

can't wait to
LEARN.



Can't Wait to Learn

Closing the education gap
through technology

Lebanon



WAR
child

Education in their hands

Can't Wait to Learn is a proven digital game-based learning model designed with and for children affected by conflict.



It is a curriculum-based, context-specific solution, which brings together the know-how of locally based education stakeholders, such as Ministries of Education, international and community-based organisations alongside international expertise in software development, game development and design. The result is a self-guided serious gaming format accessed on tablets that takes children through Ministry of Education approved curriculum, providing opportunity for children to work toward primary level certification. In this way, Can't Wait to Learn aims to reinforce the education pipeline across informal and

formal education, to decrease drop-out rates and encourage transition into formal primary and secondary education. In Lebanon, Can't Wait to Learn is helping Syrian Refugee and Lebanese children currently ineligible for either the government endorsed Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) or formal schools due to either over age or lack of appropriate competency level gain basic maths and reading skills in informal learning centres.

Above — Child playing Lebanon Maths 1-3 game

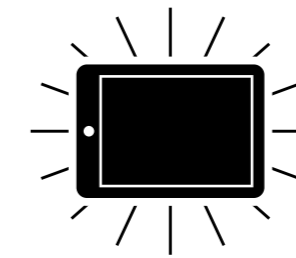
THE SITUATION

HIGH COSTS
+
LONG DISTANCES
+
LANGUAGE DIFFICULTIES
=
NO EDUCATION



AN EDUCATION SYSTEM UNDER PRESSURE

The issue is not only the 286,000 out of school children, but also the stress that increased numbers of children enrolling has had on the current school system.



THE CHALLENGE

NO EDUCATION, NO FUTURE

Almost 60% of the estimated 488,000 Syrian children of school age in Lebanon were not enrolled in public education in the 2016-17 school year and there is a USD 50 million critical gap threatening the enrolment of around 260,000 Lebanese and non-Lebanese children for the 2018-19 school year.

Barriers to education for out of school children in Lebanon include:

- Distances between home and school and insufficient existing public school facilities
- Ability of children to successfully (re-)integrate into formal education due to years spent out of school
- Language of instruction in Lebanon, i.e. technical subjects in French or English, as opposed to Arabic
- Initial intimidation by the Lebanese curriculum, and lack of basic literacy and numeracy skills



THE TRUE COST OF EDUCATION

UNICEF estimates the cost of the loss of human capital resulting from Syrian children missing out on education alone to be US\$10.7 billion; more than 17 percent of Syria's 2010 GDP.



Above — Children learning maths in Lebanon

THEY CAN'T WAIT TO LEARN... NOW THEY DON'T HAVE TO

Can't Wait to Learn offers:



Maths and reading curriculum educative game and full instructional model based on Ministry of Education & Higher Education curricula and requirements



A digital user interface that is adapted to context to support motivation and active, self-paced learning



Diagnostics for every learner which can be aggregated according to Ministry and sector requirements



A delivery mechanism that works across resource-constrained environments

The game world is their world...

Below — Part of the Lebanon Math 1-3 game world



"in every new game, a video appears and we learn from it how to play the game before starting the game [...] It has been very simple, because there has been a video" — **Child, North Lebanon**

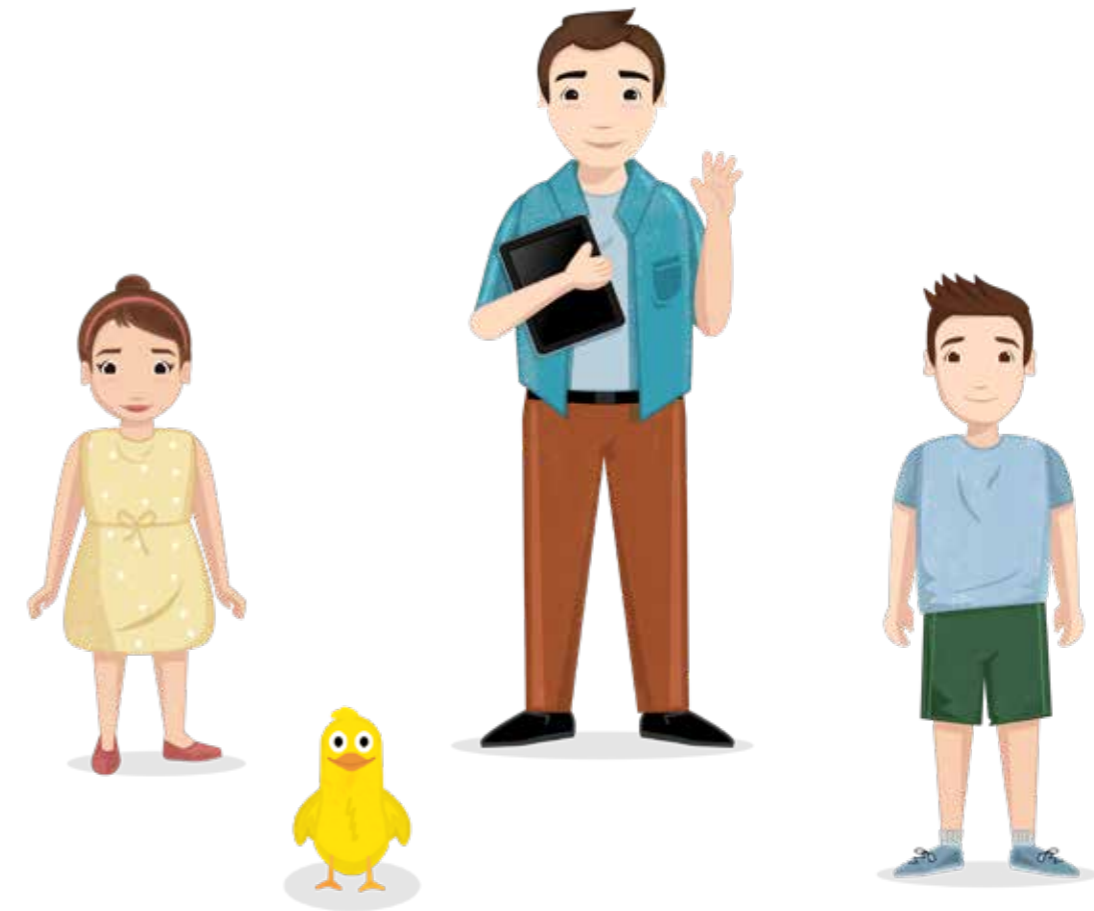
One of the unique features of the approach is that the software is tailored to the relevant national curriculum requirements and, crucially, **designed with target children** to ensure familiarity.

CWTL offers a local interface that reflects children's reality in both the look and feel of the characters and game design and in the game's storyline, which lowers the threshold for children to engage, particularly if new to technology. Instead of learning to recognize new characters, events and circumstances, children become immersed in a world that reflects their own and focus on math and/or reading

...AND THE WORLD THEY WANT TO SEE

During the co-creation of the math game the children expressed the desire for a green and secure world. Therefore the final design is a very green land with low mountain in the distance which gives the game world a friendly and safe feeling.

"I notice them when they get an image of a carpenter or a musician, they feel happy. Thus, they do not feel happy only by solving the questions. The game itself attracts them. They like to win in order to move to another nice place in the game." — **Facilitator, South Lebanon**



Above — Three of the reading game characters (l) Rana likes to play and create. (m) Gameguide Rafic and (r) brother Firas, likes to sport and takes care of his younger brother Rami a lot

Left — Childrens co-creation workshop

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR ALL

The game application can be taken to children who cannot access learning facilities for reasons of physical disability or discrimination. In Lebanon, the most disadvantaged children were included in co-creating the games, resulting in a very inclusive content and design. Implementing partner Forum for the rights of People with Disabilities noted that after one week of playing most of the children chose to forego their Easter break because they wanted to keep playing and finish more game levels.

Nour* is 12 years old and was born with a hearing and speech impediment. She and her family fled from Syria at the beginning of the conflict and they are currently living in an informal tented settlement in Lebanon. With a little help from her 10-year-old brother Ali using sign language, Nour has already finished the first cycle of the Can't Wait to Learn maths game. "Education is everything in my life" Nour explains. "When I grow up, I want to be a teacher." — ...

Replicating success: a scalable model

From the start, War Child and partners have designed Can't Wait to Learn with scale in mind. Research plays a strong part in this. Can't Wait to Learn has been adapted in both Middle East and African settings with strong results, including in Lebanon.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR SCALE AND SUSTAINABILITY

Reflecting the Lebanese education sector's enthusiasm for Can't Wait to Learn, a wide variety of implementing partners are involved in Lebanon. These partners are chosen for their reach, technical skills, willingness to engage with research and ability to support scale-up.

15 local and international partners including Sonbola, Ana Aqra Association, INTERSOS, Terre des Hommes, NRC, LOST, SEED and AVSI have been part of CWTL. They integrated CWTL into their existing programming as part of their informal education interventions designed to support children to re-enter non-formal or formal education.

In 2019, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education started reviewing the Can't Wait to Learn curriculum for potential use in the formal schooling system and the Centre for Educational Research and Development (CERD) - a national organization charged with modernization and development of education - has now asked War Child to submit a concept for introducing Can't Wait to Learn in formal schools.

With positive results, strong partnerships and active Ministry of Education and Higher Education engagement and support, CWTL is poised to scale up and bring education to thousands of conflict-affected children in Lebanon.



Between October 2017 and June 2018, we conducted a practice-driven evaluation of the Lebanon Mathematics 1-5 Can't Wait to Learn programme to determine whether children's mathematics and psychosocial outcomes significantly improved after taking part. Findings show that on average children improved their math mastery score by **7% within just twelve weeks**. Significant improvements on self-esteem scores and psychological symptoms were also noted.

Top — CWTL team test their self developed off-line board game to explain the levels concept to the children

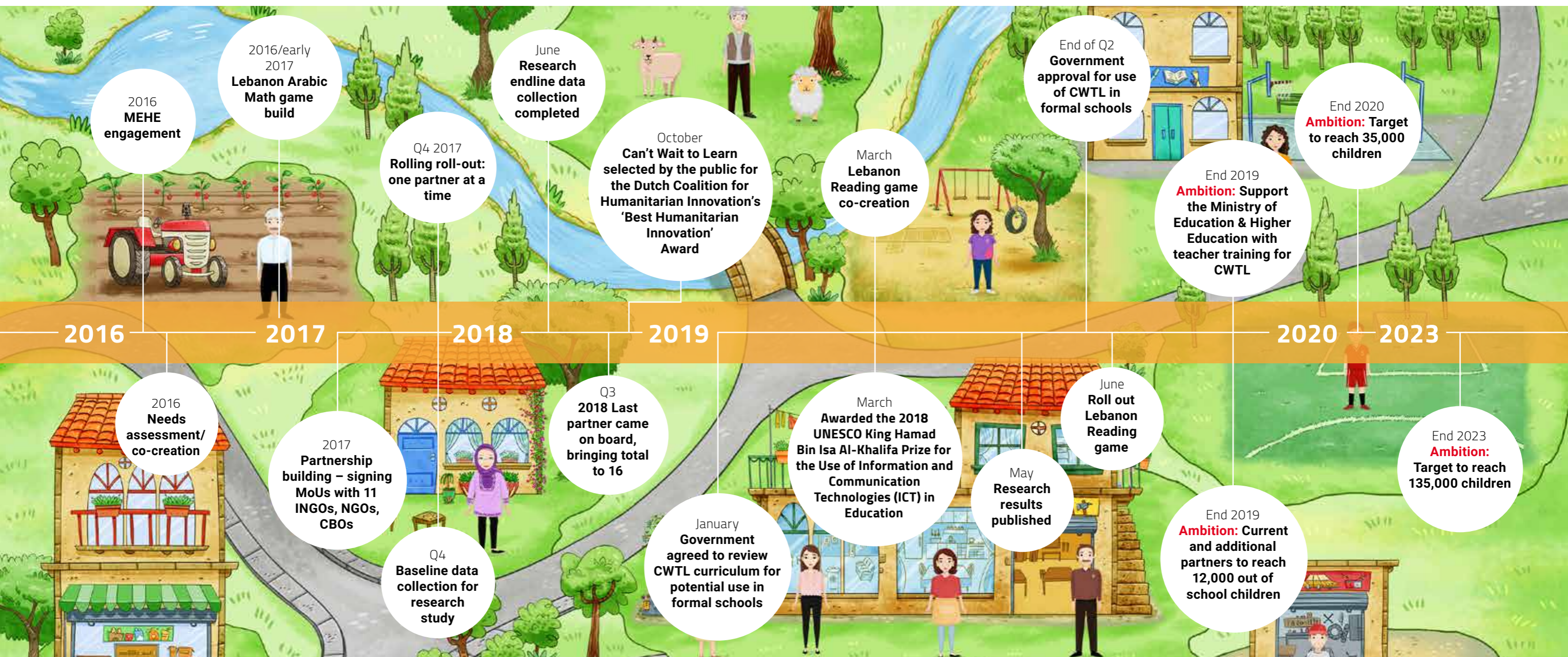
Below — Teacher explaining how to navigate on screen with your finger through paint exercise

Achievements and scale up ambitions

The programme timeline below shows achievements to date and scale up ambitions in Lebanon

Can't Wait to Learn currently offers maths (Grade 1 – 5 equivalent) and reading (Grade 1 to 3 equivalent) across seven governorates of Lebanon; Mount Lebanon, Beqaa, Baalbek-Hermel, South Lebanon, Nabatieh, Akkar and North Lebanon. Games are based on the basic literacy and numeracy (BLN) curriculum for out of school children aged 10-14 that has been developed and recently finalised by War Child upon appointment of Ministry of Education and Higher Education.

Below — Part of the Lebanon Reading Game world



PARTNERSHIPS

Can't Wait to Learn is managed globally by War Child Holland. In Lebanon, War Child works in partnership with 16 international and local NGOs as implementing partners. Ministry of Education and Higher Education – at national and District levels - has been involved at all programme stages, particularly with regards to supporting the formal integration of Can't Wait to Learn as a recognized Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN) approach in Lebanon.



Left — Nisreen the shop owner from the Maths 1-3 game

In Lebanon Can't Wait to Learn receives support and advice from:



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