengthening teachers' professional worth, through both improved working conditions (increased salaries and reduction in curriculum demands), but also better ongoing support on managing stress and workload constraints.

5. Efforts should be directed towards strengthening the capacity of the education system to deliver learning and well-being programmes to learners using distance/remote learning measures, given that disruptions due to ongoing escalations in conflict, teachers' strikes, and other unforeseen events are likely to continue in Palestine. Learning continuity and a maintenance of connections to peers and adults outside the home environment can act as an important protective factor in times of heightened adversity.

Palestinian student in front of her house in the Zaytoun neighborhood, East of Gaza, in July 2021.
Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Introduction

Learning on the Margins has been a four-year research study conducted by the University of Auckland (UoA) and the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) with the support of the European Civilian Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations office (ECHO). The research has focussed around four main objectives:

1. To understand how educational vulnerability is currently understood and measured by a range of stakeholders across the occupied Palestinian Territories (oPT);

2. To explore the interrelationship between the predominant definition of educational vulnerability and student and teacher well-being outcomes, and test the assumption that there is a relationship between these;

3. To investigate how student and teacher well-being outcomes have shifted over successive academic years (four years for students, two years for teachers), particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

4. As part of Objectives 2 and 3, develop a set of tools to measure well-being outcomes for both these groups, and which can continue to be used to assess school-level vulnerability from an outcome-based perspective.

This report summarises what has been found and produced in relation to the above objectives. It begins by briefly outlining the background and context for this report, which follows on an earlier one published in 2021 from the first stage of the research. Following this, the methodology by which each of the objectives was pursued is also described. The remainder of the report then presents key findings—and specifically how student and teacher well-being have changed over successive years, as well as whether this is sufficiently reflected in current measures of educational vulnerability—before making recommendations on ways forward.

School social worker leads a Psychosocial support class at Beita Mixed Elementary School, West Bank, in September 2022. Photo: Ahmad Al-Bazz/NRC

Background and context for this research

Why is it important to understand educational vulnerability?

More than five decades of occupation of the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and fifteen years of a siege imposed on Gaza have led to ever-increasing humanitarian needs across Palestine. In the education sector, this has traditionally led to responses by humanitarian actors which target learners and school communities facing the greatest barriers accessing schooling.[1] This is often related to restrictions in mobility, distance to schooling, exposure to violence to/from/in school, or the active denial or removal of educational services due to the ongoing occupation. In Palestine, these issues are often locational in nature, with them being most acute in Area C, Hebron H2, East Jerusalem, and at times of violent escalation, communities across the Gaza Strip. This approach to targeting assumes that locational-based factors are the most critical determinate for identifying the most vulnerable learners.

Yet, international research suggests that the interrelationship between risk, vulnerability and resilience is not linear, but rather multifaceted, in conflict-affected contexts.[2] Educational vulnerabilities and the ensuing marginalisation it produces, are often a combination of group-based, poverty-related, location-specific and individual factors which manifest themselves in intersectional ways.[3] In Palestine specifically, this appears to be recognised in development-focussed programming; but humanitarian responses remain largely focussed on assessing risks and vulnerabilities quite narrowly (as specified above), and potentially with too little coherence with coordination across the humanitarian-development nexus to addressing systemic inequalities, protection needs, and group and poverty-related patterns of marginalisation.[4]

This is a product of decision-making of service providers and implementing partners being constrained at present by several factors. This includes: (1) a lack of consistent and up-to-date information of risk factors facing schools and learners; (2) insufficient capacity and time for analyses; and (3) inadequate resourcing for the education sector which has unfortunately created a "zero-sum" game in a context where the needs are chronic and multi-faceted. This has led to responses which may not fully be informed by the situation at hand.

In sum, the realities of a protracted crisis on the degradation of individual, school and community resilience need to be better understood, and the impacts on well-being and learning identified.[5] For Palestine specifically, this is even more important given the role of education as an important source of empowerment, and a source of security, hope and key foundation for a future Palestinian state.[6] There is a critical need to assess, monitor and track education vulnerability from the standpoint of outcomes rather than inputs, with greatest attention given to those whose learning and well-being outcomes are impacted by a certain constellation of risk factors.[7] A starting point for this is to understand if access-related constraints to education do in fact have an impact on educational outcomes: in this case student and teacher well-being.

Why now? Pandemic coupled with other shocks and stressors

Globally, the international community has already voiced significant concern about how the harmful effects of the pandemic will not be distributed equally, and will be most damaging for children under conditions of poverty, conflict and displacement.[8] In Palestine where COVID-19 exists alongside a range of long-range stressors that differentially impact various segments of the population—based on location, household SES, disability status, gender, and age to name a few—there is significant concern that the vulnerability of certain groups of learners will be exacerbated by COVID-19.

In terms of direct impacts of the pandemic, schools faced successive periods of school closure and reopening across two academic years: 2020-21 and 2021-2022 as per Figure 1 below.
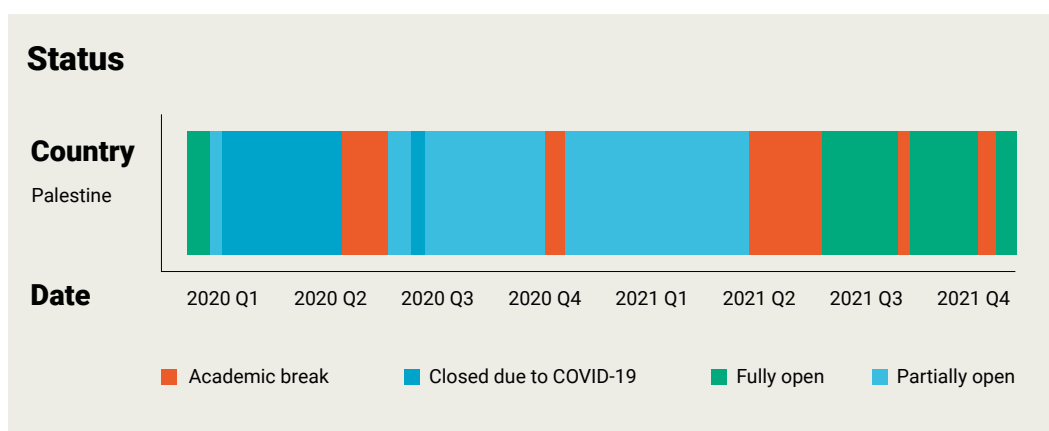
Figure 1: Educational disruption in Palestine between 2020-22. Source: https://covid19.uis. unesco.org/global-monitoring-school-closures-covid19/country-dashboard/

Following a short closure of all educational facilities at the outset of the pandemic in March 2020, schools were reopened across West Bank and Gaza, only to be progressively closed again in late 2020 as a resurgence of the pandemic led to increasing rates of community transmission firstly in Gaza and then across the West Bank. Data from UNESCO-UIS indicates schools were closed for a total of 17 weeks, and partially reopen for a period of 43 weeks across the 2020-2022 academic years.[9] While distance learning, using a range of technologies and approaches were used across the oPT to support learning continuity, learners and households were able to engage with, and effectively participate in such opportunities to varying degrees. For households without reliable internet or electricity supplies, or where access to devices (mobile phones with data or computers with internet connectivity) was constrained or non-existent, participation rates in distance learning were found to be significantly lower.[10] This was compounded by the insufficient capacity of teachers and schools to support online instruction—leading to a perception in a sizeable proportion of households that what was being taught online was insufficient, irrelevant, or inappropriate to the needs of learners.[11]

Indirectly, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated pre-existing stressors in Palestinian society which then impact on educational access and outcomes. COVID-19 restrictions and closures have led to a loss of employment for many Palestinians, compounding economic vulnerability and eroding resilience.[12] This has also led to higher levels of food insecurity, particularly in Gaza, and increased levels of anxiety and stress within households across Palestine.[13] Already high rates of violence against

children prior to the pandemic increased during lockdown periods, as families (often under increasing duress) spent large amounts of time confined to the home environment.[14]

Despite this evidence base, most of the research on COVID-19 impacts has been based on assessments done at a single point, most frequently at the outset of the pandemic. As of now, there is no way of knowing what the longer-term impacts of COVID-19 will be on students' learning and well-being outcomes. There is some evidence to suggest that in Palestine, as in many other contexts, the pandemic will evolve from a short-term shock to a long-term stressor as the economic and social vulnerabilities which COVID exacerbated are unable to be immediately rectified. Globally, evidence suggests that in addition to concerns around learning loss, millions of children have failed to return to school following extended school closures.[15] A World Bank report identifies that a combination of being out of school and facing a loss of family livelihoods may leave girls, persons with disabilities, and other marginalised groups increasing vulnerable from an educational access, retention and learning standpoint for years to come.[16]

A critical dimension of whether learners will be able to effectively "catch up" on learning lost and remain in school relies on the degree to which their well-being is both attended to and strengthened in the aftermath of the coronavirus pandemic. Evidence suggests that when children face higher levels of anxiety, frustration and stress, it can lead to negative coping mechanisms, such as lower attendance and participation in schooling.[17] The first stage of the *Learning on the Margins* research identified that in Gaza, approximately 30% of parents/caregivers report their children as exhibiting greater anti-social behaviour (bullying, aggression, violence, anger) as a result of the pandemic; and that these same children are reported to be two times less likely to be engaged in any form of remote/distance learning.[18]

Educational personnel will play a key role now and into the future in effectively re-engaging students in the learning process and supporting their well-being. Yet, teachers' well-being has suffered as well in the pandemic due to the personal and professional stresses faced with recurrent school closures alongside the need to ensure the safety, health and welfare of themselves and their own families. There is concern that globally, teachers are returning to school with increased anxieties which are likely to impact their own job satisfaction and work-related stress.[19] Additionally, teachers have faced the immense challenge of identifying how to engage learners remotely and in blended approaches, often without adequate levels of support and supervision.[20] Hence, questions remain about how effective educational personnel will be in addressing students and well-being needs following prolonged pandemic related disruptions.

Finally, while attacks on education temporarily declined in 2020 during COVID-19 lockdowns, the subsequent and gradual return to in-person learning from 2021 onwards has seen a return to previously high rates of violence in and around school facilities. These forms of attacks in West Bank include armed clashes near schools, the use of teargas or other weapons around schools, search and arrest operations; raids checkpoints or other restrictions on movement near schools; settler violence affecting schools and personnel and the arrest and intimidation of school children and teachers. In the past two years, several schools in West Bank have also been demolished or issued stop-work orders, limiting or eliminating access to schools for thousands of learners. In Gaza, the May 2021 conflict between Israeli security forces and Palestinian armed groups was the most acute escalation since 2014 and resulted in 24% of public, private and UNRWA schools being damaged. Beyond this, remnants of unexploded ordinances from the 2021 escalation present an ongoing risk to learners near schools in areas where air-launched explosives were used.[21] In

2022, violence in parts of West Bank has flared up, due to a rapid expansion of Israeli settlements, a sharp rise in Israeli military raids, and Palestinian attacks. This has led to 2022 being the deadliest year for children in more than 15 years with 34 children having lost their lives as of November 2022.[22]

Addressing and responding to threats to the education system and building on existing assets and strengths of the system is a critical element of maintaining a future-focus for Palestinian society.[23] At this juncture, it is vital to understand who is being impacted most acutely by these events of recent years, and why. This study identifies, from an analysis of well-being outcomes, both how well designations of schools as more/less vulnerable in 2019 captures those whose well-being outcomes are poorest, as well as how these well-being outcomes have changed in the past four years by the events and conditions detailed above.

Palestinian student in front of her house in the Shejaya neighborhood, in East of Gaza, in April 2021.
Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Methodology

This section details the methodology for each of the objectives of the research.

Defining educational vulnerability and more and less vulnerable schools

The research process began in 2019 with a focus on exploring how educational vulnerability was being understood, assessed, and influencing programmatic interventions for the more vulnerable schools. This was carried out in several stages. Firstly, a desk-based review was carried out of both academic and grey literature[24] on concepts of vulnerability within the Palestinian context, as well as research specific to the education sector to understand the factors which are commonly depicted as putting it at increased risk to deleterious outcomes at present. This desk review helped to shape the development and design of an online questionnaire which was disseminated to the donor working group and the members of the Education Cluster (which includes the main education service providers, the Ministry of Education and UNRWA) in late 2019. The online questionnaire asked, in addition to basic information about the type of organisation the respondent works for, the type of programming they offer, and the locations they work in a total of five questions, including:

a. How the organisation currently understands or defines educational vulnerability in Palestine?

b. The top (five) risk factors which make specific schools and/or learners in Palestine more vulnerable than others.

c. The key (five) factors in the home, community or school that can mitigate some of the risks facing learners in accessing and completing their education in Palestine.

d. The types, frequency and quality of the data they are collecting and using to assess the vulnerability of learners, schools and/or communities across Palestine.

A total of 43 responses were received to the online survey, with representation of different perspectives including donors, INGOS, NGOS, and education service providers. This was followed with a small number of in-person interviews (9) with some of these respondents in late 2019.

Alongside this, consultations with stakeholders about which schools, communities and localities within Palestine they deem as more or less vulnerable occurred throughout 2019. Two workshops were held—one in Gaza and one in West Bank—in May 2019 to have education cluster partners, Ministry of Education and UNRWA officials and donors map out the localities which they identify as more vulnerable educationally in both locations.

What this initial work found was that in the education sector, **the prioritisation and targeting of schools for education in emergencies and/or humanitarian-focussed support in Palestine has largely been directed towards learners and school communities identified as most acutely impacted by the protracted conflict.**[25] Factors such as restrictions in mobility of students/staff due to checkpoints or security barriers, the distance students need to travel to reach school, exposure to and incidences of violence to/from/in school due to soldier or settler activity, or the active denial or removal of educational services due to the ongoing occupation are often those seen to make certain schools and communities more vulnerable than others. The result is that humanitarian support to the education sector has a long-

standing precedent for targeting some geographic areas over others with a clear focus on ensuring protective access: which in West Bank means Area C, Hebron H2 and East Jerusalem, and in Gaza, communities most prone to air and ground assaults during Israeli military operations.[26]

To then identify specific schools as more or less vulnerable within these geographic areas, two different approaches were used for Gaza and West Bank. In Gaza, findings of an Islamic Relief (2018) community vulnerability mapping study were used to identify specific vulnerable communities within a wider geographic zone. In the Islamic Relief study, overall community vulnerability was determined by collating data on economic, environmental, protection, education and health risk factors and creating a composite index at the community and municipality level across all governorates of Gaza Strip. The municipalities with high levels of *overall vulnerability* were Buraij, El Maghazi, Fukhari, Khan Younis and Shuka. Educational vulnerability—measured in each locality by a range of indicators including educational levels, availability of schools and kindergartens, access and distance to schools and kindergartens, average number of students per class, dropout rates, and the availability of services provided by NGOs—identified high levels of vulnerability for specific communities, but not for any specific municipality or governorate of Gaza Strip. Many of the same areas, identified through the May mapping exercise, were found to overlap with municipalities where at least one community in it was identified as highly vulnerable from the Islamic Relief study. This led to a final list of most vulnerable communities within Gaza, from which schools were then identified and selected (Table 1).

Region	List of Most Vulnerable Municipalities	List of less vulnerable municipalities
Rafah	Rafah	Al Nasar
	Shuka	
Khan Younes	Abasan Al Kabira	Qarara
	Khuza'a	
	Absan Al Jadida	Bani Suhaila
	Alfukhari	
Middle Area	Al Bureij Camp	Deir Al Balah
	Wadi Salqa	Nusierat
	Moghraqa	Al Mosadar
	Maghazi Camp	
	Zaweideh	
Gaza City	East of Gaza	Centre of Gaza City
North of Gaza	Beit Hanouna	Jabalia
	Beit Lehia	

Table 1: Most and least vulnerable communities in Gaza Strip based on sampling approach

In selecting the most vulnerable schools (MVS) within the municipalities or areas above, further data was used to make this selection. This included using an unpublished list of vulnerable schools produced by UNESCO following Operation Protective Edge which documented schools which had suffered major or minor damage. The use of this list, while acknowledged as somewhat outdated, is justified on

the basis that repair and rehabilitation of schools remains difficult in Gaza leading to longer-term reductions in the level and quality of access for learners attending these schools; as well as the fact that many of these schools are prone to suffering further damage in future air or ground operations. An additional list, produced by UNICEF, and which identifies school at greatest risk of future attack based on proximity to installations or sites which are likely to be attacked or destroyed in the event of future military action was also utilised.[27] Priority was given to selecting schools within the communities specified in Table 1 above which featured on both, or at least one of these two lists.

Less vulnerable schools (LVS) were taken from the same regions, but the **inverse criterion** was applied. It began by using the Islamic Relief study to identify municipalities where no single community within it was identified as highly vulnerable in respect to education. These "less vulnerable" municipalities are noted in Table 1 above. Within these municipalities, less vulnerable schools (LVS) were then selected ensuring that they did not feature on either UNESCO's list of schools damaged in Operation Protective Edge, or UNICEF's list of schools vulnerable to attacks.

Represented visually, MVS were identified based on their location at the intersection of all these circles, while LVS were those which sat completely outside any of these circles as Figure 2 suggests.
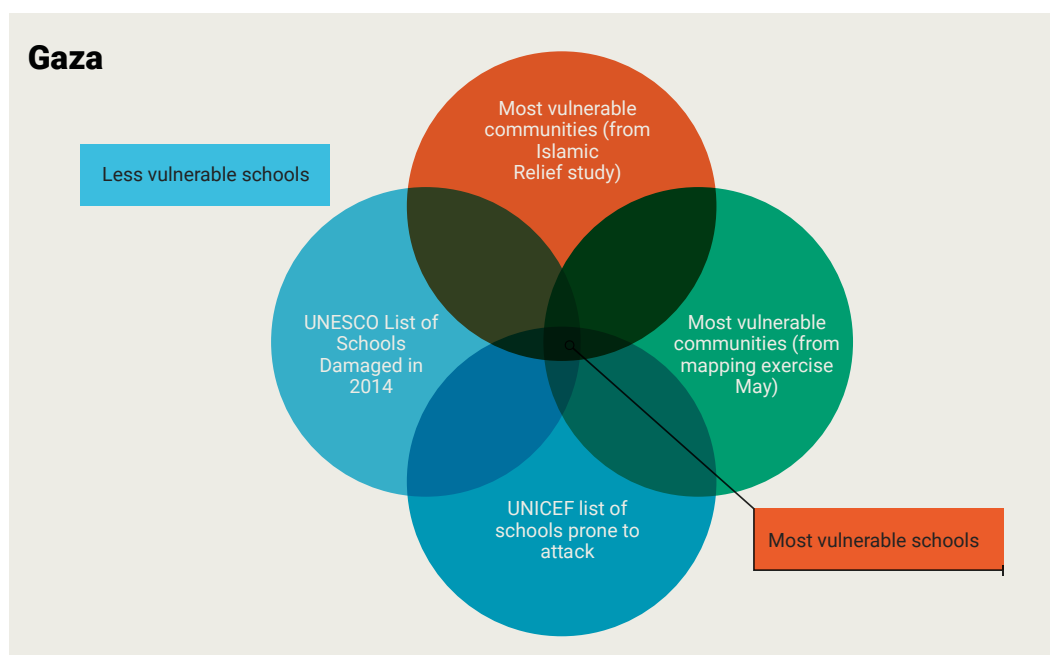
Figure 2: Approach to selecting MVS and LVS in Gaza

These final lists were then shared with Ministry of Education and UNWRA officials for review and comment before finalisation.

In West Bank, and specifically through workshop held in May 2019, there was strong consensus that education vulnerability was linked to specific geographic areas. Education stakeholders agreed that East Jerusalem and environs (suburbs) which were under Israeli control or were refugee camps were more vulnerable than other parts of the West Bank. The groups all also identified Hebron H2 as being highly vulnerable. Other areas where there was consensus amongst the groups included South Nabulus and Jenin (with specific focus on areas closest to the green line/seam zone). These areas were selected largely because of the fact that they are seen as the locales where students face obstacles to access because of settler violence on the way to/from school, a lack of relevant support for quality teaching and learning conditions

(due to either restrictions on what can be taught or schooling infrastructure), the need to pass through checkpoints or the separation wall on a regular basis, or are schools known to face frequent attacks in or around the building itself. Within these areas, the continued presence and occupation of lands in the West Bank by Israelis was seen to exacerbate vulnerability. Less vulnerable communities were identified as those where such conditions are not as prevalent—namely areas under full or partial control of Palestinian authorities in the West Bank. The final list of vulnerable and less vulnerable areas from which schools were then selected is noted in the table below.

Most vulnerable	Less vulnerable
Jenin (areas under full control of Israeli civil administration)	Jenin (areas under full or partial Palestinian administration)
Hebron H2	Hebron H1 (North Hebron)
South Nablus	Nablus City (areas under full or partial Palestinian administration)
East Jerusalem	Ramallah City
Jerusalem suburbs (areas under full control of Israeli civil administration and refugee camps)	Jerusalem suburbs (areas under full or partial Palestinian administration, barring refugee camps)

Table 2: Most and least vulnerable communities in West Bank based on mapping workshop and other data

For the purposes of this study, the starting point to identify the most vulnerable schools within these more vulnerable areas was to use the Vulnerability School Matrix (VSM), which has been developed by the Ministry of Education and the Education Cluster and is updated on an annual basis. In assessing the relative vulnerability of schools in fully Israeli-controlled parts of the West Bank, the main criteria used are the physical location of the school, the frequency or prevalence of violations by Israeli settlers or the military, the presence of roadblocks, gates or checkpoints in close proximity to the school, the condition of school infrastructure as well as the condition of the roads/infrastructure around the school.[28]

The limitation of the VSM, however, is that it does not include any UNRWA schools. However, in 2019-20 Education Cannot Wait (ECW) undertook a baseline needs analysis as part of the Multiyear Resilience Programme (MYRP) for Palestine. The analysis identified 15 UNWRA schools in need of support under the MYRP, owing to their perceived higher vulnerability compared to other UNWRA schools. For the purposes of this research, all MoE schools noted in 2019 VSM as being of highest vulnerability (category 1) along with the 15 UNWRA schools from the ECW list for West Bank were considered for inclusion in the potential sample of MVS—in so far as they were also in localities noted as highly vulnerable as specified in the table above.

In selecting LVS, the aim was to first identify schools where it is believed these same access-related constraints related to the conflict are less pronounced. At the same time, it was recognised that there was a need, as much as possible, to select geographic locations in closest proximity to the MVS for the sake of comparison. For this reason, comparison LVS were selected based on them being in similar geographic areas, but
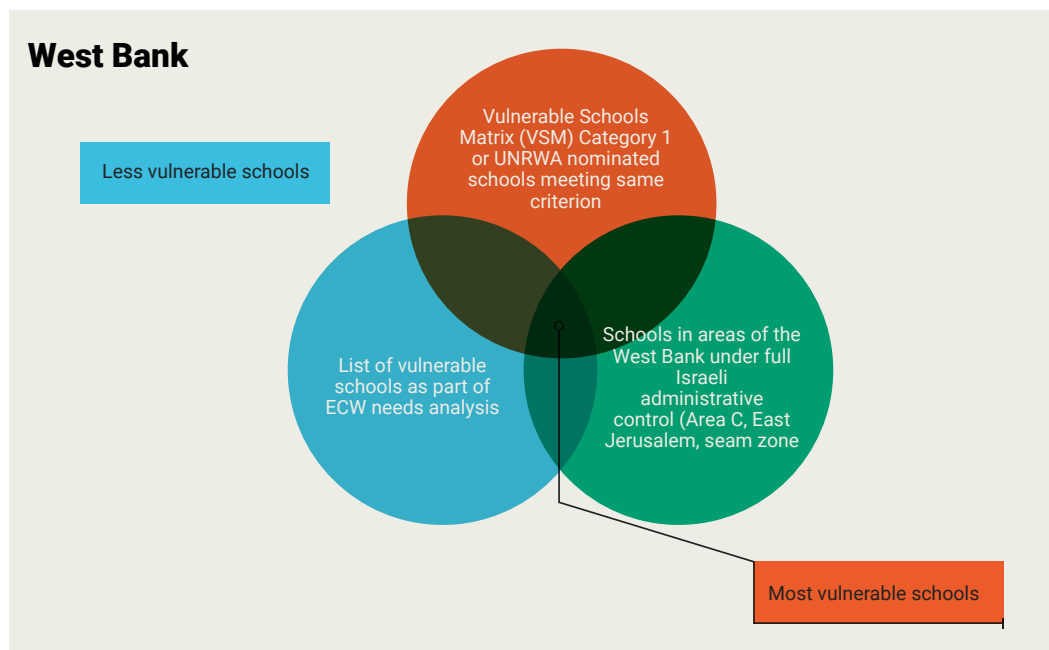
Figure 3: Approach to selecting MVS and LVS in West Bank

Tools to capture student and teacher well-being

As part of its regular cycle of programme monitoring, NRC collects baseline data on students' self-perceived psychosocial wellbeing at the start of each academic year, and again at the end of its intervention (end of the academic year). Data is collected using a research validated instrument developed by NRC in collaboration with its international research partner, the University of Tromsø. The tool, known as the Student Learning in Emergencies Checklist (SLEC) is a self-report survey that is designed to measure students' sense of safety, self-regulation, self-efficacy, social support (connectedness), academic functioning, and feelings of hope.[29] It is intended to provide data for program monitoring and evaluation purposes. The initial tool consisted of 21 items, but was later expanded to 26 items to increase focus on academic functioning.[30] Typically the SLEC is administered either by NRC Education Officers or by classroom teachers who are trained by NRC Education Officers on how to administer the tool.

At the outset of the 2020-21 academic year, NRC country offices across the Middle East decided to use a modified version of the SLEC with just nine items (SLEC 9) given that many of the statements on the SLEC-21/26 relate to supports students receive in school. Given that students were not attending school in person, these statements did not have relevance. The nine items asked were deemed relevant to students' learning and well-being, irrespective of whether they were at school or at home. For the purposes of comparison responses across all four years, only the nine statements from the SLEC 9 were used in analysis, despite data from the SLEC 21 being available in 2019 and 2022.[31] While the SLEC 21 consists of several distinct subscales to capture different dimensions of well-being, the SLEC 9 was designed to be reported against individual items (questions). However, the research team identified that a composite well-being score which averages the scores to student responses across all nine items had sufficient reliability and consistency to be used for research purposes.[32]

Measuring and capturing teacher well-being within NRC is a more recent priority/ undertaking. It began with NRC's release of a *Teachers and Caregivers Well-Being*

Framework in 2021, recognising the important role these two groups play in providing a supportive network for children's well-being. Within this, the framework articulates four dimensions of what constitutes teachers' well-being based on global evidence. These are: job stress and burnout, job satisfaction, professional self-efficacy, and social emotional competence. As part of prior research the University of Auckland carried out in Jordan, a survey was developed to capture these elements of teacher well-being but were further broken down into several sub-scales based on using internationally validated tools and measures. The survey developed in Jordan was research validated and tested and found to be sufficiently reliable for the purposes of research.

In discussion with the NRC Palestine education team, the survey items from the Jordan survey were reviewed and adapted to ensure suitability to the needs of the Palestine context. This resulted in the addition of a set of specific items related to safety, both within the school environment and for teaching staff on their way to/from school. Table 3 below summarises the number of items and scales which formed part of the teacher survey used in Palestine. It is against these scales (rather than individual items) that results are reported.[33]

Teacher survey scales	Number of items	Summary
Use of technology	3	Capacity which teachers feel to utilise software and hardware for online instruction
School leadership	3	Perceived level of professional support teachers feel they receive from their principal/supervisor
Engage students	4	Perceived capacity which teachers have to motivate students with varying levels of engagement/interest in learning
School community	4	Perceived level of support teachers feel they receive from their peers
Professional self-efficacy	6	Capacity to support students' well-being as well as use a range of instructional techniques and approaches with students
Professional worth	7	Perceptions about satisfaction with their work as a teacher, as well as the degree to which they can balance competing demands on their time, and achieve their dreams and ambitions for the future (managing burnout and stress)
Safety	4	Degree to which teachers feel safe in and around the school environs
Hope	4	Perceived capacity to meet goals and priorities for oneself in the future based on current circumstances

Table 3: Summary of subscales (constructs) used to analyse teacher well-being

Analysing student and teacher well-being over successive years and its association to school-level vulnerability

Given that the research sought to understand whether and how students' well-being had been affected by COVID-19 and other factors in Palestine, the research design only used pre-intervention data from successive groups of students in the sample of schools. The reason to use pre-intervention (beginning of academic year) data each year was to eliminate any possible influence/effect the BLP intervention had on students' well-being. Making this decision, however, meant that *the sample did not consist of the same students from year to year,* but rather students with the same demographics from within the same school. A total of 18 schools are included from Gaza and 20 schools are from West Bank.[34]

Students were matched in analysis by two key demographics within each school (gender and grade level bands), as these were both factors which also influence on well-being independent of year and vulnerability status of school. Additionally, across schools, there was an aim to ensure the overall sample was matched in terms of number of learners in more and less vulnerable schools, crossed with gender and grade level, noting again that school vulnerability status coupled with these factors (particularly gender) is also statistically significant on its own. Prior to comparing analysis between years, statistical tests (Chi square) were run of the differences in demographic make-up of students from year to year to ensure that any notable differences in well-being outcomes were not attributable to these demographic variations within the sample.[35]

In Gaza, for example, data from 800 students across the same 20 schools was provided to the University of Auckland for analysis each year. Of those, a total of 680 students' data was able to be matched to account for variances in the key demographic factors noted above. The breakdown of the Gaza by other demographics is noted in Table 4 below.

Location	Female	Male	Grade 5-6	Grade 7-10	MVS	LVS
Gaza	410	229	310	388	472	167

Table 4: Summary of Gaza student sample 2019-2022 by key demographics

In West Bank the number of students from whom data was available varied from year to year. In 2019, data was available from 621 students; in 2020, 691 students; in 2021, 579 students; and in 2022, 620 students. Following matching by key demographics, it was possibly to use data from 390 students in each of the four years. The demographics of that sample is indicated in Table 5 below.

Location	Female	Male	Grade 4-5	Grade 6-8	Grade 9-10	MVS	LVS
West Bank	224	166	132	180	78	150	240

Table 5: Summary of matched West Bank student sample 2019-2022 by key demographics

In both 2021 and 2022, sampling involved targeting an equivalent number of teachers in all schools, irrespective of the size of the school. In Gaza, this was 15 teachers/school in 2021, and 5 teachers/school in 2022. In West Bank, a smaller number of teachers in each year (5/school) were sought. For a range of reasons, including

teachers' strikes, high non-completion rates in certain schools (particularly when administered remotely), and localised closures of schools due to military operations in a couple West Bank locations, this target was not always achieved. The final sample of teachers reached is summarised in Table 6 below, broken down by key demographics of interest. The teacher sample in 2022 is much smaller than in 2021 in both locations, but particularly for Gaza. Despite this, and to ensure comparability, chi square tests were run to assess if differences in proportions of teachers within each demographic group were statistically significant or not. Only in the case of West Bank was this the case for teachers being trained/untrained, and hence this could no longer be explored as a demographic factor influencing well-being outcomes across the two years for West Bank only. What the data indicates is that in both Gaza and West Bank, a large majority of teachers are female. Most are relatively experienced (5 or more years), and about half of the sampled teachers have taken part in some form of BLP training, barring West Bank where in 2022 nearly 75% had been part of this training.

Category	Characteristic	Gaza		West Bank	
		2021	2022	2021	2022
Gender	Female	178	64	66	58
	Male	118	45	28	22
Teaching years	4 or less years	74	22	22	9
	5-9 years	47	15	24	25
	10 or more years	175	72	48	46
BLP training	No	161	54	49	13
	Yes	135	55	45	67
MVS	No	91	32	49	39
	Yes	205	77	45	41
	Total	296	109	94	80

Table 6: Summary of teacher respondents (Gaza and West Bank) 2021and 2022

Once teacher and student datasets were cleaned and student samples between years matched to ensure sufficient comparability by key demographics, mean scores to individual items on the SLEC-9 student survey, an overall student well-being composite mean score, and mean scores on the teacher well-being subscales were calculated. To assess if any differences in means were statistically significant between subpopulations of students or teachers within a specific year (i.e. by gender, age, location), as well as between years, multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) analysis was conducted. Where statistically significant differences were noted in mean scores, further descriptive statistics detailing the percentages of students or teachers agreeing or strongly agreeing with specific items were generated. The findings below only discuss differences in means and percentages which are statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), meaning that there is 95% certainty that these differences are not due to chance alone.

Validating and triangulating analysis and conclusions reached

Throughout the research process, a key aim has been to ensure that conclusions and findings reached can be explained, triangulated and/or validated through other forms of data. From the outset of the research in 2019, stakeholders from the wider education community in Palestine played an important role in refining and validating the research design as well as agreeing on the criterion by which schools would be identified to be more or less vulnerable within this design. Later, when the first round of analysis was completed in early 2021, an extraordinary meeting of the Education Cluster was hosted by NRC to share the findings and allow stakeholders to validate or question conclusions reached. In late 2022, NRC hosted an additional meeting for interested Education Cluster partners/stakeholders, alongside separate meetings with MoE officials in Gaza and West Bank to discuss the research findings. These meetings served as opportunities to validate and refine conclusions reached, and for these stakeholders to provide additional insight into why the data depicts the story it does. It is from these discussions that some of the recommendations from this research have been generated.

Beyond this, in 2020 NRC administered an open-ended qualitative survey over the phone, to understand from the parents/caregivers' views on whether or not their children were participating in e-learning activities, the challenges to participating in these e-learning activities, and whether and how their child's behaviour had changed during the period of school closure. The surveys were conducted in August-October 2020 in both West Bank and Gaza. These data were also analysed and included in the first *Learning in the Margins* report, but where key findings still have relevance—particularly in terms of the impacts of COVID-19 on student learning and engagement—they are referenced again in this report.

Lastly, focus group discussions were held with students and teachers in a small number of the schools from which well-being data was collected under the *Learning on the Margins* research in November 2022. Three schools in Gaza (two in Rafah, one in Khan Younes) and two schools in West Bank (one in Hebron, one in Jerusalem Suburbs) were visited by the lead researcher from University of Auckland, alongside colleagues from NRC. On average approximately eight students and six teachers participated in separate focus groups in each school. The aim of these focus groups was to allow students and teachers to identify how specific events over the past four years—specifically the COVID-19 pandemic, escalations of conflict, the return to school process following COVID-19—had affected learning and well-being in both school and outside of school. Students started by individually brainstorming both positive and negative aspects of discrete periods/blocks of time over the past years (pre COVID, during COVID, after COVID, and in Gaza, during the May 2021 escalation). From this, a group conversation was facilitated which then culminated in the generation of a story of students' collective experiences over the past four years. Excerpts from these stories are included throughout. With teachers, some of the key findings from the quantitative analysis were presented, with them then being given time to express: (a) whether they feel these data depict an accurate picture of student and teacher well-being and why; and (b) what might be the reasons for these trends. A similar approach was used with the school principal who was spoken to individually in all schools visited. Again, where relevant, quotes and examples from these conversations are included in the findings.

Limitations

There are a few key limitations to this study, most of which are the result of the project's need to pivot its design and focus when COVID-19 hit in March 2020. Initially, the research sought to explore the relationship between learning and well-being outcomes and vulnerability status in a wide range of schools across Gaza and Palestine, by collecting new data from a cross-section of students across most directorates. When plans to conduct this assessment were cancelled due to COVID-19, the research had to pivot to analysing data which NRC was collecting on student well-being as part of its implementation of the BLP. Hence, the sampling moved from being purposive and stratified based on several different criterion, to being opportunistic, and based on schools which NRC had student-level data for from 2019 and 2020 from the SLEC, and where data could be collected in 2021 and 2022 (for students and teachers). This does create some methodological challenges.

Firstly, the forms of analysis that could be done based for discrete subpopulations varied based on the sub-sample sizes. For instance, school-level analysis could not be done in West Bank because the number of students in each school was too small each year to trace over time. Rather in West Bank, the lowest level of analysis students could be grouped into was at a directorate level. In Gaza, on the other hand, directorate level comparisons were not possible as the sample of schools covered only two directorates (Rafah and Khan Younes) and the distribution of schools (and number of students in them) between these two directorates was not equivalent.

Secondly, and as described earlier, data was being collected from students at the outset of each year who went on to take part in NRC's Better Learning Programme (BLP). The assumption is that the intervention (the BLP) has a positive impact on students' well-being based on prior NRC evaluations and internal project monitoring. Therefore, it became necessary to exclude the intervention itself as a factor in any changes in student well-being status. Hence, data from the same students could not be collected annually. Instead, data was collected from a different group of pre-intervention students but based on similar demographic characteristics (specifically gender and age range) every year. The assumption made here was that within school differences are less of a factor than between school and directorate/vulnerability status differences. In most instances this appeared to be true, as the standard deviations, or range of responses, did not vary too significantly within most schools. Because of this need to match student demographics year after year, it did also mean that when no pre-intervention students were available in the same school with the same demographic characteristics, that schools' data had to be fully excluded from the four-year trend analysis. This further reduced the effective sample size for analysis as time went on.

Thirdly, because the SLEC was reduced to nine items only during COVID-19, it was not possible to cluster items into distinct constructs/factors as per the design of the initial SLEC tool. To do so, there would have needed to be a minimum of three items for each construct/factor which NRC sought to measure. As a result, most analysis was done on an item-by-item level, barring testing for relationships between variables which necessitated creating a single factor ("well-being"). This was not ideal given there are some distinct constructs being measured within the items that remained on the survey and the clustering of them together may not make sense conceptually/theoretically.

Fourthly, there were differences in how surveys were administered to students over time. In 2019, in Gaza and West Bank they were administered directly by NRC Education Officers. In 2020, due to the pandemic, NRC Education Officers needed to conduct these surveys via phone. In 2021, NRC Education Officers in Gaza collected

student responses in person, but in West Bank, the responsibility for administering the survey was managed by classroom teachers who had been trained by NRC Education Officers. In 2022, in both Gaza and West Bank, the survey was administered by classroom teachers. There is some chance that differences in how surveys were administered each year, as well as by whom, could have impacted on student responses.

Fifthly, data from teachers was sought in the same schools in which BLP data from students was already being collected. Sampling of teachers was opportunistic rather than purposeful and based on which teachers were able and willing to complete the survey in the timeframe required. This means that the overall sample of teachers, as well as the sample of teachers in each school is not necessarily representative of the demographics of the school or the population of teachers in Palestine. Additionally, the same teachers were not necessarily surveyed in each of the two years, but as indicated earlier, demographic data was matched to ensure there were not significant differences between the two distinct samples.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that unlike the student survey, where data is available independently for four different points in time, the teachers survey was collected only at two points, which were both following the most acute periods of COVID-19 restrictions. As a result, the research is unable to fully identify whether and how from the outset of the pandemic, there have been shifts, if any, in teacher well-being. This would have necessitated collecting the same data from 2019 onwards, similar to what was done with the students. Unfortunately, at that time, NRC did not collect any such data from teachers as part of its implementation of BLP.

Palestinian student during the distribution of tablets to support E-learning in schools, at the Directorate of Education, Gaza city, in April 2021. Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Palestinian student participating in the Youth Open Days, in Asdaa Entertainment City, Southern Gaza , in April 2022. Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Key findings

This section outlines key findings against the following research objectives:

1. To explore the interrelationship between the predominant definition of educational vulnerability and student and teacher well-being outcomes, and test the assumption that there is a relationship between these;
2. To investigate how student and teacher well-being outcomes have shifted over successive academic years (four years for students, two years for teachers), with focus on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing conflict;

Analysis of student well-being outcomes over the past four years indicate markedly different trends between West Bank and Gaza and are explored separately in the subsections below.

Trends in well-being: Gaza Strip

Trends in student well-being outcomes in Gaza

In Gaza, overall student well-being declined significantly in 2020 and 2021, compared to the previous year, and in 2022 remains significantly below where students started in 2019 as per Figure 4 below.
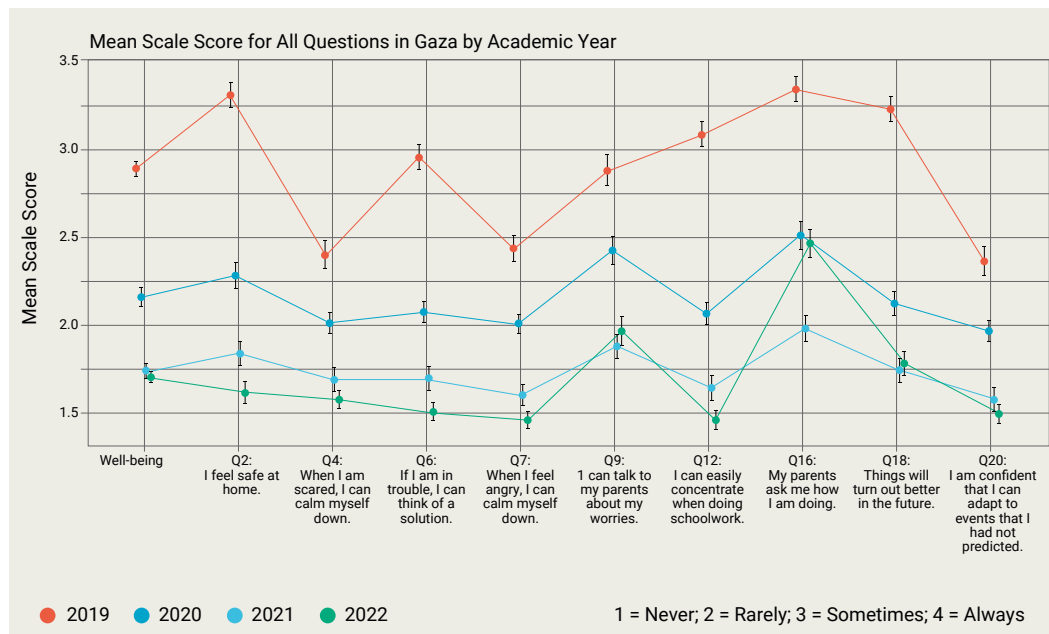
Figure 4: Well-being outcomes in Gaza 2019-2022

The magnitude of decline is both precipitous and alarming. For example, in 2019 the majority of students (81.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement *"I feel safe at home"*. By 2022, however, only a small minority (11.8%) agreed or strongly agreed with the same statement. Similar trends of agreement were noted to the other well-being statements, as indicated in Table 7 below.

Statement	2019	2020	2021	2022
Q2: I feel safe at home.	81.50%	37.70%	19.50%	12.50%
Q4: When I am scared, I can calm myself down.	47.80%	23.80%	14.30%	5.70%
Q6: If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution.	69.20%	26.60%	15%	7.80%
Q7: When I feel angry, I can calm myself down.	47.10%	21.60%	11%	6.10%
Q9: I can talk to my parents about my worries.	64.50%	43.90%	19.30%	26%
Q12: I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork.	76.40%	27.40%	13.80%	5.80%
Q16: My parents ask me how I am doing.	81.20%	46.10%	23.70%	43.20%
Q18: Things will turn out better in the future.	80.80%	29.50%	18.50%	17.40%
Q20: I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted.	44%	22.60%	12.60%	7.50%

Table 7: % of students in Gaza agreeing or strongly agreeing to well-being statements, 2019-2022

What these responses indicate is that students' capacity to regulate their own emotions and identify solutions to problems they face, retain a sense of hope for the future, focus on learning, and feel connected to their parents have all diminished significantly since 2019. The greatest declines occurred during the extended period of school closures in the 2020-21 academic year, coupled with the escalation in May 2021 which is then reflected in the 2021-22 academic year data.

There is also an important gendered dimension to this pattern of well-being decline in Gaza. As Figure 5 suggests, in 2019, girls had higher well-being scores than their male counterparts on all items on the survey, with most of these differences being statistically significant. In 2020, both girls and boys saw equivalent declines in their well-being, with girls maintaining higher well-being than boys in that period. By 2021, however, a very different situation emerged, with boys' well-being rebounding, but girls well-being continuing to decline. While girls' well-being stabilised in 2022,

it has not improved significantly over 2021, leading to a situation where **girls' well-being is now significantly lower across most items and overall than boys.**
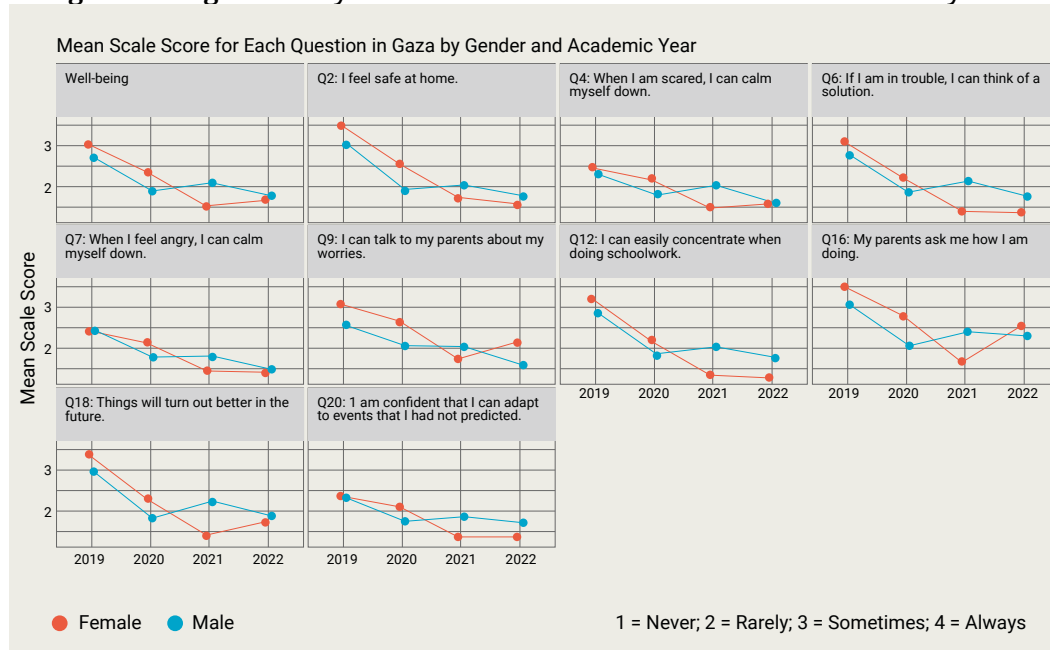
Figure 5: Well-being outcomes in Gaza 2019-2022, by gender

Two areas where these shifts are apparent is in terms of girls' and boys' sense of hopefulness, as well as their ability to manage uncertainty. In 2019, 86% of girls agreed or strongly agreed with the statement *"Things will turn out better in the future"*, while the same was true for 72% of boys. By 2022, though, only 15% of girls agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, while 23% of boys felt this way. Similarly, on the statement *"I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted"*, 47% of girls agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in 2019, while only 39% felt the same way at that time. By 2022, only 4% of girls agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, versus 14% of boys.

One area, however, where girls continue to score higher than boys, despite sizeable drops for both over the four years, is in regard to statements on parental connectedness (see Table 8 below).

Statement	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Q9: I can talk to my parents about my worries.	71.70%	53.80%	55%	27.20%	10.20%	32.90%	32.30%	13.30%
Q16: My parents ask me how I am doing.	85.80%	74.40%	57.50%	29.10%	6.70%	49.20%	45.90%	37.90%

Table 8: % of boys and girls who agree or strongly agree with statements on parental connectedness, 2019-2022

This is likely due to strong gendered norms across Palestine which do not always allow males to express their feelings and fears in the same way to their parents or

other adults that females can—irrespective of the fact that they do often share the same fears and worries.[36]

One pattern which did not shift across the four years, was a trend for well-being of students in the older grades (Grades 7-10) to be significantly higher than that of students in younger grades (Grades 5-6). While again, there have been declines in well-being across both groups in the period of 2019-2022, students in the older grades continue to fare better than their younger counterparts as per Figure 6 below.
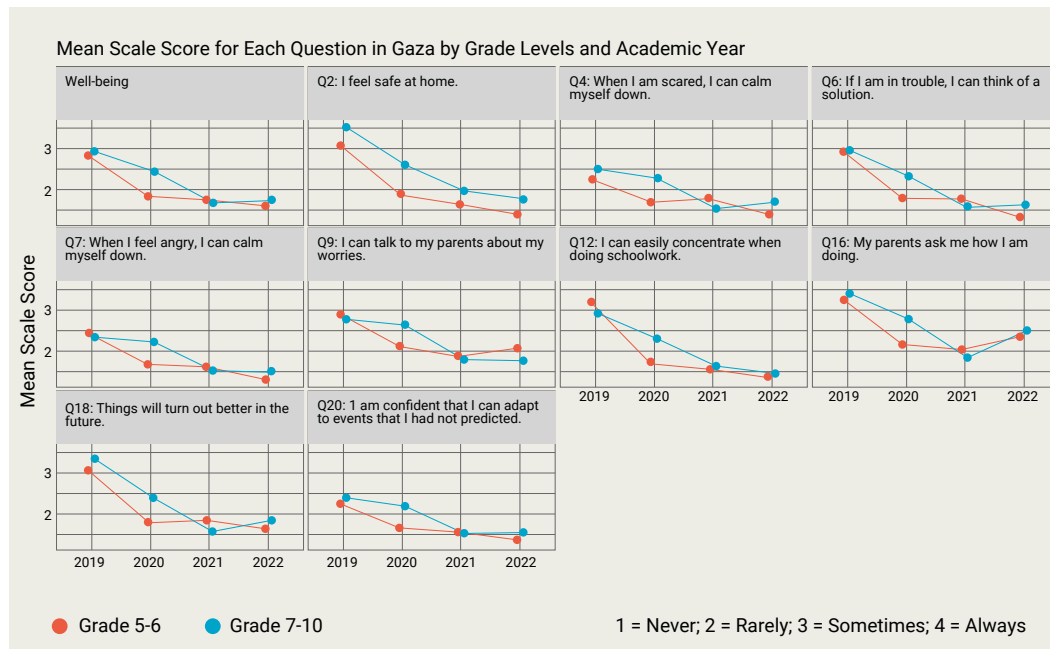
Figure 6: Well-being outcomes in Gaza 2019-2022, by grade level

What explains the significant decline in student well-being in Gaza?

A combination of worsening economic conditions, a lack of access to basic services in the home, increased social isolation, and violence in the home, made movement

Palestinian children playing at the NRC summer camp, Al-Buraq Elementary School, North of Gaza, in June 2021. Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

related restrictions, curfews and stay at home orders difficult for children and youth in Gaza.

Economically, COVID 19 markedly increased short-term unemployment and food insecurity in Gaza.[37] In a PCBS comprehensive household survey covering the first few months of the crisis (March-May), 52% of the households reported that the main income earner did not receive any wages during the lockdown period.[38] PCBS also noted that the income of 38% of Gaza households dropped by half or more throughout the pandemic.[39] The marked increase in short term unemployment, fall in income and increased food insecurity in Gaza also meant that during COVID-19 many more Palestinian households fell into poverty. The economic stress which COVID-19 created in many households was readily visible by students interviewed in focus group discussion.

> One group of students at a boys' school in Rafah described how, *"Our families could not go out of the house to work in the fields or daily construction. Neither could others access transportation to go out and collect the salaries for their jobs. Many of our families had to ration food and plan what we were going to eat for a whole month. Some of us took to growing food in our garden to support ourselves, and others of us relied on the assistance provided by the government during this time. We could see our parents were very stressed and we tried to help them best we could."* According to the principal from the same school, *"Students, particularly boys, were acutely aware of the economic strains facing their families. Basic needs were not being met, and it created stress and pressure on the boys."*

Additionally, access to basic services such as electricity, water and sanitation, already a problem pre-pandemic, grew worse in 2020. In May 2020, in response to the Israeli announcement to annex parts of West Bank, the PA rejected the transfer of tax revenues Israel collected on its behalf and stopped paying for Gaza's electricity. In August, after the deterioration of the security situation in Gaza, Israeli authorities limited the transfer of certain goods into Gaza through the Kerem Shalom crossing and stopped all fuel deliveries. By mid-August, the Gaza Power Plant had shut down completely, sharply reducing electricity provision in Gaza to a few hours per day. From NRC's own survey, **more than half of the parents/caregivers surveyed (57%) indicated that their child was not participating in e-learning in September 2020.** 50% of the school aged population in Gaza lack access to computer equipment, a reliable power supply and the internet. Additionally, it is estimated that only 30% of households in the Gaza Strip have internet, and these internet connections are often unreliable.[40] Regression analysis from the same survey indicates that **for households lacking internet in Gaza, they were 3x less likely to have a child participating in e-learning.** As school closures continued to be extended, this increased worries amongst such students that they were falling behind their peers in their schoolwork and would be unable to catch up on return.

> As one group of students at a school in Khan Younes described, *"We had to try to continue learning, but most of us did not have enough devices to learn on, and then we had no way to charge these or access the internet with the frequent electricity cuts. Despite our teachers trying to stay connected to us through Whatsapp and Messenger, we still couldn't understand many of the lessons we were supposed to learn... we grew more and more worried that we would be penalised for not being able to effectively engage online and lose marks."*

Across the board, teachers and principals in schools noted that a legacy of COVID-19 was that students had led to a loss or inability of students to attain basic foundational skills needed for further learning. It meant that teaching time was now compressed

towards first, catching students up with gaps in their knowledge, and then trying to teach the material required for a specific grade level. Yet despite these efforts, students felt that COVID-19 had, *"[made us feel] like we were behind in our learning"* which resulted in *"feeling much less confident to be able to succeed at school."*

Thirdly, for many young people in Gaza, being stuck home was often a restrictive social-emotional experience. In the context of the hierarchical Palestinian family unit where young people are constantly reminded of their inferior status within the family through various rules of conduct, Gazan youth feel frustrated with home confinement. Young Palestinian men are often restricted in their behaviours in the presence of their families and see time with friends as a space where they feel greater freedom and more "themselves".[41] During the time of the lockdown in Gaza, restrictions on movement led to young men feeling alienated and "trapped" at home.[42] Yet, boys were still given relatively more autonomy to leave the house than their female counterparts. One group of girls described how throughout the pandemic, *"For us as girls, we were also unable to go outside the home, unlike our brothers...we had no way to connect with our relatives and friends outside the home."* The social isolation, stress and anxiety of young women worsened under lockdown because they could not leave the house easily.[43] For many young Palestinian women, schools provide a space for them to establish social contacts and to practise their choice and agency, as well as a legitimate reason to leave home without the questioning and supervision of male adults.[44] Attending school is often key to girls' self-esteem, autonomy and future career development, and these elements of well-being and hope were especially affected by school closures.[45]

> As a group of girls in Rafah described, *"...school is where we get to spend time with our friends and teachers and have support from them. We can talk freely about our feelings and emotions which we can't always do at home. For us, school is an opportunity to get out of the home, to have freedom, and through learning imagine a better future."*

For these girls then, COVID-19 also led to a loss of freedom and increased social isolation. As one girl in the group described, *"we lost connections with everyone outside our homes."*

Additionally, in the context of COVID-19 where parental stress is likely to have escalated dramatically in overcrowded Gaza, boys are more likely to face harsh parenting practices and to deem their homes as unsafe. A 2017 study found, for example, that boys suffered from public humiliation as children and childhood violence more than girls.[46] During the pandemic, the number of Gazan children reported with signs of psychosocial distress, particularly among boys, increased significantly by 660% or 1,500 cases.[47]

This is compounded by the fact that Gazan households are often overcrowded and have multiple school-aged children, which means the households are at risk of higher maternal stress, less sleep per night and strained parent-child interactions.[48] Pre-pandemic, and based on recent MICS data, around 89% of Palestinian children have been subjected to psychological aggression and 74% to physical punishment in their homes.[49] In the midst of COVID, 22% of the Gazan households surveyed in a baseline household vulnerability assessment identified that domestic violence and neglect were a significant challenge in their household for their children.[50] A large proportion of children between the ages 1-14 in Gaza (31%) experienced violent child discipline[51], with boys being more likely to experience violence from family members. Confinement and movement and access restrictions have heightened parental stress and burnout, and put them at risk of problematic parenting behaviours, such as

corporal punishment.[52] The lack of safety in homes, appears to have a direct bearing on learning and well-being outcomes.

Teachers and school principals spoken to in Gaza acknowledged that violence in the home was a real phenomenon and exacerbated by the coronavirus.

One principal of a school in Rafah felt that the *"…psychological situation of students during COVID-19 was directly impacted by the state of parents' minds. Many parents were feeling a lot of stress and worry about their financial situation and health, and they were directing their anxieties and anger on children."* Another principal went onto note that the violence which had been directed towards children in the home was *"now being brought into the school"*, with an uptick in bullying, aggression and fighting amongst students in his school since 2021 when students returned to school.

This is not to suggest, however, that all children experience violence or felt unsafe at home. In each of the focus group discussions, students were able to identify positive aspects of movement-related restrictions during COVID-19, with the predominant one for many being that they spent more time with their immediate family.

One group of boys in Khan Younes described how, *"we got to spend time at home and with our family—particularly our older brothers and fathers who are normally always outside the home or busy with other things. Everyone was forced to spend time with each other, and we enjoyed this."*

One issue, described repeatedly by students in focus group conversations, was both the increased social stigma and anxiety caused by fear of contracting COVID-19, and the associated challenges of being in home isolation and receiving medical treatment if ill with the coronavirus.

As one group of girls in Khan Younes specified, *"When coronavirus arrived, we started to feel fear. There was a lot of anxiety about catching the virus, so we needed to wear masks all the time, and constantly practice good hygiene. We could no longer shake hands or get close to others. We grew fearful of catching the virus, not only because we could fall ill and make others sick, but also because there was a shame associated with families who contracted COVID-19."*

An early study from the Palestinian National Institute of Public Health found that in Gaza in particular, people were afraid of a person who had COVID-19, and that COVID-19 positive individuals were often rejected when others discovered their circumstance. Additionally, families also faced avoidance from the community and social stigma when someone in their household had tested positive.[53] This fear was found to be statistically correlated with increased rates of anxiety, depression and stress amongst the Palestinian population.[54]

Returning to school, then, was viewed favourably by many students in Gaza. But because COVID-19 was still prevalent in the community, and the fear of contracting the virus remained, there was also fear about returning to school. This coupled with the concern of already being behind in ones' learning, and then only attending school in person half of the time (due to COVID-related capacity restrictions in classrooms and other public spaces), meant that learning experiences were not as enriching as prior to the pandemic.

> A group of boys in Rafah described how, *"When we returned to school we felt hope again, a sense that our lives were returning to normal. At first, we were quite afraid of catching the coronavirus when we returned, but the school provided us with protective hygiene kits which made us feel safe. Returning to school gave us freedom from being trapped at home, even if we only returned to school three days a week. For some of us, three days a week was more than enough to go to school, but it also meant that the curriculum was condensed, and we lost opportunities for sports and recreation activities in the school."*

In April 2021, and due to rapidly increasing number of cases of COVID-19 in the community, schools were again fully shut in Gaza Strip and students returned to learning from home. Then in May 2021, tensions between Palestine and Israel escalated significantly and over an 11-day period led to large-scale Israeli airstrikes and tank shelling across many parts of the Gaza Strip. Even after a ceasefire was brokered, schools across Gaza Strip remained shut for the remainder of that academic year due to frequent electricity and internet cuts, damage to school infrastructure and difficulty in students accessing schools due to damaged streets and public infrastructure.[55] Both the intensity and scale of bombardment across Gaza Strip was unprecedented. At its height, nearly 113,000 people were internally displaced and sought shelter in UNRWA schools or with other family members. Of the 264 Palestinians killed, a quarter of these were children.[56]

The psychosocial impacts of this period of time were significant. UNICEF identified in July 2021 that 75% of children needed Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and community- and family-based MHPSS services.[57] A gender analysis conducted by the UN noted that boys and girls responded to this situation differently and faced distinct challenges. While girls remained in the home and relied on their hobbies or family for support, boys resorted to sleeping for long periods of time, playing online games or football on the streets. It was also noted that boys were expected to put a 'brave face' on their fears during the offensive, while girls more openly expressed their fears.[58] But both males and females interviewed in a separate rapid assessment conducted by UNFPA reported them as living under continuous fear and anxiety, experiencing sleeplessness and depression. Importantly, none of the respondents felt any sort of safety in the aftermath of the escalation, heightened insecurity, and increased desperation to flee the situation they found themselves in. Most saw no hope for the future of living in Gaza.[59]

These issues were repeated across all of the focus groups conducted in Gaza Strip, and explains why well-being continued to decline, particularly for girls, in the 2021-2022 academic year, which started in August 2021.

> One group of boys in Khan Younes described how, *"During the escalation we felt helpless to support others affected. Many of us questioned the future. We felt unprotected, particularly when children were being attacked, and wondered who was taking care for us. We could die any time and any moment. We didn't feel safe anywhere."*
>
> And a group of girls at another school discussed how, *"All our dreams for the future disappeared overnight, and many of us had to flee from our homes as the missiles flew around us. We had to leave behind all the beautiful clothes and foods we had prepared for Eid. Our parents tried to comfort us by telling us stories, hugging us, encouraging us to pray. They tried to make us feel safe even though we were very afraid."*

At the start of the 2022-2023 academic year and following over two years of disruptions to schooling by both the pandemic and the escalation, students returned with mixed emotions about this.

> A group of girls in Rafah described, "...we felt we were returning to our second home. We had an opportunity to connect with others and share our experiences of the challenges we had been through. Everything about school—waking up early, wearing our uniforms, doing our homework—were exciting again,"
>
> But they also noted that, "...we returned to school with a heavy heart because we remember all the losses, we have experienced over the past years both because of the escalation and COVID-19. These times have become a permanent memory in our minds, and it affects our concentration and capacity to learn until today."

In the end, teachers and principals felt that there has been a loss of both hope and a future focus amongst the young people they work with. Schooling no longer carries with it the same sense of empowerment or hope it provides for a better future. This then impacts on students' motivation for learning, and even their regular attendance at school, according to those spoken to across the three schools in Gaza. All of this is also demotivating to them, who feel that they are facing an uphill, and sometimes futile struggle against the scale of the crisis facing Gaza at present time. Despite this, as one teacher noted, *"we do our job in the best way we can"*, but as another principal identified fixing this situation requires, *"protect[ing] Gaza from war and stop[ping] the siege."* The legacy of these past years on students' well-being, as one group of boys described is that *"We remain afraid of the future, and not trusting it will bring us any more hope. We can't forget the events we have been through and feel insecure all the time."*

Trends in teacher well-being in Gaza

Teacher outcomes across the two years in which data were collected did not vary significantly from year to year across the various domains of well-being assessed (see Figure 7). While there was a small decline in most domains between 2021 and 2022, none of these were found to be significant.
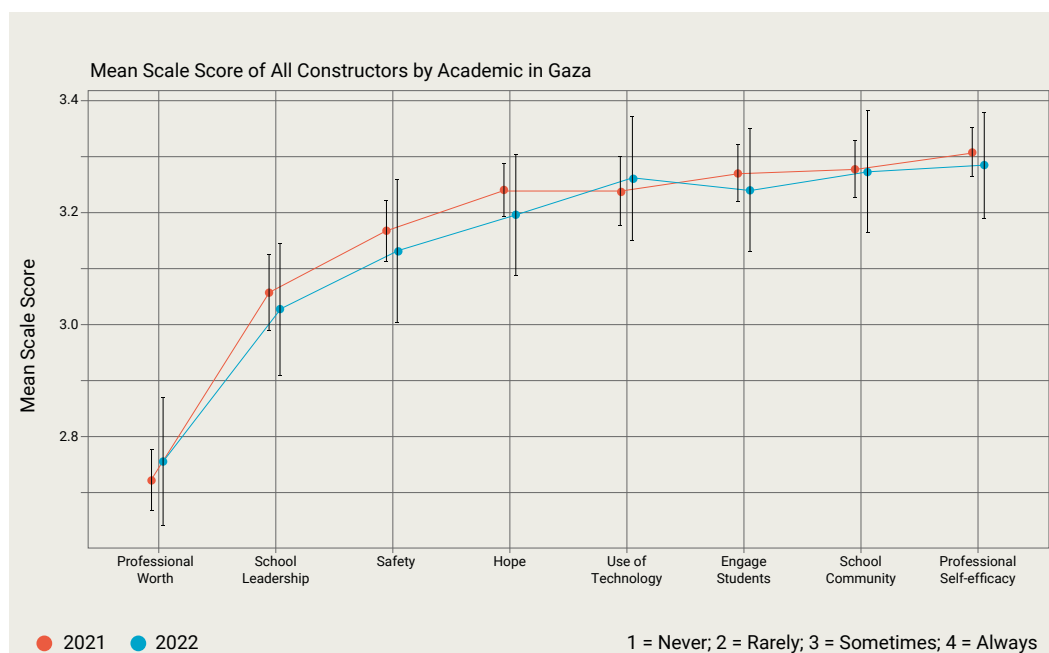

Figure 7: Mean scores on teacher well-being constructs in Gaza, 2021-2022

Of note, however, is that **teachers appear to be much more positive about aspects of their well-being than students in the same period**. The fact that the mean score for teachers under hope is around 3.2 (on a scale of 4, with 4 being strongly agree)

suggests that the majority of these professionals retain an optimistic view of the future, which is very different to students, as indicated previously.

The one area where teachers' well-being is less positive at present is their sense of professional worth. As per Table 9 below, large percentages of teachers feel their work is exhausting, though most would still choose to remain in the teaching profession.

Statements for professional worth	2021	2022
My work as a teacher is exhausting	79.1%	71.6%
I have enough energy for my family and friends after a day of teaching my students	66.9%	56.6%
I feel exhausted in the morning by the thought of another day at work	59.2%	50.5%
If I could decide again, I would still choose to work as a teacher	81.8%	74.0%
I regret that I decided to become a teacher	22.9%	18.9%
I feel proud of what I am able to achieve as a teacher with my students	95.2%	91.7%
I wonder whether it would have been better to choose another profession	46.2%	39.8%

Table 9: % of teachers in Gaza who agree or strongly agree with statements on professional worth, 2021-2022

It was also found that **teachers who had participated in NRC's trainings on the Better Learning Programme were generally more positive about their professional worth than those who had not been part of such training, particularly in 2022.**

Statements for professional worth based on training status	2021		2022	
	None	Yes	None	Yes
My work as a teacher is exhausting	77.5%	81.1%	79.6%	63.6%
I have enough energy for my family and friends after a day of teaching my students	67.3%	66.4%	46.2%	66.7%
I feel exhausted in the morning by the thought of another day at work	62.7%	55.0%	56.9%	44.4%
If I could decide again, I would still choose to work as a teacher	81.6%	82.0%	67.3%	80.8%
I regret that I decided to become a teacher	20.1%	26.1%	26.9%	11.1%
I feel proud of what I am able to achieve as a teacher with my students	93.0%	97.8%	90.7%	92.7%
I wonder whether it would have been better to choose another profession	44.0%	48.8%	45.1%	34.6%

Table 10: % of teachers in Gaza who agree or strongly agree with statements on professional worth based on whether they received BLP training or not, 2021-2022

For example in 2022, nearly 80% of teachers who had not been part of training found their work exhausting while this was only the case for approximately 63% of those who had been part of NRC's trainings.

Trends in well-being: West Bank

Student well-being trends in West Bank

In West Bank, COVID-19 related disruptions to education had the opposite impact on student well-being. **Across the two academic years where schools were shut or were only partially open (2020 and 2021), well-being outcomes improved significantly compared to 2019, and in some instances in 2021 over 2020**. As of 2022 though, after a period where schools had been fully reopened, there were some declines in well-being, particularly when compared to 2021 and in some instances to 2020. In many cases though, these declines are not yet statistically significant (see Figure 8 below).
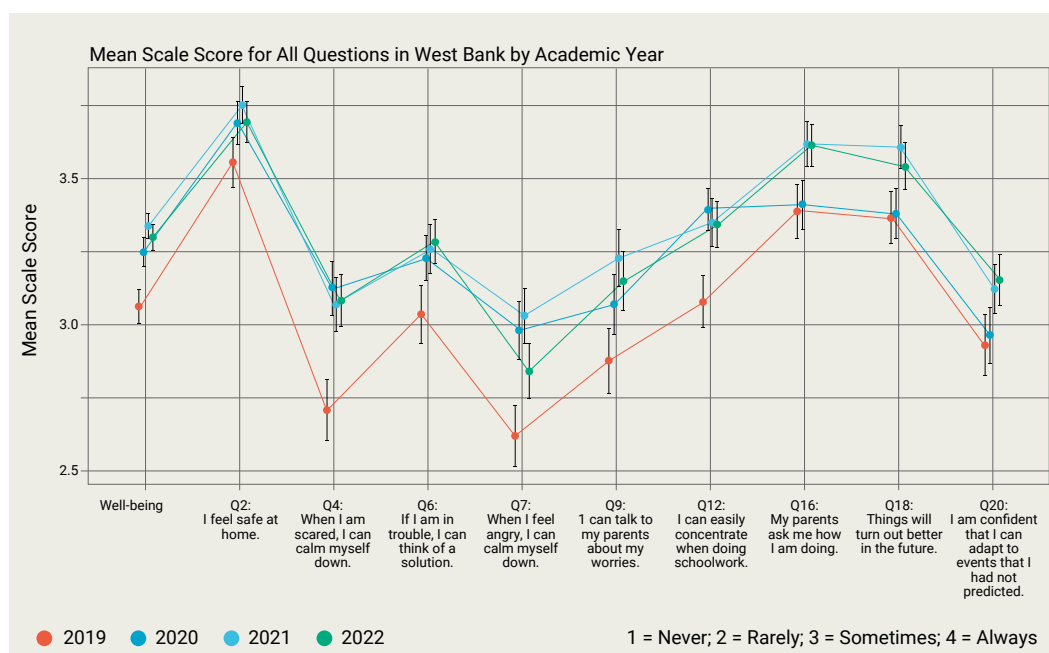
Figure 8: Well-being outcomes in West Bank 2019-2022

As per Table 11, the improvements are able notable in the percentages of students agreeing or strongly agreeing with each of the statements on the SLEC-9 survey from year to year. In some areas, the improvements were most marked between 2019 and the other years, while in other cases the most notable improvements appear to occur between 2020 and 2021.

Statement	2019	2020	2021	2022
Q2: I feel safe at home.	86.50%	91.80%	91.70%	90.20%
Q4: When I am scared, I can calm myself down.	62.20%	79.30%	76.80%	76.50%
Q6: If I am in trouble I can think of a solution.	72.80%	85.10%	83.60%	83.20%
Q7: When I feel angry, I can calm myself down.	57.50%	73%	73.30%	70%
Q9: I can talk to my parents about my worries.	64.10%	76.90%	77.60%	75%

Q12: I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork.	78.70%	88.90%	84.30%	86.80%
Q16: My parents ask me how I am doing.	85.70%	84.20%	88.40%	91.30%
Q18: Things will turn out better in the future.	84.90%	84.30%	89.90%	87.10%
Q20: I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted.	67.30%	66.40%	80.50%	80%

Table 11: % of students agreeing or strongly agreeing to well-being statements, 2019-2022, West Bank

As an example, on the statement, *"When I feel angry, I can calm myself down"*, in 2019, 57.50% agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. In 2020, this increased to 73% feeling this way which was a statistically significant increase. The percentages of students who agreed or strongly agreed with these statements in 2021 and 2022 remained constant around the levels reported in 2020. However, on the statement, *"I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted"*, there was little change in the percentage of students agreeing or strongly agreeing on this between 2019 and 2020 (67.3% and 66.4% respectively). In 2021, though, the percentage of students who agreed or strongly agreed jumped to 80%, which was statistically significant and then remained at this level in 2022. **Irrespective, the overall picture is one of improvements in well-being in students in West Bank from 2019 to 2022, across all the different areas this constitutes**.

These patterns are also reflected in gender disaggregated analysis. As per Figure 9 below, females reported slightly, but statistically significant higher well-being outcomes to their male counterparts overall, and on several individual items on the SLEC survey in 2019, and then in subsequent years as well.
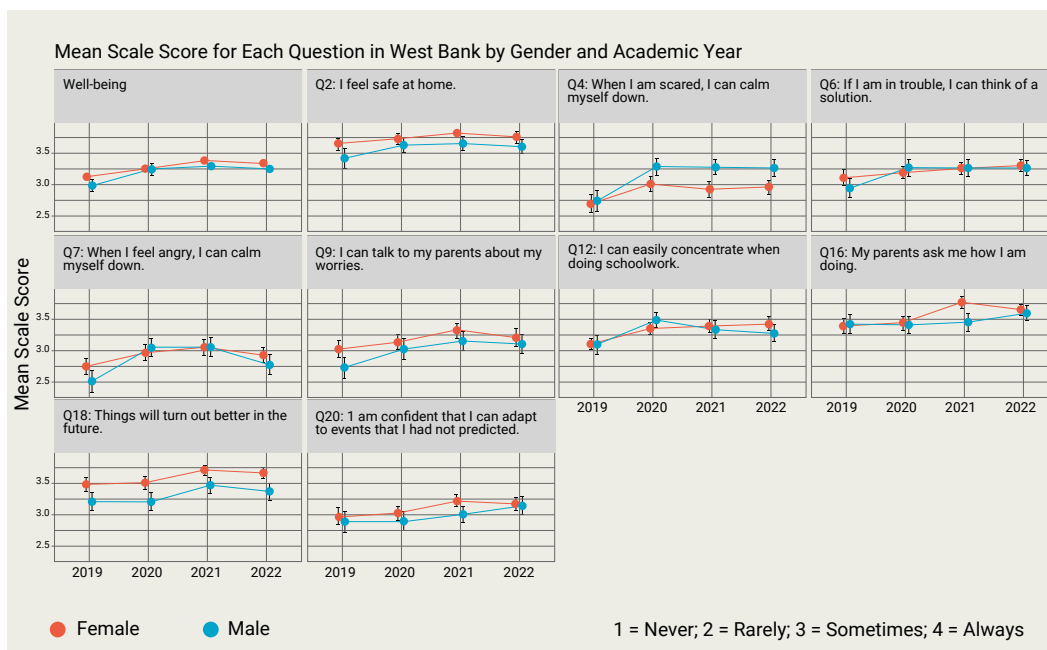
Figure 9: Comparison of responses on SLEC-9 between males and females 2019-2022, West Bank

Across all four years, female well-being remained higher than males, though not always at statistically significant levels, and not on all items. The table below provides a summary of the percentage of students who agreed with each statement, broken down by gender, across the four years. Statistically significant differences are highlighted.

Statement	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
Q2: I feel safe at home.	91.40%	81%	94.30%	88.90%	97.70%	85.30%	94.10%	86.30%
Q4: When I am scared, I can calm myself down.	60.40%	64.10%	78.30%	80.50%	76.30%	77.30%	75.10%	77.80%
Q6: If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution.	77.90%	67.10%	89.80%	79.80%	89.50%	77.30%	86.60%	80%
Q7: When I feel angry, I can calm myself down.	64.40%	50.20%	23.20%	31.40%	21.70%	31.90%	26.90%	33%
Q9: I can talk to my parents about my worries.	72.10%	55.30%	79.20%	74.20%	83.50%	71.30%	76.10%	74%
Q12: I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork.	81.30%	75.90%	91.30%	86.10%	91.40%	76.90%	87.90%	85.70%
Q16: My parents ask me how I am doing.	87.10%	84.10%	87.30%	80.50%	94.40%	82.10%	91.10%	91.40%
Q18: Things will turn out better in the future.	89%	80.30%	90.10%	77.70%	95.90%	83.70%	92.80%	81.60%
Q20: I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted.	72.10%	62%	66.90%	65.90%	88%	72.50%	82.30%	77.80%

Table 12: % of boys and girls who agree or strongly agree with the SLEC-9 statements, 2019-2022. Statistically significant differences are highlighted

On the statement *"Things will turn out for the future"*, there is a consistent pattern across all four years of girls feeling more positive about the future than boys. Similarly, on the statement *"I feel safe at home"*, in all years except 2021, the percentage of females who reported agreeing with this statement was found to be significantly different, and higher, than the number of boys who felt the same way. On the statement *"When I am scared, I can calm myself down"*, however, an opposite pattern exists. Since 2019, a higher percentage of boys than girls agree or strongly agree with this statement, but from 2020 this difference becomes statistically significant.

What explains trends in student well-being in West Bank?

Counterintuitively, COVID-19 related school closures, restrictions in movement and extended periods of learning from home appear to have had a positive impact on student well-being. Additionally, with students having returned to school during the 2021-2022 academic year, it is also notable to start to see some declines in student well-being even if these trends are not as of yet significant.

As identified in the previous *Learning in the Margins* report produced in 2021, the home context for students in West Bank was often a more conducive environment to supporting learning and well-being during COVID-19 than homes in Gaza. NRC found that the vast majority of students in West Bank (79%) were participating in e-learning through a survey of parents and caregivers conducted at the outset of the pandemic in 2020. This higher rate of participation is attributable to both the much higher rates of access to devices and internet, and more reliable electricity supply. Additionally, supportive relationships at home, alongside positive interactions with family members—which are found in the research to be more commonplace in West Bank than in Gaza—facilitated the development of emotional regulation and cognitive skills which these learners needed to cope with shocks like the pandemic in a constructive way.[60]

The latter point was reaffirmed in speaking with students and teachers in West Bank schools.

> One group of students, at a school just outside of Jerusalem, described how, *"During the lockdown all of us were stuck in the homes with our families. This was good in some ways as it gave us an opportunity to spend time with our parents who are otherwise often too busy. Our parents could not go to work, and for them it was hard as they had no income, but many families supported each other with food and money. We learned to communicate, play, and support each other, we gained new talents like playing football, and enjoyed spending time with one another. We felt like we managed to build a stronger connection with our family."* Teachers in the same school observed that these students were *"...more relaxed and comfortable to learn in the home, as they could also get support from their family members. It was an easy transition for them to have lessons at home. They had flexibility around their learning and the capacity to self-direct themselves more."*

This is not to suggest, however, that the experience of staying at home and learning from a distance was completely positive. The same group of girls described how, *"Often we could not follow the lessons, and we found learning subjects like Mathematics difficult on Teams. Many of us did not have enough devices in our home so we had to share them."* But perhaps different to Gaza, students felt that they were able to compensate for this, to some degree, by *"...discuss[ing] what the teacher had taught with other family members and friends afterwards."* Students also described the same anxiety and worry of contracting coronavirus, particularly in the early days of the pandemic when there was a lot of fear and paranoia and disinformation about the virus and its impacts. However, over time they realised that *"...COVID-19 was not as bad as we first thought...in many cases no different to the flu except that we couldn't smell or taste things."*

Students also saw the financial strain which stay at home orders placed on their families. They noted that their parents' inability to go to work was *"...good...as it gave us an opportunity to spend time with our parents who are otherwise often too busy,"* but they could see that, *"...it was hard as they had no income, but [that] many families supported each other with food and money."* In West Bank, informal safety nets were able to be deployed amongst families and communities in terms of ensuring basic needs were met, irrespective of the temporary loss of income. Hence while food insecurity, unemployment, and household poverty increased across the Palestinian Territory during the pandemic, this situation has proven to be less chronic or long-term in West Bank than in Gaza, where the May 2021 conflict, ongoing blockade and worsening divisions between the de-factor government and PA pose longer term threats to livelihoods and well-being.[61]

But beyond this, the period when movement was restricted because of COVID-19 and schools completely shut, was also one of temporary calm in terms of the ongoing threats of violence and insecurity which plague many parts of West Bank. A group of boys in a school in Hebron described how, *"during the lockdown we could move more freely around and go out and explore the countryside or visit our friends with our families,"* which was different to circumstances those in Hebron normally face in terms of mobility and movement due to settler violence and military checkpoints. A group of girls at a school outside of Jerusalem observed how, *"It was also much more peaceful during the lockdown. The streets were calm and quiet, and there was not the usual conflict between us and the soldiers."* COVID-19 also had an impact on reported attacks on students and staff accessing education. As per Figure 10, when schools were partially or fully closed the frequency and number of attacks in, and around educational facilities was greatly reduced. Similarly, the same GCPEA report identifies that during the time where schools were partially or fully closed, the numbers of students and staff injured or affected by such attacks was much lower than in 2019, with this also meaning that many less hours of learning were lost during that time.[62]

Incidents of teargas and other weapons firing at or near schools in the West Bank, Jan. 2019 - Sep. 2021
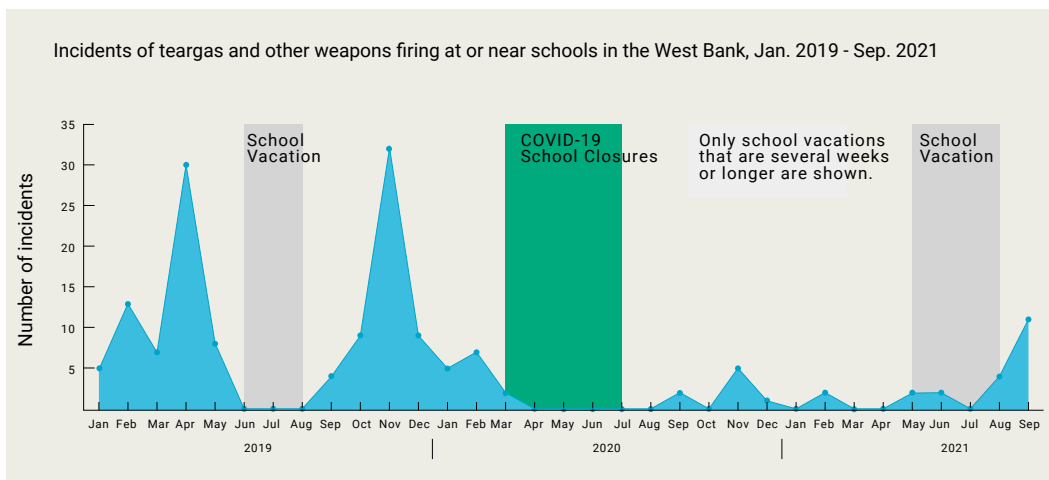
Figure 10: Incidences of attacks in and around school facilities in West Bank Jan 2019-Sep 2021. Source: GCPEA 2022. Measuring the Impacts of Attacks on Education. March 2022. p. 7

The return to school in the 2021-2022 academic year, coupled with mounting tensions between Israel and Palestine over issues such as demolitions, the construction of new settlements, and seizure of Palestinian lands, also saw a return to increased attacks in and around schools (as per Figure 10 above), and an overall sharp increase in violence across West Bank in 2022. Data from UN OCHA suggests that 2021 and 2022 also saw significant increases in the number of Palestinian casualties due to the conflict, amongst which in 2022, 34 were children who had died as of November 2022.[63]

For these reasons, the return to school process was discussed with ambivalence. On one hand, students expressed excitement with returning to face to face learning and connecting with friends. As one group of girls discussed, *"It felt in some ways that we were new students to school again and everything was exciting. It was especially fun to see our friends as we had missed them when we were at home."* But students noted that the pressure of needing to catch up on lost learning meant that activities, such as sports, trips and visiting the school library, which used to occur in schools, were no longer part of their instructional day. This meant that, *"school is less exciting than it was before coronavirus."* But of greater concern was that in both schools, students observed the increasing rates of violence and threats to their security in both their communities and schools, including on their journeys to and from school.

In the school in Hebron, the boys described how, *"...these days it is also harder in terms of settler violence and soldiers in our community, particularly because they are targeting younger students such as us who they used to leave alone. And when we move around on the weekend with our family, they now stop us all the time. For our fathers, who now need to go out and work they are the ones who are most harassed by the soldiers, and some need to work in the settlements. The Israeli soldiers drive around in their Jeeps all day long and it makes us afraid. This makes our life more difficult, particularly in terms of coming to school and feeling safe."*

Similarly, girls in a school just outside of Jerusalem described how they observed increased *"...tension between us and the Israeli soldiers. Lots of people are dying because of this violence. Whenever there are incidences, we have strikes which close our school again and return us to learning from home which we don't like."* They felt, *"...frustrated, depressed, and angry by that situation."*

Teachers in the same school noted that these conditions were leading to feelings of increased anxiety, and *"fear and worry about leaving home,"* both because of the violence and the increased threats of demolitions occurring in their community. At the school in Hebron the principal described how *"even people who have everything they need feel trapped by the situation now...the violence is getting higher and higher out of frustration."* Hence while well-being outcomes of students in West Bank remain higher than pre-pandemic level—even in 2022 when there were some small declines over previous years—as the situation continues to deteriorate, well-being could continue to decline and return to pre-pandemic levels.

Teacher well-being trends in West Bank

There were not any significant changes between the two years in which data was collected on any of the teacher well-being outcomes as per Figure 11 below.
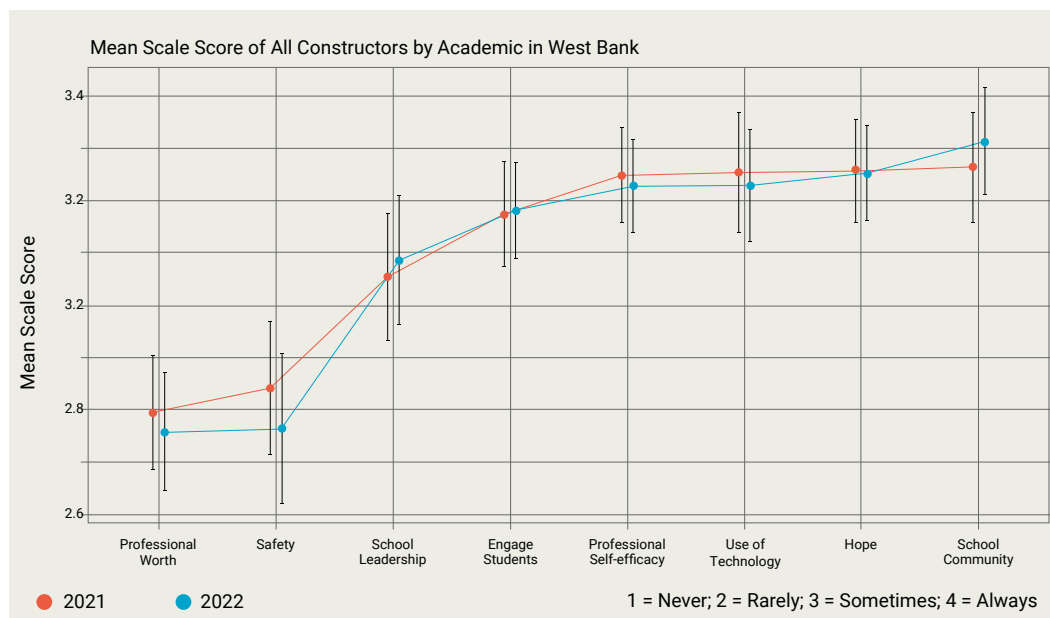

Figure 11: Mean scores on teacher well-being constructs in West Bank, 2021-2022

Generally speaking, like students across West Bank, **teachers had a positive outlook on different aspects of their well-being across both academic years**. The two areas, however, where teacher well-being was notably lower than other aspects

were professional worth and safety. In terms of professional worth, and like Gaza, a large percentage of teachers reported their work as exhausting, and with sizeable percentages in both years (but particularly 2021) questioning whether they would have been better off choosing another profession (see Table 13 below).

Statement	2021	2022
My work as a teacher is exhausting	77.4%	77.2%
I have enough energy for my family and friends after a day of teaching my students	62.6%	66.7%
I feel exhausted in the morning by the thought of another day at work	44.8%	47.5%
If I could decide again, I would still choose to work as a teacher	82.1%	76.0%
I regret that I decided to become a teacher	17.4%	23.3%
I feel proud of what I am able to achieve as a teacher with my students	96.8%	98.8%
I wonder whether it would have been better to choose another profession	51.1%	39.5%

Table 13: % of teachers in West Bank who agree or strongly agree with statements on professional worth, 2021-2022

When asked specifically about this in focus group discussions, teachers in West Bank noted several factors that were contributing to this loss of professional motivation. A repeated concern, and one also acknowledged by Ministry of Education stakeholders, was a view that the curriculum was increasingly crowded with new subjects and content areas for teachers to teach, but with less time to do so. Added to this is the pressure which teachers feel to not only cover content and material which students may not have learned during school closures, but also the content they are supposed to teach. As a principal in one school outside of Jerusalem described, *"the teachers are fully loaded and have more and more responsibilities...this is exhausting for them."* Beyond this though, teachers at a school in Hebron noted that *"in the past there was a lot of concern, respect and attention given to teachers and their well-being...financially, professionally and emotionally."* This it was felt, had been eroded by years of stagnant salaries not keeping up with the cost of living as well as *"lots of additional duties brought about by COVID-19 and other events."* At the same time the number of students in classes have increased, leading to a sense that *"they no longer can escape their duties, not even at home."*

These sentiments are not dissimilar to those raised by teachers in a workshop hosted by INEE and NRC in August 2022. Importantly, the increased workload which many teachers are facing without sufficient compensation was a key concern raised by many participants at that workshop. Teachers described the struggles to support their own families' housing, nutrition, health and education needs.[64] At present the average salary of a Palestinian teacher is 2500 ILS per month, or $730 USD. Many are forced to take on other part-time jobs to meet the needs of their families. In the past, the Ministry of Education has also withheld paying teachers their full salaries due to delays in receipt of tax revenue which the PA receives from Israeli authorities. This has led to a number of strikes by teachers in Palestine over the past two years, who are demanding that salaries are raised to cover the cost of living amongst other issues.[65]

The other area of well-being which was also significantly lower than other areas was in the area of safety. As Table 14 indicates, there were particular aspects of safety which teachers noted as being of greater concern.

Statement	2021	2022
I feel safe at my school	81.1%	73.3%
If I report unsafe or dangerous behaviours in or around my school, I can be sure the problem will be taken care of	79.1%	74.3%
I feel safe when entering and leaving my school building	69.9%	73.0%
I feel safe getting to and from my school each day	65.6%	65.3%

Table 14: % of teachers in West Bank who agree or strongly agree with statements on safety, 2021-2022

For example, **1 out of 3 teachers (or 33%) do not feel safe getting to and from their school each day, and more than a quarter of teachers in 2022 (27.7%) do not feel safe at their school**. The importance of safety and protection was also a matter touched on at length in aforementioned INEE/NRC workshop on teacher well-being. There, a teacher described his own experiences of both travelling to/from school as well as the threats against safety experienced in the school itself.

He notes that *"Although the distance from my house to the school is only 7 km, the journey often takes between 1-2 hours, and sometimes even more because of the checkpoints. Instead of thinking about my students' learning needs and what activities I will use to start the day, I can only think of whether I will be able to get to school safely or not. Each morning my colleagues have to cross the military checkpoint at an exact time... We need to negotiate with the Israeli soldiers guarding the gates to let us pass to work."* He also described how in May 2022, *"...tear gas canisters were fired at the school during school hours; one of them landed in the teachers' staff room and one canister detonated right in front of the school principal's office."* [66]

Another principal of a school outside of Jerusalem visited in November 2022 described how one of her teachers had her car shot at on the way to school earlier that year, and how it significantly traumatised this individual and made it nearly impossible for her to feel safe coming to work. As noted in a recent report, Israeli security forces firing teargas, stun grenades, rubber-coated metal bullets, and other weapons at schools and students, or in their vicinity has injured at least 12 males and 10 female staff in the period Jan 2019-September 2021.[67] All of this leads to an atmosphere of fear and insecurity amongst teachers, but also students, and is a matter discussed in greater detail in the next section.

The relationship between vulnerability designation and well-being outcomes

A second key objective of the *Learning on the Margins* research was to assess the degree to which access-related constraints to schooling—by which schools are then deemed to be more or less vulnerable—has impacted differentially on well-being outcomes over time. The result of analysis, again, demonstrate a very different narrative between Gaza and West Bank and for this reason the results are presented separately below.

Gaza

In **Gaza Strip** and using the vulnerability designations of the 20 target schools established in 2019, it was found that **while such a designation did have some bearing on well-being outcomes in 2019 and again in 2022, it did not have any significant impact at all in 2020 and 2021** (see Figure 11 below). It is important to note that 2020 and 2021 were the two years where COVID-19 related impacts on education were most acute, and more likely to have impacted learners across all of Gaza Strip.
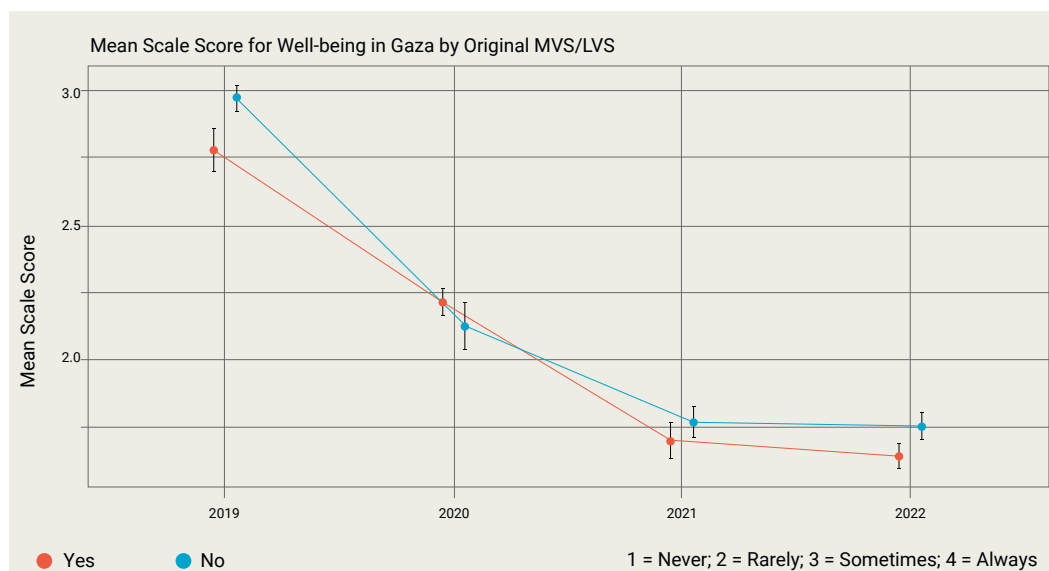
Figure 12: Comparison of overall well-being score between more (yes) and less (no) vulnerable schools in Gaza, 2019-2022

As Figure 12 above indicates the average well-being score of students in the more vulnerable schools was 2.78, and in the less vulnerable schools was 2.97 in 2019. Average well-being scores declined more precipitously in the less vulnerable schools in 2020, and this decline continued in 2021, before levelling out in 2022. For the more vulnerable schools, declines between 2020 and 2021 were sizeable, but still less sharp than the less vulnerable school, but in 2021 and again 2022 the declines continued, though at a smaller magnitude between 2021 and 2022. Hence in 2022, a significant difference emerged again between the two groups, with the average score for the students in the more vulnerable schools of 1.64 and in the less vulnerable schools as 1.72—both of which are notably lower than in 2019 when the research started.

The general trend, though, is that **there are fewer statements where there are significant differences between students in more and less vulnerable schools in 2022, compared to 2019**, and where a difference does exist, the magnitude of difference is much smaller. This is reflected in Table 14 below, where the mean scores in both 2019 and 2022 for both more and less vulnerable schools are presented to many of the statements on the SLEC-9 survey. Where differences in scores between the two groups are significant within that year, they are highlighted.

Statement	2019		2022	
	MVS	LVS	MVS	LVS
Q2: I feel safe at home.	3.17	3.42	1.58	1.65
Q4: When I am scared, I can calm myself down.	2.22	2.54	1.44	1.68
Q6: If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution.	2.79	3.08	1.46	1.54
Q7: When I feel angry, I can calm myself down.	2.3	2.54	1.33	1.56
Q9: I can talk to my parents about my worries.	2.89	2.88	1.77	2.11
Q12: I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork.	3.02	3.13	1.53	1.41
Q16: My parents ask me how I am doing.	3.20	3.45	2.39	2.53
Q18: Things will turn out better in the future.	3.06	3.36	1.76	1.81
Q20: I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted.	2.36	2.37	1.52	1.48

Table 14: Mean scores to individual statements on the SLEC-9 for more (MVS) and less vulnerable (LVS) schools in West Bank in 2019 and 2022 (statistically significant differences between the two groups for each year highlighted)

A further exploration of well-being trends was undertaken at a school-level in Gaza to understand why vulnerability status of schools, as defined in 2019, was less of a significant factor in the subsequent three years than it was at the outset. In this analysis, the mean well-being scores of a particular school were compared to those of other schools of a similar demographic—for example a boys school's scores were compared to those of all other boys schools in Gaza, and a girls school's score compared to those of all other girls schools—across all four years. This was done to determine if some schools which had been deemed more vulnerable in 2019 could in fact now be seen as less vulnerable, and vice versa, based on their *well-being outcomes rather than access-related constraints*, which is how they were initially identified. A four year trend line of the mean overall well-being score for each school, compared to comparison schools is presented in Figure 13.
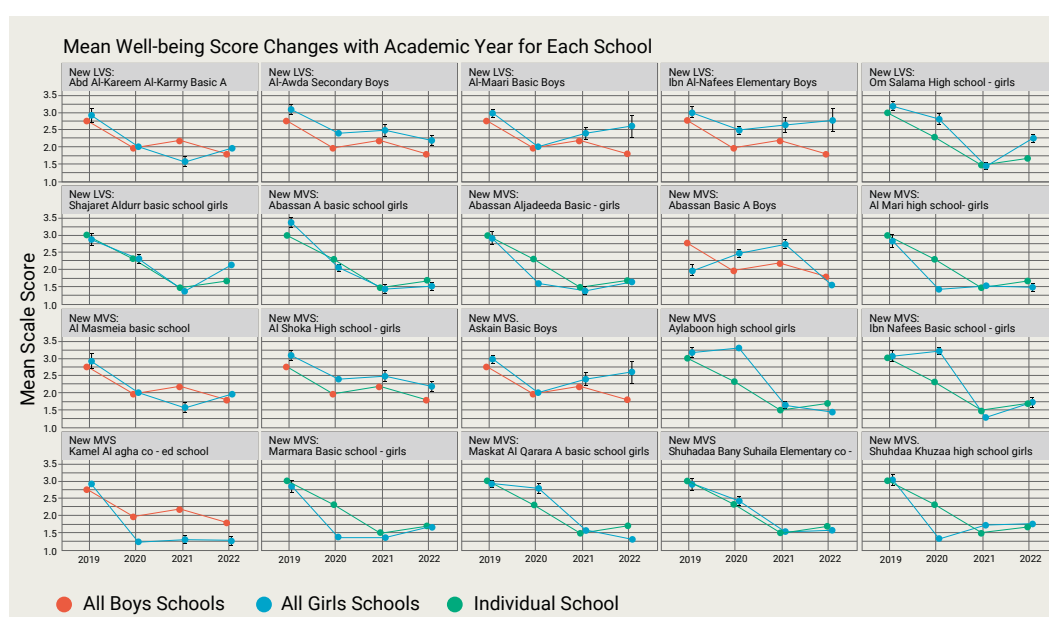
Figure 13: Comparison of individual school well-being score to that of other boys' or girls' schools in Gaza, 2019-2022

What this indicates is that:

- Seven schools which were initially deemed less vulnerable, are now more vulnerable to other schools in 2022, given that their well-being scores are significantly below those of other comparable schools. This is the case for Al Mari High School Girls, Aylabook High Schools Girls, Kamel Al Agha Co-Ed School, Shuhdaa Khuzaa High School Girls, Al Mari high Schools Girls, Al Masmela Basic School and Al Shoka High School Girls.

- One school, which was deemed more vulnerable in 2019—Ibn Al-Nafees Elementary Boys—now needs to be recategorized as less vulnerable in 2022, given that its mean scores on well-being are significantly at/above those of other comparable schools.

Table 15 summarises the changes in designation of schools' vulnerability status based on this.

School	Initial	New
Abassan A Basic School Girls	MVS	MVS
Askaln Basic Boys	MVS	MVS
Aylaboon High School Girls	LVS	MVS
Ibn Al-Nafees Elementary Boys	MVS	LVS
Ibn Nafees Basic School Girls	MVS	MVS
Kamel Al Agha Coed School	LVS	MVS
Marmara Basic School Girls	MVS	MVS
Maskat Al Qarara A Basic School Girls	MVS	MVS
Shuhadaa Bany Suhaila Elementary Co-ed	MVS	MVS
Abassan Aljadeeda Basic Girls	MVS	MVS
Shuhdaa Khuzaa High School Girls	LVS	MVS
Abassan Basic A Boys	MVS	MVS
Abd Al-Kareem Al-Karmy Basic A	MVS	MVS
Al Mari High School Girls	LVS	MVS
Al Masmeia Basic School	LVS	MVS
Al Shoka High School Girls	LVS	MVS
Al-Awda Secondary Boys	LVS	LVS
Al-Maari Basic Boys	LVS	LVS

Table 15: Original and new designation of schools' vulnerability status in Gaza based on well-being outcome trends 2019-2022

The overall finding from this analysis is that educational vulnerability, if measured by outcomes, needs to be continuously reassessed and evaluated, and done in a way which explores specific outcomes of interest in relation to those of other comparable schools. Additionally, access-related barriers may only partially explain vulnerability, if understood in terms of the outcomes for learners (in this case well-being). This finding accords well with some of the key conclusions reached from the initial report produced from the *Learning on Margins* research in 2019, in which it was identified that in Palestine:

- The conflation of learners being exposed to certain risk factors (such as access-related constraints) with educational vulnerability (from an outcome standpoint) does not account for individual, community and system-level factors that may either exacerbate or mitigate such risks; and that

- Vulnerability is often the product of how various risk factors compound or mitigate exposure to negative educational outcomes.

As was found in schools visited in Gaza—some of which had been previously deemed less vulnerable but were now deemed more vulnerable based on the above analysis—there were clear changes in circumstances behind these shifts. Often this was linked more to the compounding nature of a number of factors—including increasing household poverty and unemployment, deteriorating public infrastructure and transportation services, and a greater sense of insecurity in the midst of the pandemic and the May 2021 conflict—and which is impacting on some communities more than others. In one school in Khan Younes, for instance, teachers described how now, *"these factors are creating undue stress...and leading to daughters being forced into early marriage, and sons to work informally instead of going to school."* Additionally, it was felt that many of their students' basic needs are unable to be met, and because of this, *"they don't have the concentration or capacity to learn." All of this is leading to a situation where "students have lost hope and the meaning of life."*

Based on recognition that the vulnerability of school populations had shifted significantly in the past four years, analysis comparing the overall well-being scores of schools, as well as responses to individual questions was re-done using these new designations. In doing so differences in the mean well-being score (see Figure 14) as well as in responses to individual statements on the SLEC-9 becomes more significant, across most of the years. Additionally, the gap between the more and less vulnerable schools in terms of well-being outcomes is much larger in 2022 than it appears under the original vulnerability designation (see Figure 12 for comparison).

Mean Scale Score for Well-being in Gaza by New Groups

● New_MVS   ● New_LVS   1 = Never; 2 = Rarely; 3 = Sometimes; 4 = Always
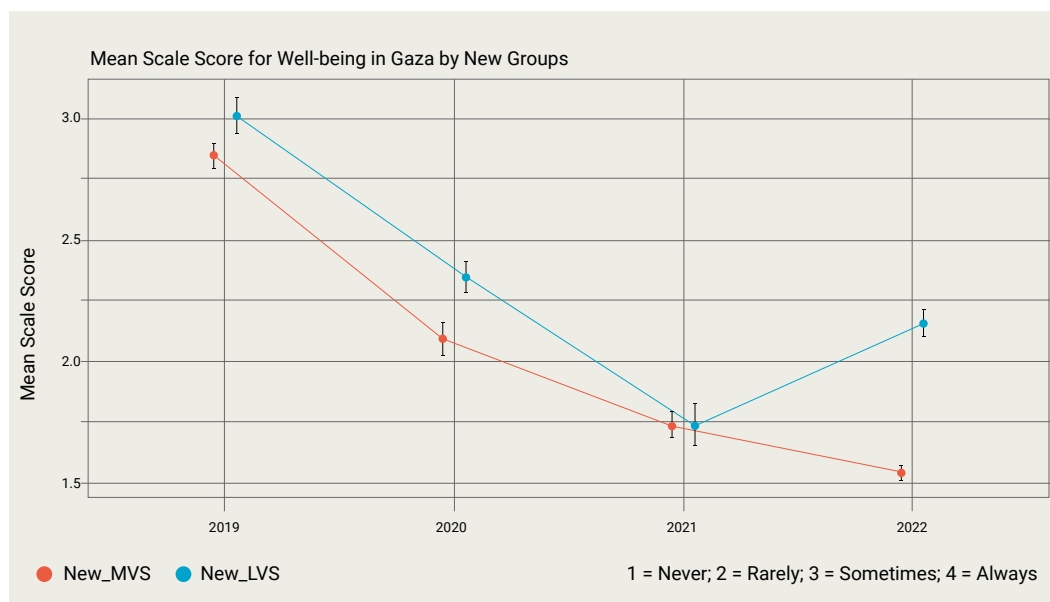
Figure 14: Comparison of mean well-being score between more and less vulnerable schools (new designation), Gaza 2019-2022

For instance, on the statement *"My parents ask me how I am doing"*, 84.8% of students in the less vulnerable schools (LVS) agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in 2022, while this was the case for only 30.1% of students in the more vulnerable schools (MVS). Additionally, on the statement *"Things will turn out better in the future"*,

39.9% of students in the LVS agreed or strongly agreed with this statement in 2022, but only 10.3% of students in the MVS felt similarly.

In terms of teachers' well-being outcomes no significant differences were found between those teaching in more or less vulnerable schools—using the initial or new designations.

West Bank

In the preceding section, it was found that throughout the period of school closures due to COVID-19, student well-being improved. This is largely because a range of household, community and institutional conditions were found in combination to shield young people from many of the same risk factors which negatively impacted on this same group in Gaza. But beyond this, a significant risk factor which undermines well-being was not present in young people's lives during periods where they were learning from home fully or partially—namely threats to their security as a result of travelling to/from and attending school where they risk the greatest threats of harassment, violence and detention.

In the context of West Bank, the more vulnerable schools are those where these threats are most prevalent.

What is evident in Figure 14 is that overall well-being improved most sizeably in the more vulnerable schools between 2019 and 2020/21 (when schools were shut). Additionally, significant differences which existed in overall well-being between the more and less vulnerable schools disappeared in this period. But in 2022, when students returned to school again, students in the most vulnerable schools showed the greatest declines in well-being, with a significant difference between them and students in the less vulnerable schools re-emerging.

Figure 15: Comparison of overall well-being and individual SLEC-9 items between more (MVS) and less (LVS) schools in West Bank, 2019-2022

These trends are also visible in the percentages of students who agree or strongly agree with individual statements on the SLEC-9 across the years, and compared between MVS and LVS (see Table 16)

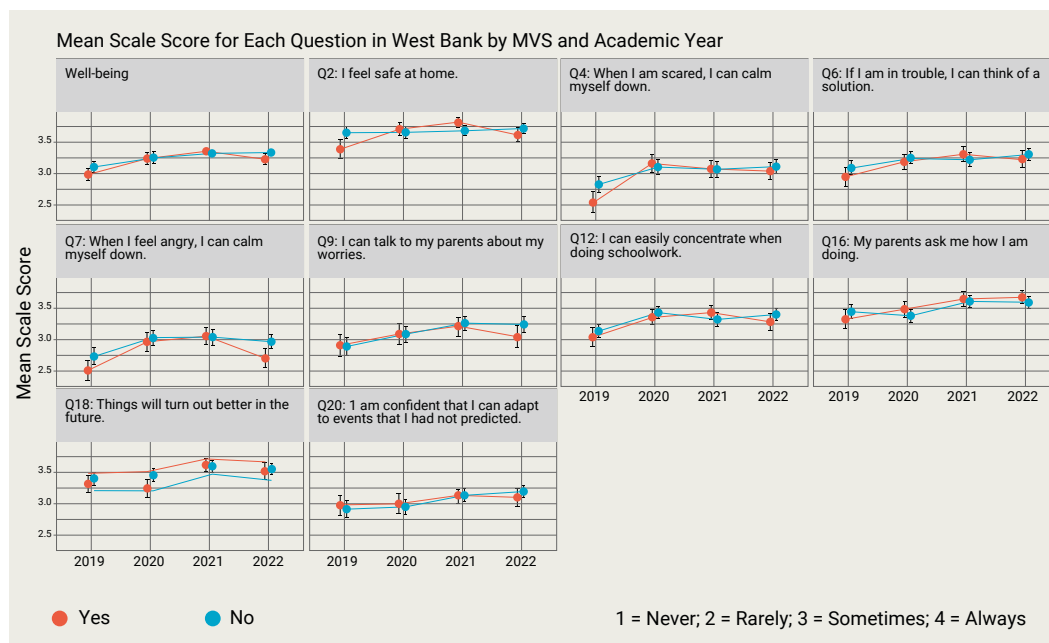| Statement	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	MVS	LVS	MVS	LVS	MVS	LVS	MVS	LVS
Q2: I feel safe at home	83%	89%	90%	93%	97%	88%	90%	91%
Q4: When I am scared, I can calm myself down	58%	66%	80%	79%	82%	73%	76%	77%
Q6: If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution	68%	77%	84%	86%	89%	80%	81%	85%
Q7: When I feel angry, I can calm myself down	54%	61%	73%	73%	77%	71%	66%	73%
Q9: I can talk to my parents about my worries	63%	65%	75%	78%	82%	75%	69%	79%
Q12: I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork	78%	79%	87%	90%	93%	79%	83%	89%
Q16: My parents ask me how I am doing	86%	85%	83%	85%	92%	86%	91%	92%
Q18: Things will turn out better in the future	84%	86%	80%	87%	95%	86%	86%	88%
Q20: I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted	66%	69%	72%	63%	87%	76%	80%	80%

Table 16: % of students in MVS and LVS who agree or disagree with individual SLEC-9 statements in West Bank 2019-2022

One area where this trend is very apparent is in terms of students' self-regulation. In 2019, for instance, 54% of students in the more vulnerable schools agreed with the statement *"When I feel angry, I can calm myself down",* compared to 61% of students in the less vulnerable schools. In 2020 and 2021, levels of agreement to the same statement improved markedly for those in the more vulnerable schools, to a point where in 2021, students in the more vulnerable schools were more likely to agree (77%) with this statement than those in the less vulnerable schools (71%). But, in 2022, there was a notable decline for students in the more vulnerable schools in terms of agreement with the same statement (63%), while those in the less vulnerable schools maintained previous levels of agreement (73%). A similar pattern can be seen with the statements *"When I am scared I can calm myself down,"* and *"If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution."*

In sum, when students do not face the same prevalence settler or military related violence and harassment, and the challenges of moving through barriers and checkpoints on a daily basis (in this case because of movement related restrictions and school closures), differences in well-being become much less between the more and less vulnerable schools. However, and as Figure 15 indicates, when students face such threats, as was the case in 2019 and 2022, well-being does in fact suffer.

As has been discussed previously, the increased tensions in parts of Jerusalem and the West Bank in 2022 appear to be having a negative impact on student well-being. It is visible in the recent declines in well-being in the more vulnerable schools, but for one directorate of West Bank in particular—Hebron—this issue appears most acute. Throughout 2021, and into 2022, residents across Hebron district continued to face violence from settlers both inside the city and across the district, as well as ongoing restrictions on movement, limited access to medical services, home demolitions and

the continuous presence of Israeli military. MSF, for instances, noted that in just the *first six months* of 2021, they had treated more patients following settler attacks, than they did across all of 2020.[68] Additionally, research from DCI identified that throughout 2021, the routine harassment, illegal detention and violence against minors continued unabated, with communities in and around Hebron being some of those most acutely impacted.[69] All of this appears to have led to a different trajectory for children's well-being in Hebron district, compared to all other regions of West Bank, as per Figure 16 below.
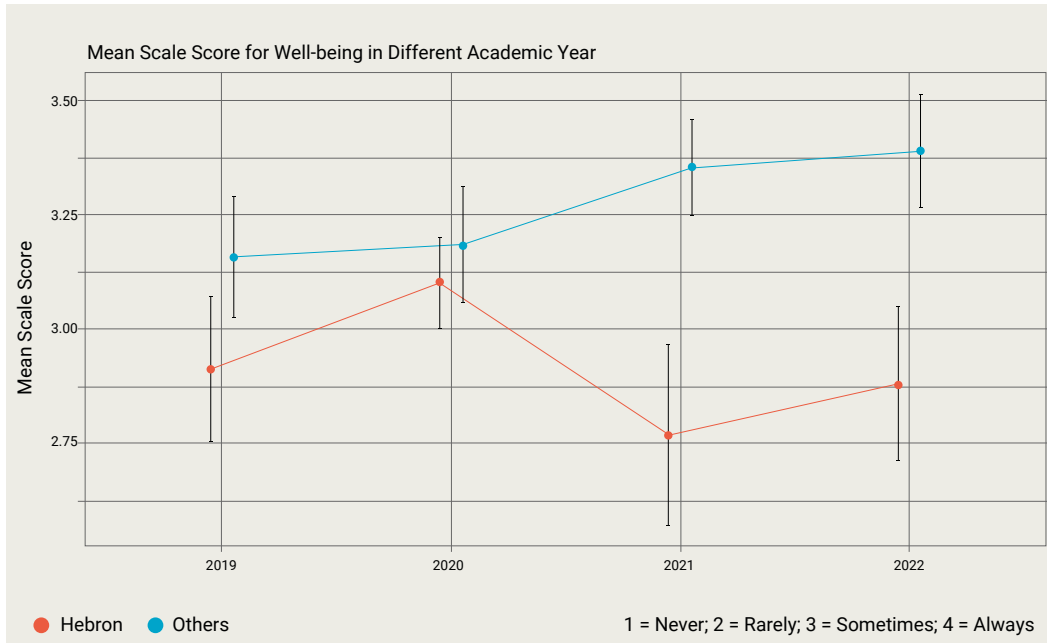
Figure 16: Mean well-being score for Hebron district compared to all of West Bank, 2019-2022

The figure highlights the fact that while well-being improved for most students in West Bank over the period of 2019-2022, following some improvement in 2020, **students' well-being of sampled schools in Hebron district declined and is significantly below that of other sampled West Bank schools in both 2021 and 2022.** For example, the mean well-being score for Hebron students was 2.77 and 2.88 in each of those respective years, compared to 3.35 and 3.39 for all other students across West Bank. Responses to individual statements on the SLEC-9 highlight specific areas where the differences are most acute: particularly in terms of students sense of safety, emotional regulation and sense of hope for the future (see Table 17).

Statement	2019		2020		2021		2022	
	Hebron	Other	Hebron	Other	Hebron	Other	Hebron	Other
I feel safe at home	82.3%	86.4%	92%	93%	67%	88%	76.4%	91%
When I am scared, I can calm myself down	64.6%	66%	83%	81%	59.1%	73%	71.7%	77%
If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution	64.6%	77%	77%	82%	69.3%	76.5%	69.8%	87%
When I feel angry, I can calm myself down	54%	61%	67%	73%	90.2%	80.1%	60.4%	76.2%
I can talk to my parents about my worries	49%	68.3%	81%	79.7%	61.4%	76.9%	69.8%	79.3%

I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork	78.1%	78.5%	86%	90%	68.2%	90.9%	82.10%	84.3%
My parents ask me how I am doing	82.3%	85.9%	83%	86.1%	62.5%	93.2%	90.6%	91.7%
Things will turn out better in the future	80.2%	87.3%	81%	86.3%	73.9%	86.9%	70.8%	89.1%
I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted	52.1%	71.2%	65%	77.3%	60.2%	82.1%	77.4%	80.2%

Table 17: % of students who agree or strongly agree to statements on SLEC-9, comparing students in Hebron district to all other parts of West Bank, 2019-2022

Finally, no significant differences were found in teacher well-being outcomes when comparing those teaching in more and less vulnerable schools across West Bank.

Palestinian Student in her classroom at Beita Mixed Elementary School, West Bank, in September 2022. Photo: Ahmad Al-Bazz/NRC

Palestinian students at Asma Bint Abi Baker primary school are participating in NRC Better Learning Programme.
In the Sheikh Radwan neighborhood of Gaza City, in March 2021. Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Conclusion and recommendations

This section summarises the key findings of the research, before specifying a number of recommendations/considerations to take forward.

Key findings

It was found that COVID-19 has had differential impacts on student well-being in Gaza and West Bank. While in West Bank, well-being of students improved significantly during periods of school closures/lockdowns, the opposite was the case in Gaza. Much of this is due to the fact that a much higher percentage of learners in West Bank, compared to Gaza were able to engage in some form of distance learning from home. But beyond that, household conditions and circumstances were markedly different between the two contexts, with higher levels of parental engagement, support and care offered to learners in West Bank and with students much more likely to feel safe at home and able to learn and speak freely with their parents/caregivers about their emotions and feelings. In Gaza, a combination of increased food insecurity and household economic stress during COVID-19, overcrowded living conditions, violence in the home, and a lack of electricity/internet, led to an increasing sense of social isolation and hopelessness on the part of learners. Economic and social risk factors, rather than the risk or prevalence of schools or communities falling under Israeli attack, appear to play a more significant role in impacting on learner's well-being in Gaza during this time.

As students began to return to school, partially and then fully, students' well-being in West Bank has started to decline again, with this being most significant in in schools and communities where settler and military violence and harassment, attacks in and around school, and ongoing Israeli military operations are most frequently experienced by learners. This trend, coupled with the fact that improvements in well-being were most marked in these more vulnerable schools during school closures, suggests that unfortunately, attending school in person is a risk factor for many young children throughout the West Bank.

In Gaza, returning to school fully has not necessarily translated into improvements in well-When students returned to school (partially) in 2021, it was seen as a positive one, and provided them with renewed optimism and a sense of connection to those outside the home. Unfortunately, the May 2021 escalation with Israel significantly eroded this sentiment and again trapped students in their homes and with increased insecurity over all aspects of their lives. Hence well-being outcomes amongst young people—in terms of their self-regulation skills, connectedness to caring adults in the home, their sense of safety, and hope for the future—remain concerningly low and in need of wide-scale attention and support.

Additionally, changes in well-being identified have a clear gendered component to them. In West Bank, females are consistently more positive about most aspects of

their well-being than their male counterparts. In Gaza, while this was true in 2019, by 2022 this situation has shifted markedly, with females having lower well-being outcomes than their male counterparts, barring the dimension of connectedness with caring adults where females remain higher than males.

Importantly, these findings indicate that while access-related definitions of education of educational vulnerability do have some association with well-being outcomes, particularly in West Bank, it is more important to understand the specific nature of risk factors impacting on learners (and educational personnel) and how individual, household and community level conditions interact to lead to improved/worsened outcomes. Hence in Gaza, a worsening economic, social and political conditions have eroded the capacity for individuals and households to withstand the impacts of the pandemic and recent escalations on children's well-being. Vulnerability was found to be an evolving and complex phenomena—and best understood by measuring learning outcomes of interest—rather than gauging it on access-related constraints alone.

Lastly, in terms of teachers' well-being, there are two areas of concern and need at present. One is to teachers' sense of professional worth—where sizeable numbers of teachers report feeling overwhelmed by their current workload and lacking the motivation to remain in the profession. The other, particularly in West Bank, is teachers' sense of safety in and around schools. There, a sizeable number of teachers, report feeling unsafe in around their school, and lacking confidence that if they report these issues they will be sufficiently addressed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this report, there are a number of recommendation for the education and humanitarian community in Palestine to consider in future action and engagement:

1. In terms of immediate response measures to address the impacts of the pandemic on learning well-being, psychosocial support and social emotional learning opportunities are most acutely needed across the Gaza Strip. However, rather than continue to deliver these efforts through ad-hoc programmes of support, there is a need to ensure that social emotional learning skills such as communication, cooperation, resilience, self-regulation, self-awareness, are being supported and integrated across all areas of the curriculum. This is because these skills are likely to remain an important ongoing need in a context like Gaza where there remain a range of acute stressors impacting on learners' well-being.

2. Across Palestine, there is a clear need to also address the perceived lack of emotional support and connectedness that many young people feel with their parents/caregivers. Efforts need to be directed towards working with this group, and providing psychosocial support to these individuals, as well as equipping them with tools and strategies on how better to engage with their children about their learning and well-being in the home. This could occur through activities where parents are brought into the school to work alongside their children, as well as to connect and engage with other parents/caregivers. Alternatively, given the difficulty many face in reaching schools, use of digital platforms and/or locating such support out of community centres or other venues might support higher participation.

3. In West Bank, there are less immediate psychosocial needs/demands arising out of the pandemic. Rather, attention in West Bank should be directed towards restoring the

sense of safety and security students (and teachers) feel towards both reaching school and being in school. Strengthening protective access measures, while concurrently addressing some of the other issues which might undermine students' sense of safety in school (violence, bullying) are both critical needs at present.

4. In both Gaza and West Bank, there is a clear need to move away from one-sized fits all approaches to supporting learners' social emotional learning and psychosocial recovery, and to acknowledge both the gendered and age-based components of need. Programming for adolescent girls and boys needs to both respond to and seek to transform some of the gendered norms in Palestine which might preclude these young people from asking for and receiving the support they need.

5. There is a need to shift how educational vulnerability is being identified and measured in both Gaza and West Bank. Viewing and measuring vulnerability as the product of access-related constraints to either reaching school, or remaining in school (due to insufficient resourcing, materials, teachers, facilities), is insufficient to understanding to addressing student needs at present. Rather, vulnerability should start by assessing and measuring the outcomes of interest for the education sector in Palestine: learning and well-being. Schools where these outcomes are lowest compared to others should be those deemed more vulnerable and in need of greater support. Such analysis needs to be sufficiently disaggregated by location, gender, age of students, disability status, to truly understand where needs are highest. This is something which both donors need to demand of implementing partners, and which implementing partners need to systematically assess using data they may already be collecting about their interventions. All of this necessitates a mindset shift from collecting programmatic data purely for monitoring and impact purposes towards using such information to shape future responses; and to support wider sector learning and evidence generation efforts.

6. Consideration should be given on how to improve teachers' professional worth, through both improved working conditions (increased salaries and reduction in curriculum demands), but also better support in terms of managing stress and workload constraints. Activities such as teacher-led support and professional learning groups/communities, where they can jointly share and discuss some of these struggles and are equipped with strategies which other teachers have found effective, might be most relevant. During the pandemic these online support networks/communities were established in Palestine, as well as other contexts around the world, and there is now an opportunity to further strengthen and institutionalise them as a regular aspect of teachers' work. In doing so, care must be given to extra demands on teachers' time—noting how stretched they are at present—and weekends should not continue to be used for trainings and other work. Partners, working with the Ministry of Education and UNRWA, need to explore how they can utilise technology and distance-learning approaches more to support teacher professional development, while also drawing more on school-based development approaches.

7. Efforts should be directed towards strengthening the capacity of the education system to deliver learning and well-being programmes to learners in the home, given that disruptions due to ongoing escalations in conflict, teachers' strikes, and other unforeseen events are likely to continue in Palestine. When these are delivered effectively and supported by caregivers, they have been shown to act as protective factors against known risk factors in Palestine. This requires investing in both digital learning technologies and platforms, but also strengthening and supporting partners (and education service providers and teachers) to catalogue, share and generate examples of effective practice during times where they offered support to learners, caregivers and teachers, and wider school communities remotely, and to use these examples of good practice towards increasing their reach, effectiveness and scale.

Palestinian student precipitating at the NRC winter camp, in Beitlahia Elementary School, North of Gaza, in January 2022. Photo: Yousef Hammash/NRC

Annex 1

Survey tool (SLEC-21) and analysis guide for student well-being

Background

The SLEC 21 is a tool that was developed for informing the planning, design, and evaluation of school-based psychosocial interventions in education in emergencies contexts. The tool helps measures promotors and barriers for learning before and after interventions to track progress in terms of both academic functioning and well-being. It was designed to monitoring progress of the Better Learning Programme intervention but has since been proven to be research validated tool.

Note: Highlighted questions in English and Arabic are those which comprised the SLEC-9 used from 2020 onwards

The tool (English)

Student Learning in Emergency Checklist (SLEC-21)
(For children between 10-16 years old)

A. Please fill in the blanks below:

Name (Optional):			Area:	
Age:			Grade:	
Gender:	(M)	(F)	Section:	
Name of school:				

B. Please answer the following:

Have you ever participated with the teacher in classroom sessions about calming down exercises and how to deal with stressful and traumatic events?

Yes		No	

If the answer is yes, how many sessions (classes) did you participate in?

One session (class)	Two sessions (Classes)	Three sessions (Classes)	Four Sessions (Classes)

Have you ever participated with the teacher in class sessions on study skills (weekly agenda and homework note)?

Yes		No	

Have you ever participated with the counselor or other students in sessions about nightmares and sleep problems?

Yes		No	

Please read each of the statements below and tick the box which best indicates how you feel to each of them.

1. I can control my temper (or anger).

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

2. I feel safe at home.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

3. I feel safe inside school.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

4. When I am scared, I can calm myself down.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

5. It is easy for me to accomplish my goals.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

6. If I am in trouble, I can think of a solution.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

7. When I feel angry, I can calm myself down.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

8. Someone in the school staff (a teacher or the principal or the counselor) ask me how I am doing.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

9. I can talk to my parents/caregiver about my worries.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

10. Someone in the school staff (the teacher or the principal or the counselor) support me when I feel scared.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

11. When I feel scared, I can tell my parents/caregivers.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

12. I can easily concentrate when doing schoolwork.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

13. I am able to do my best in school.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

14. I like being at school.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

15. I can talk to someone in the school staff (the teacher or the principal or the counselor) about my worries.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

16. My parents/caregivers ask me how I am doing.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

17. I will graduate school.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

18. Things will turn out better in the future.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

19. I feel the teachers and the school staff respect me.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

20. I am confident that I can adapt to events that I had not predicted.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

21. I have friends at schools

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Never

Thank you so much for participating!

The tool (Arabic)

العنوان: أداة مراجعه تعلم الطلاب في حالات الطواريء

الاستخدام: لدواعي البحث في المجلس النرويجي

أ- الرجاء تعبئة المعلومات التاليه:

	المنطقه			الاسم (اختياري):
	الصف:			العمر:
	الشعبة:	(أنثى)	(ذكر)	الجنس:
				اسم المدرسة:

ب- الرجاء الاجابة على الجمل التاليه:

هل سبق و شاركت مع المعلم في جلسات صفية حول تمارين التهدئة و كيفية التعامل مع الاحداث الضاغطة و الصادمة؟

	لا		نعم

اذا كانت الاجابة نعم، كم عدد الجلسات (الحصص) التي شاركت بها؟

جلسة (حصة) واحدة	جلستين (حصتين)	ثلاث جلسات (حصص)	أربع جلسات (حصص)

هل سبق و شاركت مع المعلم في جلسات صفية حول مهارات الدراسة (الاجندة الاسبوعية و مذكرة الواجب المنزلي)؟

	لا		نعم

هل سبق و شاركت مع المرشد او طلاب اخرين في جلسات عن الكوابيس و مشاكل النوم؟

	لا		نعم

1 استطيع السيطرة على اعصابي (أو غضبي)

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

2 أشعر بالامان في البيت.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

3 أشعر باﻻمان في داخل المدرسة.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

4 عندما أكون خائفاً يمكنني أن أهدأ نفسي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

5 من السهل علي تحقيق أهدافي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

6 اذا كنت في مشكلة يمكنني أن أفكر في الحل.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

7 عندما أكون غاضباً يمكنني تهدئة نفسي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

8 شخص ما من طاقم المدرسة (المعلم او مدير المدرسة او المرشد المدرسي) يسألني عن أحوالي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

9 يمكنني التحدث مع والداي/ ولي امري حول مخاوفي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

10 شخص ما من طاقم المدرسة (المعلم او مدير المدرسة او المرشد المدرسي) يدعمني عندما اكون خائفاً.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

	أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

11 يمكنني أن اخبر والداي/ ولي امري عندما اشعر بالخوف.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

12 أستطيع التركيز بسهولة عندما أقوم بالاعمال المدرسية

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

13 أنا قادر على بذل أقصى ما لدي في المدرسة.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

14 أحب أن أكون في مدرستي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

15 أستطيع التحدث مع شخص ما من طاقم المدرسة (المعلم او مدير المدرسة او المرشد المدرسي) حول مخاوفي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

16 يسألني والدَي/ ولي امري عن أحوالي.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

17 سوف اتخرج من المدرسة.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

18 ان الامور سوف تتغير الى الافضل في المستقبل.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

19 أشعر أن معلمي وطاقم المدرسة يحترموني.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

20 أنا على ثقة بأنني أستطيع التكيف مع أحداث لم أكن أتوقعها.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

21 لدي اصدقاء في المدرسه.

أبداً	نادراً	احيانا	دائماً

شكرا جزيلاً على مشاركتك

Scoring and analysis

To calculate an overall well-being score:

1. Score each response as follows: Never=1, Rarely=2, Sometimes=3, and Always=4

2. Add up the total score for Q2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 16, 18, 20

3. Divide by 9 to reach the overall well-being score for that particular student

Annex 2

Teacher well-being tool

Background

In 2021, NRC released its draft *Teachers and Caregivers Well-Being Framework*, recognising the important role these two groups play in providing a support network for children's well-being. The framework articulates four dimensions of what constitutes teachers' well-being based on global evidence. These are: job stress and burnout, job satisfaction, professional self-efficacy, and social emotional competence. As part of prior research the University of Auckland carried out in Jordan, a survey was developed to capture these elements of teacher well-being but were further broken down into several sub-scales based on using internationally validated tools and measures. This survey is the product of significant field testing, adaptation and validation in both Jordan and Palestine and has been proven to be research-valid in both contexts.

The tool (in English)

Dear education personnel at the school:

When you participate in this survey, you are helping those working to support education in Palestine learn more about the situation in your school and community. The University of Auckland and Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) are using the information in a research project, funded through the European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations Office (ECHO).

Participation is voluntary and all information is kept anonymous. You will not be asked to, and should not write your name, or provide any other identifying details, other than the name of your school on this questionnaire. Additionally, your responses are private and will not be shared with anyone besides members of the research team who have all signed confidentiality agreements.

Completing this survey is likely to take one hour of your time. By submitting this survey, you are providing your permission for us to use and analyse your responses for this research. Should you wish to not participate in the survey, please do not submit the survey. Once you submit your responses, to the survey, they cannot be withdrawn.

Thank you so much for participating!

Part A: Demographic information

Please tick the box or fill in the response for each of the questions below.

1. Gender:

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. I have been working as a teacher for:

☐ Less than one year

☐ 1-4 years

☐ 5-9 years

Þ 10 or more years

3. My school is located in:

☐ Gaza

☐ West Bank

4. Select the name of your school (from drop down list based on whether they select Gaza or West Bank and which includes names of all schools)

5. Which trainings run by NRC have you ever participated in (select all that apply):

☐ BLP I

☐ BLP II

☐ Supporting the supporters

☐ Did not participate in NRC trainings

Part B: Questions about you, your students, and your school

Please read each statement and indicate your level of agreement to each of the statements below which relate to how you feel and relate to your work, your school or your students. If you cannot respond to a particular statement because it is not relevant to your current situation, please tick the unsure or cannot answer box.

No	Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure or cannot answer
5	I can contribute to improving the well-being of my students					
6	I meet the goals that I set for myself					
7	I can come up with good questions to ask my students					

8	I can use computers for word processing, internet searching and email communication quite well					
9	My principal/supervisor is aware of my needs					
10	My work as a teacher is exhausting					
11	I feel connected to the teachers at my school					
12	If I could decide again, I would still choose to work as a teacher					
13	I can navigate the internet to provide links and resources to students in an online course					
14	I can motivate students who show low interest in completing their work					
15	I can respond to a student who shows obvious signs of distress					
16	I have enough energy for my family and friends after a day of teaching my students					
17	I can create a learning environment that fosters a sense of safety and belonging for all students					
18	I regret that I decided to become a teacher					
19	I am able to pursue my goals in life					
20	I can get students to believe that they can do well in their schoolwork					
21	I get along well with other teachers at my school					
22	I feel proud of what I am able to achieve as a teacher with my students					
23	I can navigate the online learning platforms available to us as teachers to successfully teach my lessons					
24	I can engage all of the students in my class					

25	I wonder whether it would have been better to choose another profession					
26	I feel supported by other teachers at my school					
27	My principal/supervisor ensures teachers are involved in decision-making					
28	I can think of ways to get out of a difficult situation					
29	I can use a variety of approaches to instruct my students					
30	I feel like I fit in among the other teachers at my school					
31	I can help students' value learning					
32	I can encourage students to think creatively					
33	I have been successful in my life					
34	My principal/supervisor inspires new ideas for my professional learning					
35	I feel exhausted in the morning by the thought of another day at work					
36	I feel safe at my school					
37	I have been concerned about my physical safety at school					
38	If I report unsafe or dangerous behaviours in or around my school, I can be sure the problem will be taken care of					
39	I feel safe when entering and leaving my school building					
40	I feel safe getting to and from my school each day					

The tool (in Arabic)

استبيان العاملين في مجال التعليم

الإصدار: 2021

السيدات والسادة الأفاضل العاملين في المدرسة،

تحية طيبة وبعد،

تقوم وزارة التربية والتعليم و بالشراكة مع المجلس النرويجي للاجئين (NRC) وجامعة أوكلاند، بمشروع بحثي ممول من المفوضية الأوروبية للمساعدات الإنسانية والحماية المدنية (ECHO) بهدف معرفة الأوضاع الحالية للمدارس الفلسطينية وأثرها على جودة مخرجات العملية التعليمية في المدرسة.

عندما تشارك في تعبئة هذه الاستبانة فإنك تساعد الباحثين في معرفة المزيد عن الوضع في مدرستك والمجتمع الذي تعيش فيه، إن المشاركة في هذه الاستبانة طوعية، كما أن جميع البيانات التي سوف يتم الحصول عليها سيتم التعامل معها بطريقة سرية. ولن يُطلب منك كتابة اسمك، أو تقديم أي تفاصيل تعريفية أخرى، باستثناء اسم مدرستك في هذه الاستبانة.

إكمال هذه الاستبانة من الممكن أن يستغرق دقائق من وقتك، وبمجرد الإجابة على جميع الأسئلة، فإنك تمنح فريق البحث الاذن باستخدام وتحليل اجاباتك.

في حال رغبت بعدم المشاركة في هذه الاستبانة، يرجى عدم الإجابة على الأسئلة. لأنه في حالة تسليم الاستبانة، فانه لا يمكن سحبها.

هل توافق على المشاركة في الإستبيان؟

☐ نعم

☐ لا

الجزء أ: المعلومات الديموغرافية

يرجى وضع علامة في المربع أو ملء الإجابة لكل سؤال من الأسئلة أدناه.

1 الجنس:

☐ ذكر

☐ انثى

2 أعمل كمدرس منذ:

☐ أقل من سنة

☐ 1-4 سنوات

☐ 5-9 سنوات

☐ 10 سنوات أو أكثر

3 تقع مدرستي في:

☐ قطاع غزة

☐ الضفة الغربية

4 حدد اسم مدرستك (من القائمة بناءً على ما إذا كانت في غزة أو الضفة الغربية والتي تتضمن أسماء جميع المدارس)

5 .5 ما هي التدريبات التي يديرها المجلس النرويجي للاجئين والتي شاركت فيها من قبل (حدد كل ما ينطبق):

☐ نحو تعلم أفضل 1

☐ نحو تعلم أفضل 2

☐ دعم الداعمين

☐ لم أشارك في أي برنامج

الجزء ب: أسئلة عنك وعن طلابك وعن مدرستك

العبارات اللتي سأتلوها عليك تتعلق بما تشعر به تجاه عملك و مدرستك و طلابك، الرجاء ان تحدد مدى موافقتك عليها. لكل عبارة، يمكنك الاختيار من بين أحد الخيارات الأربعة التالية: لا أوافق بشدة، لا أوافق، أوافق، أوافق بشدة. إذا كنت تشعر أن إحدى العبارات لا تنطبق عليك أو أنك لا يمكنك الإجابة عنها ، فيرجى اختيار «غير متأكد أو لا يمكنني الإجابة»

غير متأكد أو لا يمكنني الإجابة	لا أوافق بشدة	لا أوافق	أوافق	أوافق بشدة	العبارة	الرقم
					يمكنني المساهمة في تحسين العافية و الراحة النفسية لطلابي أو طالباتي	5
					أحقق الأهداف التي أحددها لنفسي	6
					يمكنني التفكير بأسئلة جيدة لطرحها على طلابي	7
					يمكنني استخدام أجهزة الكمبيوتر للكتابة والبحث عبر الإنترنت والتواصل عبر البريد الإلكتروني بشكل جيد	8
					مديري / مشرفي على دراية باحتياجاتي	9
					عملي كمدرس مرهق	10
					أشعر بالارتباط و التواصل مع المعلمين في مدرستي	11
					إذا كان تم تخييري مرة أخرى ، فسأختار العمل كمعلم	12
					يمكنني تصفح شبكة الإنترنت لتوفير روابط وموارد للطلاب ضمن المواد المقدمة على الإنترنت	13
					يمكنني تحفيز الطلاب الذين يظهرون اهتمامًا ضئيلاً بدراستهم لإكمال واجباتهم	14

					يمكنني التجاوب و التعامل مع الطالب الذي يظهر علامات واضحة على الضيق	15
					لدي طاقة كافية لعائلتي وأصدقائي بعد يوم من تدريس طلابي	16
					يمكنني إنشاء بيئة تعليمية تعزز الشعور بالأمان والانتماء لجميع الطلاب	17
					أشعر بالندم على أنني قررت أن أصبح مدرسًا	18
					أنا قادر على متابعة أهدافي في الحياة	19
					أستطيع أن أجعل الطلاب يؤمنون بأنه يمكنهم القيام بعمل جيد في واجباتهم المدرسية	20
					أتعامل جيدًا مع المعلمين الآخرين في مدرستي	21
					أشعر بالفخر لما يمكنني تحقيقه كمدرس مع طلابي	22
					يمكنني استخدام منصات التعلم عبر الإنترنت المتاحة لنا لتدريس دروسي بنجاح	23
					يمكنني إشراك و زيادة إهتمام جميع الطلاب في صفي	24
					أتساءل ما إذا كان من الأفضل اختيار مهنة أخرى	25
					أشعر بأنني أحصل على الدعم من قبل المعلمين الآخرين في مدرستي	26
					يحرص مدير المدرسة مشاركة المعلمين في صنع القرار	27
					يمكنني التفكير في طرق أو استراتيجيات للخروج من موقف صعب	28
					يمكنني استخدام أساليب متنوعة لتوجيه طلابي	29
					أشعر أنني أتأقلم مع المعلمين الآخرين في مدرستي	30
					يمكنني مساعدة الطلاب على تقدير التعلم	31
					يمكنني تشجيع الطلاب على التفكير بشكل إبداعي	32
					لقد كنت ناجحا في حياتي	33
					يلهمني المدير بأفكارٍ جديدة من أجل تعلمي و تطوري المهني	34

						أشعر بالإرهاق في الصباح عند التفكير في يوم آخر في العمل.	35
						أشعر بالأمان في مدرستي	36
						أقلق بشأن سلامتي الجسدية في المدرسة	37
						إذا أبلغت عن سلوكيات غير آمنة أو خطرة في مدرستي أو حولها، يمكنني التأكد من أن المشكلة ستتم معالجتها	38
						أشعر بالأمان عند الدخول ومغادرة مبنى مدرستي	39
						أشعر بالأمان عند الوصول من وإلى مدرستي يوميا	40

Scoring and Analysis

Within this survey are several different subscales, for which an average score needs to be calculated for each. To calculate a score for each of the scales:

Score each item as follows (except negative worded items which must be reversed scored and are indicated with a * below): 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, 4=strongly agree.

Add up the following items for each of the subscales and then divide by the total number of items to establish an average score for that teacher for each domain

Scale	Question #'s to total	Total number of items
Professional worth	10*, 12, 16, 18*, 22, 25*, 35*	7
Efficacy to use technology	8, 13, 23	3
Instructional efficacy	7, 29, 32	3
Efficacy to engage students	14, 20, 24, 31	4
School leadership	9, 27, 34	3
Safety	36, 38, 39, 40	4
Efficacy to promote socio-emotional skills and competencies	5, 15, 17	3
School community	11, 21, 26, 30	4
Hope	6, 19, 28, 33	4

Endnotes

1   This is despite the 2018 HIP (p. 5) from ECHO acknowledging that there are a range of factors influencing vulnerability of the Palestinian population including: risk of or having faced forced displacement because of the conflict, households living under the poverty line, proximity to borders/military zones, and those with little or reduced opportunities for livelihoods.

2   See for example USAID (2018). Resilience Evidence Forum Report. Available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1867/0717118_Resilience.pdf

3   UNESCO (2010). *Global Monitoring Report: Reaching the Marginalized.*

4   Diakonia (2018). *The Humanitarian-Development Divide: A False Dichotomy? The International Law Framework for Humanitarian and Development Assistance in a Context of Protracted Occupation.*

5   Shah, R. (2015). Protecting children in a situation of ongoing conflict: Is resilience sufficient as the end product? *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction, 14*, 179-185. 10.1016/j.ijdrr.2015.06.003

6   Massad (2018); Abdul-Hamid, H., Patrinos, H., Reyes, J., Kelcey, J., & Diaz Varela, A. (2015). Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. In Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0706-0; Abdul-Hamid, H., Patrinos, H., Reyes, J., Kelcey, J., & Diaz Varela, A. (2015). Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. In Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0706-0; Akesson, B. (2015). School as a place of violence and hope: Tensions of education for children and families in post-intifada Palestine. International Journal of Educational Development, 41, 192–199. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.08.001

7   See Shah, R. 2019. *Transforming Systems in Times of Adversity: Education and Resilience White Paper.* USAID Education in Conflict and Crisis Network.

8   See for example the UN Sustainable Development Group's report from April 2020 or INEE's *Learning Must Go On: Recommendations for keeping children safe and learning during and after the COVID-19 crisis.*

9   See https://covid19.uis.unesco.org/global-monitoring-school-closures-covid19/country-dashboard/

10 See findings from the first stage of the *Learning on the Margins* research here. It was found, for example that participation rates in distance/remote learning were significantly lower in Gaza, and specifically in the more vulnerable communities, than other parts of Palestine. Additionally, households lacking internet connectivity in Gaza were 3 times less likely to have children participating in distance learning activities than those who were connected.

11 Hamad, F. K. (2021). Palestinian Mothers' Perceptions about Online Learning at Public and Private Elementary Schools during COVID19: Challenges and Recommendations. *Pedagogical Research*, 6(3), em0098. https://doi.org/10.29333/pr/11009; Awad, Ola (2022) Education in COVID 19: From disruption to recovery. See https://www.palestineeconomy.ps/en/Article/17670/Education-in-COVID-19-From-disruption-to-recovery

12 See World Bank (2022). Economic Monitoring Report to the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee; UN (2022). Report on UNCTAD assistance to the Palestinian people: Developments in the economy of the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

13 See PCBS (2021). Socio-economic and Food Security Survey 2020: State of Palestine.

14   See UNICEF (2020). COVID-19 Protection Needs Identification and Analysis in the State of Palestine; General Union on Palestinian Women (2020). Report on Violence Against Women and Girls during COVID-19 in the State of Palestine; UNFPA (2020). Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak and Lockdown on Family Dynamics and Domestic Violence in Palestine.

15 UNESCO, UNICEF, and INEE (2021). The State of the Global Education Crisis; A Path to Recovery.

16 See *Simulating the Potential Impacts of COVID-19 School Closures on Schooling and Learning Outcomes: A Set of Global Estimates.* http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/798061592482682799/covid-and-education-June17-r6.pdf.

17 This is a point stressed in the OCHA OPT COVID-19 Response Plan, which notes (p. 14), there is "further deterioration in MHPSS well-being of the protected population, as the pandemic creates many additional stress factors including social isolation, health-related fears, and stigma and discrimination." This point is also noted in Mohsen, R. (2020). *Repercussions of the Corona Pandemic on the Youth of Gaza Strip.* Written for PNGO Net as well as a recent briefing put out on the Impact of COVID-19 on Global Mental Health, where it is noted that school closures combined with restrictions on movement are taking a tool on children's mental health, affecting brain health and development and increasing likelihood of prolonged exposure to toxic stress (p. 5-6).

18 See https://www.nrc.no/globalassets/pdf/reports/learning-on-the-margins/learning-on-the-margins.pdf

19 See OECD (2020), «Give teachers a say: Facing the challenge of teachers' work-related stress in the COVID-19 crisis», *Teaching in Focus*, No. 36, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/05da3183-en.

20 See Abu Moghli, M. and Shuyab, M. (2020). *Education under COVID 19 Lockdown: Reflections from Parents, Teachers and Students.* Available at https://inee.org/system/files/resources/booklet-covid-19-22july.pdf

21 See Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2022). Measuring the Impact of Attacks on Education in Palestine.

22 See Save the Children (2022). 2022 Becomes the Deadliest Year for Palestinian Children in the West Bank in over 15 Years.

23 Massad (2018); Abdul-Hamid, H., Patrinos, H., Reyes, J., Kelcey, J., & Diaz Varela, A. (2015). Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. In Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0706-0; Abdul-Hamid, H., Patrinos, H., Reyes, J., Kelcey, J., & Diaz Varela, A. (2015). Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. In Learning in the Face of Adversity: The UNRWA Education Program for Palestine Refugees. https://doi.org/10.1596/978-1-4648-0706-0; Akesson, B. (2015). School as a place of violence and hope: Tensions of education for children and families in post-intifada Palestine. International Journal of Educational Development, 41, 192–199. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2014.08.001

24 Grey literature are materials and research produced by organisations outside of the traditional commercial or academic publishing and distribution channels. Common grey literature publication types include reports, working papers, government documents, white papers and evaluations produced by UN agencies, donors, implementing partners or other civil society organisations.

25 The full report from this first phase of research, exploring Objective 1 of the research is available here.

26 This is despite the 2018 HIP (p. 5) from ECHO acknowledging that there are a range of factors influencing vulnerability of the Palestinian population including: risk of or having faced forced displacement because of the conflict, households living under the poverty line, proximity to borders/military zones, and those with little or reduced opportunities for livelihoods.

27 The limitation with this list is that it does not include any UNRWA schools.

28 Schools located within the Old City of Jerusalem, in Bedouin Areas, the Old City of Hebron, in close proximity to settlements, or behind the Separation wall, are all classified as falling under the most vulnerable category.

29 These five dimensions are seen as the core attributes of recovery for children exposed to disasters and mass violence and stand as the foundation for the design of the Better Learning Programme activities according to *Norwegian Refugee Council's Global Framework on Child Well Being and Learning* (2020). When well-being is used throughout this report, it refers to these attributes, which research suggests are critical to recovery, and a child's capacity to learn (Hobfoll et. al, 2007; Brymer, et. al, 2013).

30 See https://inee.org/resources/student-learning-emergency-checklist-slec

31 Students respond to each of the statements/items using a four-point scale: 1=never, 2=rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=always.

32 To test for the internal consistency between individual items in a single scale/grouping analysis calculating Cronbach's alpha is utilised. When Cronbach alpha >= 0.70 it is deemed that there is sufficiently high consistency to allow items to be grouped together under a single construct (or concept), in this case well-being (Hulin, Netemeyer, and Cudeck, 2001). For all years (2019-2022) that this was the case.

33 The full survey is appended. In most instances (and unless otherwise noted in the scoring guidelines accompanying the survey), all items within an individual subscale were aggreggated together and then a mean (average) scaore reported for that subscale. All responses are on a four-point Likert-like scale of frequency from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), agree (3), strongly agree (4). Reliability for all subscales was tested using Cronbach alpha. In both years, Cronbach alpha was found to be >=0.70 for all subscales.

34 NRC supports implementation of the BLP in more than just these number of schools from year to year, but these are the schools where NRC was active in 2019 and continues to be active through to present. Additionally, in some cases, data from schools where data was available could not be used as the sample of students in the school was not comparable. This is often because the age and grade level of students across the years was not consistent. Noting that grade level does have an impact on student well-being, this then meant not using data from schools where the samples were not comparable. For example in Gaza, two schools from which data was collected could not be included in the analysis, while in West Bank data from all 20 schools was included but in some instances students data from a specific grade or gender was excluded.

35 This mean that in all cases $p>0.05$ in terms of Chi Square tests (outside the realm of statistical significance).

36 Ravi Gokani, Aline Bogossian & Bree Akesson (2015) Occupying masculinities: fathering in the Palestinian territories, *NORMA*, 10:3-4, 203-218, DOI: 10.1080/18902138.2015.1102898

37 NRC. 2020. *Covid-19 Rapid Assessment: Mapping the Impact on Households in Gaza and the West Bank;* OCHA. 2020. *Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPt) Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021 (December 2020).* https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/occupied-palestinian-territory-opt-humanitarian-needs-overview.

38 OCHA. 2020. *Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPt) Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021 (December 2020).* https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/occupied-palestinian-territory-opt-humanitarian-needs-overview.

39 Gaza Protection Consortium. 2020. *Baseline Household Vulnerability Assessment.* https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/gpc_gaza_baseline_vulnerability_assessment_november_2020.pdf.

40 UNICEF. 2020. *State of Palestine Humanitarian Situation Report: End of Year 2020.*

41 Larzillière, Pénélope. 2004. *To Be Young in Palestine: Translation by William Snow of the Book Etre Jeune En Palestine.* Paris: Balland. https://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00464037.

42 Child Protection. 2020. *COVID-19 Protection Needs Identification and Analysis in the State of Palestine.* https://www.unicef.org/sop/media/1476/file/COVID-19 Protection Needs Identification and Analysis in the State of Palestine.pdf.

43 Hamad, Shoroq, Eman Abu Hamra, Riyad Diab, Bassam Abu Hamad, Nicola Jones, and Agnieszka Małachowska. 2020. *Listening to Young People's Voices under Covid-19: Exploring the Impacts of Covid-19 on Adolescents in the Gaza Strip.* Policy Brief. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence. https://www.gage.odi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Exploring-the-impacts-of-covid-19-on-adolescents-in-the-Gaza-Strip.pdf .

44 Hamad, Shoroq, Eman Abu Hamra, Riyad Diab, Bassam Abu Hamad, Nicola Jones, and Agnieszka Małachowska. 2020. *Listening to Young People's Voices under Covid-19: Exploring the Impacts of Covid-19 on Adolescents in the Gaza Strip.* Policy Brief. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence. https://www.gage.odi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Exploring-the-impacts-of-covid-19-on-adolescents-in-the-Gaza-Strip.pdf .

45 Hamad, Shoroq, Eman Abu Hamra, Riyad Diab, Bassam Abu Hamad, Nicola Jones, and Agnieszka Małachowska. 2020. *Listening to Young People's Voices under Covid-19: Exploring the Impacts of Covid-19 on Adolescents in the Gaza Strip.* Policy Brief. London: Gender and Adolescence: Global Evidence. https://www.gage.odi.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Exploring-the-impacts-of-covid-19-on-adolescents-in-the-Gaza-Strip.pdf .

46 UN Women, and Promundu. 2017. *Understanding Masculinities: Result from the International Men and Gender Equality Survey (Palestine).*

47   Child Protection. 2020. *COVID-19 Protection Needs Identification and Analysis in the State of Palestine.* https://www.unicef.org/sop/media/1476/file/COVID-19 Protection Needs Identification and Analysis in the State of Palestine.pdf.

48   Marsh, Rachael, Theodosia Salika, Sarah Crozier, Sian Robinson, Cyrus Cooper, Keith Godfrey, Hazel Inskip, and Janis Baird. 2019. The Association between Crowding within Households and Behavioural Problems in Children: Longitudinal Data from the Southampton Women's Survey. *Paediatric and Perinatal Epidemiology* 33 (3): 195–203. https://doi.org/10.1111/ppe.12550.

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