

IRFAN Schools

Semkanieh / Sofar / Dahr El Ahmar / Hasbaya / El Bsatine

Evolution and Distribution

The first Irfan School was the one created in 1973 at Semkanieh / Shouf in the Lebanese central district of Mount LEBANON. That first branch received students from some forty villages in the surrounding region. Five years later and responding to the calls of the public and the community, the expansion of Irfan's services started with the creation of a new school in SOFAR in the casa of ALEY(1978) and a third in DAHR EL AHMAR in southern BEKAA(1979) followed by the fourth in Hasbaya/ south Lebanon(1987). That expansion was renewed later in 1988 with the creation of Irfan's fifth branch in EL BSATINE (CASA of Aley). later in 1993 Irfan succeeded in topping its school development plans with its new secondary school that was erected in SEMKANIEH just few hundred meters away from its oldest and main branch where also sits the Hospital of the Establishment.



Irfan schools are all qualified as N.G.O.'s, as they are parts of the mother Irfan charitable est., therefore, and wherever they exist, Irfan schools implement the same educational and social service strategies drawn by the Irfan Est., and offer to their surrounding regions the same reliable, modern and quality proven educational services even when these services are offered on a non profit basis.

Irfan schools insure top quality education, and offer a large and considerable amount of aids and support to those who can't afford to pay for their children's tuition, thus protecting the unfortunate kids from losing their future chances and opportunities, by becoming lettered at least, or well educated at best, why, in both cases, and between the two extremes, they will have more chances in facing the future and its difficulties on all levels. Irfan works hard on making the new generations become more beneficial to their country and follow citizens.

Since its establishment in 1973, Irfan schools have always kept on improving on all: size, capacity and quality levels, and reached today a well respected position between its similar. Throughout the past ten years, Irfan School's management was able to regroup many of the most known professionals in the education field, and have put them to work in the service of some five thousand school kids and youngsters, of both sexes, in some 250 classrooms, supported by computer and science laboratories, audiovisual rooms and the best possible inside and outside activities programs.

In its continuous effort to realize a better future for our new generations, Irfan schools' management is carefully implementing a wide range of self development techniques, involving all its instructors and most of its managerial cadres, why, and since 1991, Irfan's management has fully reestablished and completely reformed its educational programs and teaching techniques, and has also completed the rehabilitation of many of Irfan's teachers, each in his/her own specialty. This training program is implemented either on local terrains in Lebanon or abroad in cooperation with Irfan's international cultural partners. New teaching techniques and the use of modern supporting utilities in education, added to special emphasis on languages are all items of interest on which Irfan's management fully concentrates and makes available to the students.

IRFAN Schools' Education Support Program

Responding to the critical economical situation, and to the, unfortunately, always degrading social conditions in Lebanon, even though war has already ended several years ago, Irfan's management keeps on executing its social relief plans as it did during the war, therefore, Irfan school, still takes in, hundreds of poor and unfortunate kids into the classrooms every year as a part of its continuing social support and relief program.

“Approximate” yearly, tuitions reduction and support..

Number of orphan kids on the Irfan students roll	150 (full grants)
Number of most poor and unfortunate students	1200
Number of 40 to 60 % tuition grants	700
Number of 20 to 40 % tuition grants	1800

Total amount of the grants > **1500, 000 \$./ Year**

Irfan schools (general/ basic info).

<i>Number of Irfan's operating branches throughout LEBANON</i>	006
<i>Number of Irfan schools</i>	010
<i>Number of teachers, coordinators and education counselors</i>	430
<i>Number of other employees, (contractors, drivers)</i>	120
<i>Irfan School seats capacity</i>	5000

(Irfan plans to reach the capacity of 6000 seats by the year 2010)

Irfan schools yearly budget is mainly spent on two important and priority sectors, the first is on wages and salaries, while the second is spent on maintenance and for basic supplies and operation back up, especially transport, heating and buildings rehabilitation. Those two elements of the operation exhaust the budget and make it difficult for the management to implement the planned development projects. Therefore, Irfan depends on out of budget sources, like cooperation protocols or other cooperation means with local or international partners every time the need for development arises, or when it comes to major rehabilitation or main equipment projects.

Irfan School accords a special attention to modern technologies used in the teaching process thru the integration of modern audio-visual and computer supporting programs into its regular teaching curriculum, added to a wide range of multidisciplinary science and art laboratories put into the service of its teachers and students. Irfan's museum and art gallery that was inaugurated by the late Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik El Hariri, represents today a focus point of interest to Irfan's visitors, where are exposed hundreds of items, ranging from Irfan students top selection of science projects, to several pieces of artifacts, added to a particularly rare photos gallery showing a line of historic events and people that are, high up, and important in Irfan's history.

The School's Mission Statement

The founding of Irfan School in 1973 was not a simple coincidence. In fact, it was in response to real needs generated from the absence of sufficient number of schools in the rural regions of Mount Lebanon and southern Bekaa. Schools were then scarce and lacking the necessary cadres and seat capacity as to cope with the needs of the residents. That situation was then, the reason behind high numbers of illiteracy and unemployment in the mountainous and rural villages where agriculture was the main source of income.

Since 1973, Irfan was up to the challenge, why, and in less than 4 decades, Irfan schools' education policies made it possible for Irfan to reach the highest ranks of success in Lebanon. Thousands of students graduated from Irfan schools and hundreds of them already made it to the top on both scientific and professional levels. Irfan is proud of them all and is now preparing a new generation of talented and promising teenagers to follow on the path of success.

Irfan School's management plays today an important role on the national educational reform scene thru a set of advanced cooperation activities shared with the Lebanese governmental and non governmental authorities especially in the reform of the national teaching programs. Irfan specialists have already helped in developing the Lebanese educational system in cooperation with the national bodies and leagues of teachers and schools.

Irfan offers today, private sector, quality education to the general public in an ambiance of a public school with the cost of an NGO, and that, is a true realization of Irfan's mission.

IRFAN's Social Action

The economic recovery in Lebanon keeps on confronting many difficulties since the end of the war thus generating several severe social problems hitting hard and heavy at the doors of thousands of households especially in the rural and mountainous regions where sluggish and unstable economic situations make it impossible for hundreds of families to recover. Thousands of social cases are generated from such conditions added to a high number of orphans, displaced, or families affected by displacement and war. No exact statistics are made on the national level so as to find out the number or percentage of families living under the line of poverty, and what is the number of orphans, nor is it possible to find out how many are unemployed and have financial problems but, what Irfan is sure of, is what it truly faces, daily, with some 3000 out of 4500 students enrolled in its six branches and are in need for care and support. This number includes orphans, poor and special case students.



(Orphans and poor kids are in the hundreds, while special cases kids are those who come from families where the working parent is either sick or unemployed, the parents are divorced, etc...)

Facing such a situation Irfan spends lots of efforts on finding or creating jobs for hundreds of unemployed parents, help in social reconciliation, teaching capable women, and girls over the age of 18 a selection of in-house professions thus creating sources of income without forcing women-parents to leave their households and on many occasions helping in financing equipment and accessories needed for such professions.

In line with this social development and care activity and to meet the requirements of the ministry of social affairs Irfan created a system of internal lodging for orphans and most poor kids to whom the ministry of social affairs offer a share of the needed support that Irfan offers already.

According to Lebanese laws, the Ministry of Social Affairs doesn't recognize the school's request to support orphans unless they are housed in a special home (internat). Irfan thinks that a natural family surrounding and a normal house and family life is more adequate both socially and psychologically for the children but the need for the governmental support presses and made it necessary for Irfan to create such a system of lodging and caring.

This "house for social care" project includes the creation of Six internat residences meant to cope with the basic needs of some 600 orphan and poor kids in the five regions where Irfan operates. Irfan concentrates presently on the good implementation of this most important social development and relief project with the cooperation of the ministry of social affairs and NGO's working in this field.