

MAKING CITIZENSHIP A SHARED NATIONAL PRACTICE

SCHOOL OF
POLICY B

September 2026

**Year One evidence and priorities
for institutional partnership**

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POLICY BRIEF

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for institutional partnership**

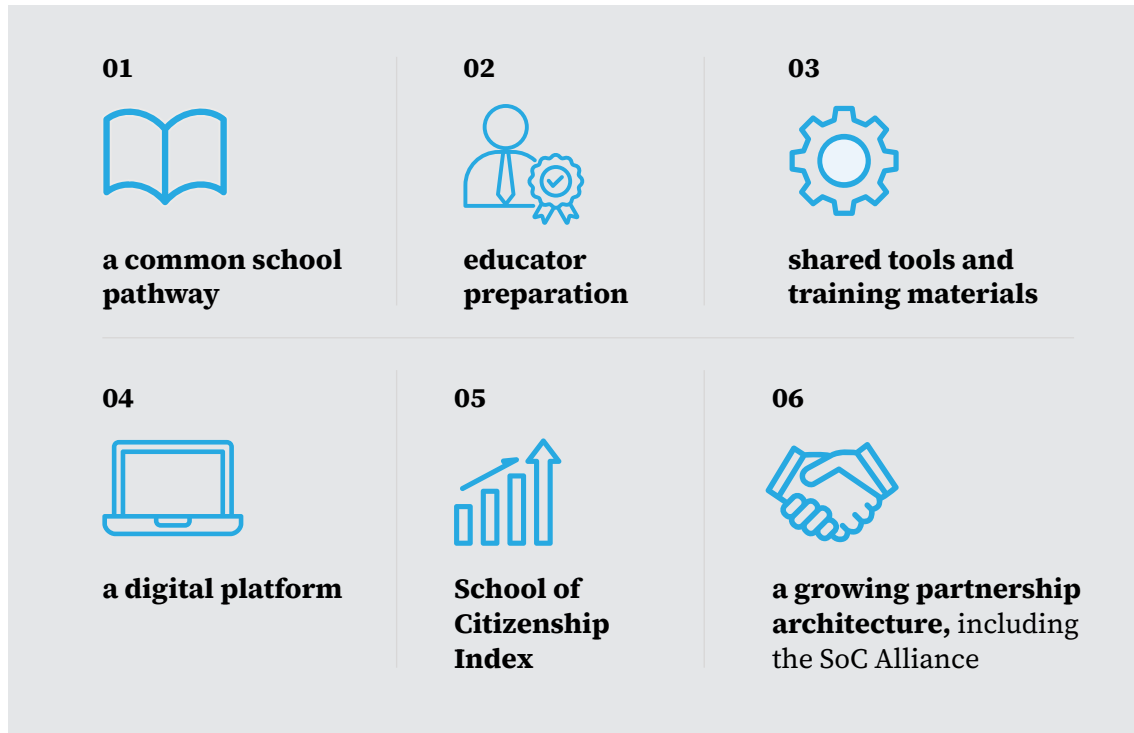


The School of Citizenship (SOC) is a nationally led initiative that brings citizenship education and citizenship practice into a shared framework across Lebanon. Launched It was launched at the Presidential Palace in October 2025 under the leadership and patronage of First Lady Nehmat Aoun and in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE), the UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the American University of Beirut (AUB) and Arcenciel. SOC brings together schools, public institutions, universities, civil society and international partners around a common national vision. A Steering Committee chaired by the First Lady oversees the initiative and provides strategic direction and budget oversight.

SOC's significance lies in having created more than a stand-alone program or informal coordination network:

Year One established the foundations of a nationally led platform for citizenship in practice.

In its first year, SoC developed:



Together, these elements provide a system through which schools and partners can connect citizenship learning with participation, responsibility and community engagement, while adapting practice to different school and local contexts. [1]

Governance and national ownership

SoC combines national leadership with shared institutional responsibility.

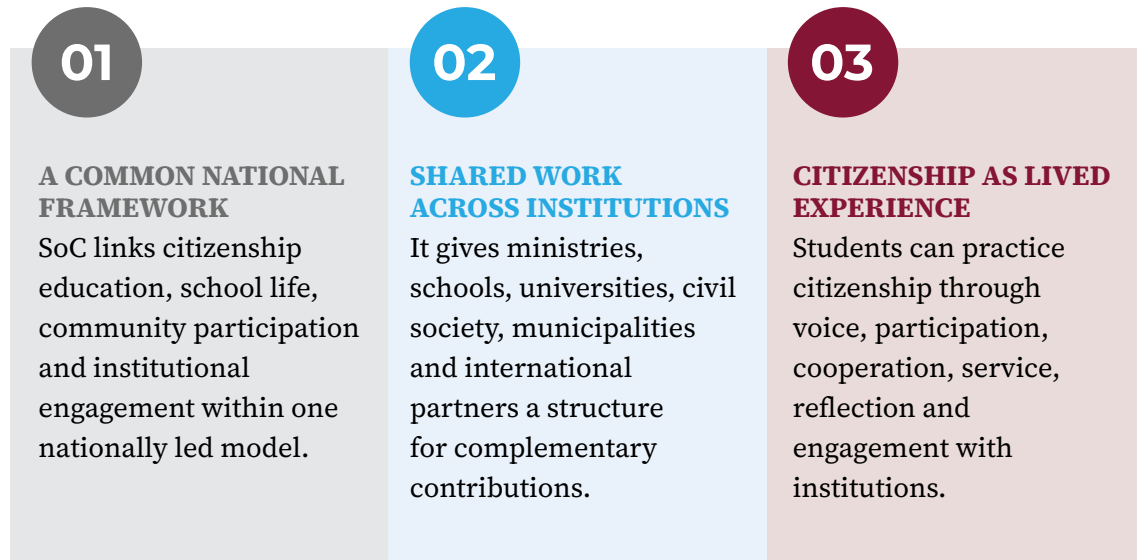
First Lady Nehmat Aoun chairs the SoC Steering Committee, whose responsibilities include oversight of the initiative's strategic direction and budget [2]. Her office also maintained engagement with participating school principals during Year One, connecting national leadership with implementation across participating schools. [1]

The Year One evaluation identifies this national ownership as one of

SoC's distinctive strengths. Consulted stakeholders associated national leadership with credibility, visibility and motivation to participate. This national stewardship is complemented by a multi-stakeholder partnership model involving education authorities, schools and school networks, universities, civil society organizations, international organizations and technical partners, each contributing through its own role and expertise. [1]

1. WHY SoC MATTERS NATIONALLY

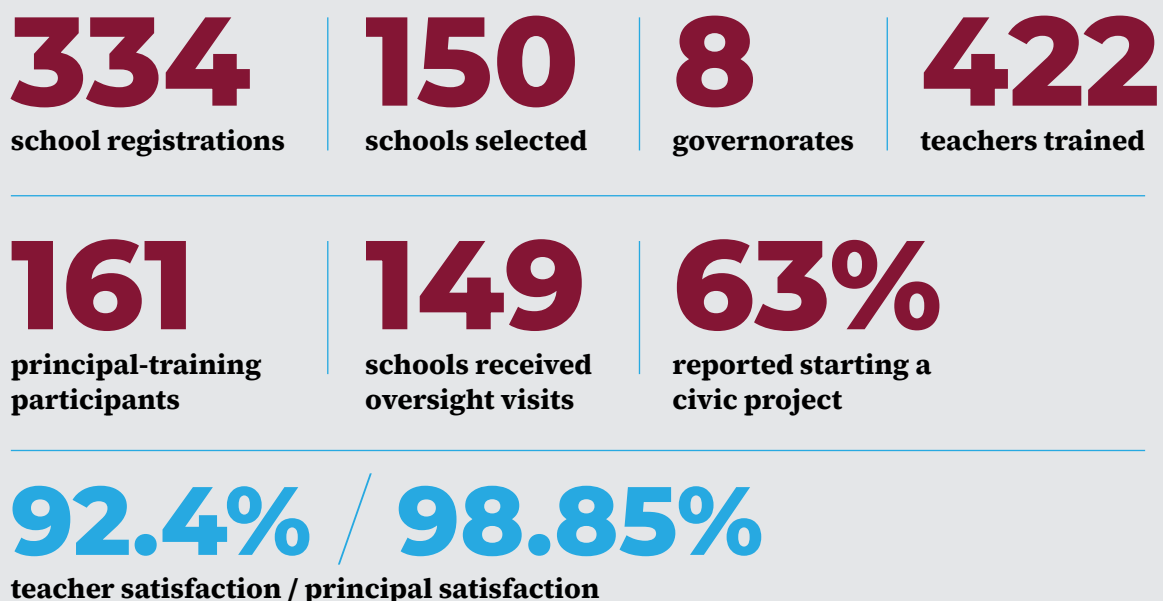
SoC is important because it moves citizenship beyond a classroom subject or a series of isolated activities. It creates a common architecture through which learning can be connected to participation, responsibility, community engagement and interaction with institutions. [1]



What Year One established

Year One did more than deliver activities. It established the foundations of an operating national model: a common school participation pathway, educator and school-leader preparation, shared tools and training materials, a digital platform, the School of Citizenship Index, monitoring arrangements and a growing partnership architecture that includes the SoC Alliance. [1]

YEAR ONE AT A GLANCE



Regional significance

A regional first

UNESCO identifies the SoC pilot as making Lebanon the first country in the Arab region to put the 2023 UNESCO Recommendation on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development into practice at school level. [3]

Four values at the center of the model



Solidarity
Working with others and across differences.



Responsibility
Understanding rights, duties and consequences.



Engagement
Participating meaningfully in school and community life.



Belonging
Building a connection to school, community and wider society.



Recommendations at a glance

The brief translates Year One evidence into three connected policy directions. The first two provide the institutional foundation; the third turns that foundation into repeated citizenship practice. Two cross-cutting commitments apply across all three: (A) equitable access and (B) shared knowledge and policy learning. [1]

 POLICY DIRECTION	 WHO IS INVOLVED	 EVIDENCE CONNECTION
01. Establish SoC as Lebanon's national platform for advancing citizenship in practice 	SoC leadership; MEHE and the Center for Educational Research and Development (CRDP); schools and school networks; students and educators; SoC Alliance and other partners	Relevance and coherence: formalize SoC's coordinating role by building on the national framework already established, connecting shared priorities, school experience and complementary expertise, and making support and opportunities easier to access.
02. Institutionalize and sustain cooperation 	SoC; participating ministries and public institutions; schools and school networks; universities; Alliance members; international actors and support partners	Coherence, efficiency and sustainability: move from relationships that may depend on individual projects or actors toward clearer institutional contributions, focal points, annual planning, sustained support and recurring review.
03. Make citizenship a recurring and lived experience through five practical pathways 	Education authorities; schools; relevant ministries and public bodies; municipalities; school networks; universities; youth, civic and community partner	Relevance and effectiveness: translate the national model into repeated opportunities for preparation, participation, reflection, institutional engagement and student-led practice

PARTNER GROUP	CONTRIBUTION TO THE INITIATIVE
Strategic partners	MEHE, UNESCO, AUB, arcenciel and Alem contribute to national alignment, strategic vision and core program mechanisms. [4]
Education partners	CRDP contributes to educator preparation. MEHE counselors undertook public-school oversight; volunteers visited private schools. [1]
Schools and school networks	Principals and educators organize participation, support students and connect citizenship learning with everyday school life. [1]
AUB / Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship	Monitoring and evaluation connect implementation evidence with learning and policy analysis, as set out in the program's theory of change. [1]
Technical partners / SoC Alliance	More than 20 technical partners form the SoC Alliance. The model is designed to match school needs with specialized training, resources, mentoring and technical assistance; the Year One evaluation notes that planned tailored support was deferred to a subsequent phase. [1]
Sponsors	Sponsor support contributes to program continuity and is distinct from governance, educational delivery and technical expertise. [1]

2. YEAR ONE EVIDENCE: FINDINGS ACROSS FIVE EVALUATION DIMENSIONS

The evaluation combined program records, monitoring data and available training assessments with interviews and group discussions. It examined relevance, coherence, efficiency and effectiveness, while exploring sustainability and broader impact pathways. The five headings below follow the report's findings. [1]

DIMENSION	WHAT YEAR ONE SHOWS AND WHAT IT IMPLIES
RELEVANCE 	SoC responds to the gap between citizenship knowledge and lived practice; schools are a sustained setting for participation. Next-phase implication: Widen age-appropriate student and educator participation and strengthen school-family-community links.
COHERENCE 	National leadership, complementary partners and existing school practices provide a coherent foundation. Next-phase implication: Clarify institutional contributions and sustain school-to-school exchange
EFFICIENCY 	Core delivery continued through adaptation; timing, follow-up and platform constraints generated practical lessons. Next-phase implication: Agree on predictable planning, designated contacts, accessible support and reliable reporting.
EFFECTIVENESS 	Educator learning and student-led civic initiatives provide encouraging early evidence of practical application. Next-phase implication: Connect training with reflection, coaching, repeated practice and needs-based Alliance assistance.
SUSTAINABILITY 	Schools expressed motivation to continue; MEHE is the most direct institutional pathway for the school-based model. Next-phase implication: Embed agreed approaches in regular institutional work, with continued support and peer learning.

3. THE PROBLEM: FROM CITIZENSHIP KNOWLEDGE TO LIVED PRACTICE

Lebanon faces a persistent citizenship challenge as social cohesion remains fragile, and strengthening inclusive citizenship is particularly important. The challenge is not simply what young people know about citizenship, but whether they have meaningful opportunities to experience and practice it- through equal dignity, shared responsibility, cooperation across differences, participation and engagement with the institutions and communities around them. Schools are especially important because they provide a sustained environment in which these experiences can become part of young people's everyday lives. [1]

The policy challenge

The issue is not the absence of citizenship activity in Lebanon. It is how to connect existing education, service, volunteering and civic participation more coherently, widen access to meaningful practice, and sustain institutional relationships over time. [1]

What the evidence points to

The Year One evidence therefore points toward a clear national policy direction: build on SoC's existing national architecture while creating more regular, inclusive and sustained opportunities for young people to practice citizenship across school, community and institutional life. This direction is organized around three connected priorities.



4. POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

The policy framework is organized around three connected layers.

The first defines the national role SoC should consolidate: **Lebanon's national coordinating platform for citizenship in practice.**

The second sets out how that role should be institutionalized and sustained.

The third identifies **five policy pathways** through which the platform can translate citizenship learning into sustained practice, supported by two cross-cutting commitments: (A) equitable access and (B) **shared knowledge and policy learning.**

01

Policy Recommendation 1:

Establish SoC as Lebanon's national platform for advancing citizenship in practice

Lead partners: SoC leadership, education authorities, schools and school networks, and the SoC Alliance, with students, educators, universities, civil society organizations and international partners contributing through their respective roles. [1]

SoC enters the next phase with an operating national model already in place. The priority is to make the framework more connected, accessible and sustainable while preserving local initiative. [1]

	PRIORITY	WHAT IT MEANS IN PRACTICE
	Shared national priorities	Agree on a focused set of priorities informed by students, educators and institutions - for example social cohesion, rights awareness, inclusion, environmental responsibility, responsible digital citizenship and constructive institutional engagement.
	Alliance as a knowledge network	Keep an accessible record of what each partner can contribute, the needs addressed, its reach and capacity, and the responsible contact person.
	Accessible routes for schools	Use transparent request and referral channels; provide differentiated support for schools with fewer resources or weaker connections.
	Beyond the school	Strengthen links with families, municipalities, universities, community organizations and public institutions.
	Student and educator voice	Use students' and educators' experience to identify priorities, barriers and improvements in SoC pathways and support mechanisms.

SoC's national value lies precisely in this combination: a common national framework, strong institutional partnerships and meaningful participation by the schools, educators and young people who translate citizenship into everyday practice.

02

Policy Recommendation 2: Institutionalize and Sustain Cooperation

The second recommendation is to move from relationships that may depend on individual projects or people toward clear institutional contributions that can continue across program cycles and changes in personnel.

Participating groups: SoC; MEHE and other relevant public institutions; schools and school networks; Alliance members; universities; civil society; international partners; and sponsors. Contributions should be agreed with each institution through its own mandate, capacity and approval procedures.

SHARED CITIZENSHIP CHARTER	INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENTS
• A concise common reference on equal dignity, rights and responsibilities, respect for diversity, nonviolence, participation, solidarity and the common good. • A partnership reference - not a new law, regulatory instrument or substitute for institutional authority. • A way to preserve shared purpose across program cycles and personnel changes.	• For each institution: contribution, intended recipients, focal point, capacity, delivery period and review arrangements. • Use written and, where feasible, multi-year commitments linked to institutions' regular work. • Keep commitments realistic and within institutional mandates and available staffing and resources.

Institutionalization cycle

INSTITUTIONALIZATION CYCLE	PRACTICAL OUTPUT
Map existing contributions	Update the existing record of partners, expertise and opportunities.
Agree on common principles	A Shared Citizenship Charter for participating institutions.
Formalize contributions	Written commitments describing capacity, responsibility and duration.
Designate focal points	Institutional and school contacts, with local or cluster support where useful.
Plan annually	A common calendar, named responsibilities and agreed support.
Implement and document	Records of delivery, participation, support and follow-up.
Review and adapt	Feedback from students, educators and partners informs practical adjustments.
Renew commitments	Carry relationships, learning and agreed responsibilities into the next cycle.

Continuity through existing institutions

Keep the model light

Institutional focal points, school contacts and local or cluster contacts can make cooperation dependable without creating a large new administrative structure. [1]

A joint roadmap should distinguish what remains under SoC leadership and what public institutions can progressively support through their own structures.

MEHE and CRDP are central to educational guidance, educator preparation and school follow-up. Complementary roles for the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA), the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities, and the Ministry of Youth and Sports should be defined through dialogue. The purpose is to embed approaches, tools and learning - not transfer ownership of SoC. [1]

The Alliance should sustain specialized knowledge and accessible resources.

Institutional focal points maintain partner commitments; school contacts organize participation; local or cluster contacts can connect schools with guidance and help with problem-solving. These roles should make cooperation more dependable without adding a large administrative structure. [1]



03

Policy Recommendation 3: Make Citizenship a Recurring Experience

The five pathways translate the national platform into repeated experiences for students. Secondary education is the pilot entry point, with progressive extension to younger learners. Each pathway identifies the actors best placed to lead; proposed responsibilities require institutional agreement. [1]

01

CITIZENSHIP PRACTICE & COMMUNITY SERVICE

Lead:

MEHE, CRDP, schools and hosts

Build on the existing secondary-school framework rather than introduce a separate SoC requirement. Decision 607/M/2016 sets a 60-hour requirement: 45 hours of service and 15 hours of planning, preparation, discussion and evaluation. Clarify approval, supervision and recognition; connect service to learning and reflection. [5]

02

STUDENT VOICE & FAIR SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Lead:

Schools; supported by MEHE / CRDP

Embed voice in councils, classroom dialogue, small-group discussion and written suggestions. Define what is open to input and explain which proposals can proceed, which require adaptation and why. [1]

03

SCHOOL-INSTITUTION PARTNERSHIPS

Lead:

Schools, relevant public bodies and Alliance partners

Students investigate a concern, identify the responsible institution, obtain relevant information, present proposals and follow up. Agreements should include a contact, supervision and a reasoned response process. [1]

04

COOPERATION ACROSS SCHOOLS & REGIONS

Lead:

School networks and MEHE / CRDP; SoC facilitates

Use repeated joint work across public and private sectors, regions and communities - not a single exchange event. Pair practical cooperation with reflection and educator peer learning. [1]

05

PARTICIPATION BEYOND SCHOOL**Lead:**

**Ministry of Youth and Sports,
universities, vocational institutions
and municipalities**

Link school experience to voluntary routes in further education, youth organizations, community life and work. Clarify entry, supervision and access, including for young people outside or new to SoC.

**WHAT MAKES ALL FIVE
“CITIZENSHIP PRACTICE”**

- **Preparation before action.**
- **Meaningful participation.**
- **Reflection and a clear institutional link.**
- **Safe, accessible participation.**

Two commitments across all five pathways

A.**Equitable access**

- Address barriers involving income, disability, transport, geography, school resources, language, digital access and interrupted education.
- Plan accessible venues, materials and school-based or nearby alternatives.
- Recognize meaningful learning and contribution in relation to circumstances - not project cost or public visibility.

B.**Shared knowledge & policy learning**

- Turn recurring school experience into usable guidance and policy learning.
- Route questions to the institution able to respond - for example service recognition to MEHE or educational preparation to CRDP.
- Protect privacy, dignity, research independence and students' freedom of judgment.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS BY STAKEHOLDER

1. Government and International Actors

These are proposed contributions for agreement. Each public institution acts within its mandate and retains authority over its policies, services and decisions. Student participation supports learning and dialogue; it does not replace professional or public responsibilities. [1]

STAKEHOLDER	MAIN ROLE	FIRST OUTPUT
MEHE	Set the school policy framework; link SoC to procedures; clarify current application of the 60-hour service framework; simplify approvals and reporting.	Implementation note: departments, contacts, support and 60-hour guidance.
CRDP	Set learning expectations, age progression, curriculum links, educator preparation, reflection, coaching and peer learning.	Practical guidance from preparation to participation, reflection and follow-up.
MOSA and Social Development Centers	Link schools with local needs, supervised opportunities and existing volunteering channels, within the centers' capacity.	Named local contacts and suitable supervised opportunities.
Ministry of Interior and Municipalities	Facilitate school-municipality links and channels for constructive student engagement with local authorities.	Partnership format with contacts, suitable issues and a follow-up process.
Municipalities / municipal unions	Open age-appropriate local issues to learning and dialogue; provide reasoned responses while retaining public-service authority.	Ongoing school-municipality relationship with a contact, supervision and a response process.
Ministry of Youth and Sports	Connect SoC to youth organizations, clubs, universities, vocational institutions and municipalities after school.	Documented voluntary pathways with contacts and supervision.

Issue-specific ministries	Provide expertise within their mandates-for example, environment, culture, health, justice, agriculture, mobility and infrastructure.	Short contribution note: expertise, opportunity, capacity, safeguards and contact.
International actors and donors	Provide expertise, comparative learning and resources aligned with Lebanese priorities and a named Lebanese counterpart.	Documented contribution with priority, counterpart, duration, safeguards and review point.

Consultation note

Representatives of MOSA, the Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Interior and Municipalities were not consulted during Year One. Their proposed roles - and those of additional ministries - require dedicated dialogue and institutional agreement. [1]

2. Partners, Schools and the SoC Platform

STAKEHOLDER	MAIN ROLE	FIRST OUTPUT
SoC Alliance	Make expertise easy to find; describe offers by need, geography, capacity and contact; respond to school requests and record feedback.	A current support offer for each participating member.
Universities and vocational institutions	Provide research, educator development, mentoring, expertise and community-engaged learning; open routes beyond school.	Agreed support offer with contact, capacity, period and safeguards.
Think tanks and research centers	Analyze recurring issues and translate evidence into accessible policy knowledge while protecting independence and privacy.	Defined research or knowledge contribution linked to a need.
Nongovernmental organizations, youth groups and community groups	Offer community knowledge, supervised opportunities and inclusion-focused and rights-based support.	Accessible opportunity with clear purpose and safeguarding.
Sponsors and the private sector	Provide transparent financial, in-kind or technical support without determining civic content or participation.	Support commitment with safeguards for educational independence.
Cultural institutions and media	Widen access to cultural and civic life; communicate student work responsibly.	Access or communication offer with clear educational purpose and protections.
Schools and school networks	Put citizenship into annual planning and everyday school life; prepare students and educators; support voice, inclusion, supervision and peer exchange.	Annual citizenship-practice plan and a named school focal point.

Students and families	Help identify concerns, priorities and participation barriers; participate and reflect. Families support safe, accessible participation while respecting student voice.	Student and family input built into planning and review.
SoC platform	Steward the national model; coordinate the work on Charter and roadmap; map expertise; match requests; maintain the calendar, support routes, helpdesk, monitoring and learning arrangements.	One shared work plan linking each action to an institution, a contact, support and a review milestone.

The shared ambition

Students experience citizenship through informed judgment, fair treatment, cooperation and responsibility - supported by schools, institutions and partners that keep these opportunities available over time.

From recommendations to ownership

The purpose of organizing the final recommendations by stakeholder is to make responsibility visible. Each actor can identify the contribution expected of it, the institutional counterpart it should work with and the practical output that would demonstrate progress. The expanded stakeholder roles above ensure that educational authorities, ministries and municipalities, schools and families, knowledge and civic partners, international actors and the SOC platform each have a clear place within the national platform.

Sources and evidence notes

Year One figures and findings come from the evaluation. [1] Official sources supplement information on governance [2], regional significance [3], strategic partners [4] and the community-service framework [5]. New ministry roles, the Charter and the institutionalization roadmap remain proposals for agreement

[1] Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship, American University of Beirut. (2026). *School of Citizenship: Evaluation of Year 1. Final Report*.

[2] School of Citizenship. (n.d.). Who we are. Retrieved October 3, 2026, from <https://schoolofcitizenship.com/who-we-are>

[3] UNESCO. (2025, November 3). *Lebanon launches “The School of Citizenship” to advance education for peace and resilience*.
<https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/lebanon-launches-school-citizenship-advance-education-peace-and-resilience>

[4] School of Citizenship. (n.d.). *Strategic partners*. Retrieved October 3, 2026, from <https://schoolofcitizenship.com/strategic>

[5] Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MEHE). (2016). Decision No. 607/M/2016. Reproduced in Center for Educational Research and Development (CRDP), *Community Service Project Guide* (1st ed., 2016), pp. 24–28.



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