

The Role of Municipality Budgets in Improving the Well-being of Children in Algerian Society - A Case Study of 53 Municipalities in Algeria

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Abstract

In recognition of the importance of comprehensive human development, the international community increasingly acknowledges the significant returns on investment in childhood. This recognition has translated into agreements and protocols guaranteeing greater rights and well-being for children. This focus extends beyond governments and non-governmental organizations, reaching local groups and cities. Given their close proximity to children, local governments have a heightened responsibility towards this age group. This study examines this responsibility by analyzing the allocation of local financial resources dedicated to children. The research finds that, on average, over 9% of city and local community budgets are directed towards childhood well-being. These expenditures encompass a broad range of areas, including education, culture, health, and even entertainment and play areas. Notably, education and educational infrastructure represent the largest per-child spending category within the studied cities.

Keywords: *Child-Friendly Cities, Local Government Budget, Childhood Expenses, Education Expenses, Municipality Budgets.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The concept of inherited wealth has evolved beyond tangible assets. Today's children are born into a rich world, inheriting not just physical capital like factories and roads, but also human capital in the form of educational and healthcare infrastructure, communication networks, and social institutions. This inheritance forms the foundation for their future well-being.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child underscores the responsibility of governments to allocate resources for child well-being. Increasingly, governments recognize that investing in children is not just about protecting rights, but also about generating future economic and social returns. Studies, such as those conducted in the United States and Latin America, have shown a significant return on investment in early childhood intervention programs.

South Africa's Childhood Budget Initiative exemplifies a growing trend of integrating child-focused spending into national budgets. In Algeria, the need for effective child welfare necessitates a collaborative approach. Local authorities, owing to their proximity to citizens and extensive territorial reach, are considered a crucial element in this framework.

Beyond legislative frameworks, local authorities require adequate financial resources to fulfill their child welfare mandates. This research seeks to answer the following questions:

What is the extent of local financial allocation for children across municipalities in Algeria?

Do all municipalities engage in child-related expenditures, or are there variations?

In which areas do municipalities allocate their budgets for child well-being?

To address these questions and their implications, we posit the following hypotheses:

- ✓ The Algerian legal framework provides a foundation for local spending on child-related areas.
- ✓ Despite budgetary constraints, municipalities continue to make significant financial efforts in supporting children.

2. FROM THE CONCEPT OF LOCAL COMMUNITIES IN ALGERIA TO THE CONCEPT OF CHILD-FRIENDLY CITIES:

The concept of a city has evolved beyond simply a place for residence and work. Modern cities are expected to fulfill a broader range of needs, fostering a healthy living environment. One crucial aspect is becoming child-friendly, a concept with growing recognition in both Western and modern Arabic contexts. This concept goes beyond a mere label. It envisions cities and local communities as ideal environments where children can exercise all their rights. Child-friendly cities prioritize child protection and development, integrating these goals into their core objectives.

2.1. What are child-friendly cities?

The concept of child-friendly cities transcends size or location, encompassing both urban and rural communities. This framework serves as a foundation, adaptable to the specific needs of each city. The Child-Friendly Cities Initiative emerged in response to several key trends, including globalization, rapid urbanization, and decentralization. Decentralization has placed greater responsibility on local authorities, while the growing importance of child-friendly cities reflects this shift. In 1996, the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) in Istanbul called for cities to become inclusive living spaces. The Convention on the Rights of the Child reinforces this notion and all urban children deserve access to basic services and development opportunities, regardless of their living situation. Definitions of child-friendly cities vary depending on the source (organization or researcher) and their perspective. UNICEF defines it as a local government system committed to fulfilling children's rights, ensuring every child can¹:

- ✓ Influence decisions and voice their opinions.
- ✓ Access essential services.
- ✓ Be protected from exploitation, violence, and abuse.
- ✓ Live in safe housing and navigate safely.
- ✓ Receive education, recreation, and opportunities for play.
- ✓ Enjoy green spaces within the city.
- ✓ Live in a pollution-free environment.
- ✓ Participate in cultural and social events.
- ✓ Have equal access to all services within their city.

Professor John Makhoul² defines child-friendly cities as those that address a child's complete well-being, encompassing psychological, social, and emotional needs. This includes infrastructure like roads and schools, as well as recreational spaces like playgrounds and parks. He further emphasizes the importance of child participation, ensuring children have a voice and can contribute to decision-making processes according to their abilities.

Professor Othman Al-Hassan Muhammad Nour³ offers a two-pronged perspective on child-friendly cities.

- **Legal Perspective:** A child-friendly city fosters opportunities for all children to develop their talents, access essential resources for survival and growth, and receive care and protection. It also provides children with the chance to participate in decisions impacting their lives.
- **Environmental Perspective:** This perspective focuses on children's rights within the context of urban expansion, population growth, and increasing numbers of low-income families. It emphasizes creating better living and recreational environments for children in cities.

Professor Nour views child-friendly cities as a local government system dedicated to fully implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child. This translates national commitment to child rights into actionable steps at the city level, where children live and can influence decisions affecting their lives.

2.2. Founding principles⁴: Child-friendly cities are grounded in the four core principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child:

- ✓ **Non-discrimination:** This principle ensures equal access to services and rights for all children within a city, regardless of background. It necessitates a shift in social attitudes to prioritize providing services and guaranteeing rights for every child.
- ✓ **Best Interests of the Child:** All city institutions, programs, and activities must prioritize the well-being of children. Policies and programs should be rigorously assessed to ensure they have a positive impact on children's lives.
- ✓ **Right to Survival and Development:** This principle focuses on improving service delivery, physical environment, and living conditions. The goal is to foster optimal development for children, encompassing psychological, physical, spiritual, mental, and moral aspects.
- ✓ **Respect for Children's Views:** Children have the right to be heard. City planning and decision-making processes should incorporate mechanisms for listening to children's opinions and taking them into account when formulating policies and programs that affect them.

2.3. Pillars of building child-friendly cities: Building child-friendly cities constitutes the direction that the local government follows in implementing the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and it aims to improve the living conditions of children today by recognizing and realizing their rights, and thus moving the societies of today and tomorrow towards the better. Building child-friendly cities is a practical process in which children must participate and have a positive impact on their daily living conditions⁵.

2.4. Building child-friendly cities is based on

- ✓ **Children's Participation:** This core principle emphasizes informing children about their rights, involving them in issues affecting their lives, respecting their opinions and experiences. It recognizes children as partners, rights holders, and equal citizens.
- ✓ **Child-Friendly Legal Framework:** Local authorities play a crucial role in ensuring their legislation promotes and protects children's rights. They should also advocate for the development of national legislation with the same objective.
- ✓ **Developing a City-Wide Strategy:** Formulating a comprehensive strategy for children's rights requires participation from children, citizens, and neighboring cities. This local plan should align with national planning and be backed by a strong political commitment at the highest levels to empower those implementing it.
- ✓ **Child Rights Unit/Coordination Committee:** The administrative structure varies by location, but a dedicated unit or committee focused on children's rights is essential. Regardless of the system, ensuring child-friendly cities requires informing the administration about children's needs and the best approaches to meet them. This unit/committee, ideally prioritized within the local government and closely linked to the mayor's/governor's office, plays a key role:
 - Monitoring the implementation of the city's child rights strategy.
 - Ensuring effective coordination, follow-up, and evaluation.
 - Collaborating with other government departments serving children, with a focus on integrating children's perspectives and prioritizing them in all official city procedures.
- ✓ **Evaluating the Impact on Children:** The Convention on the Rights of the Child obligates all levels of government, including local authorities, to prioritize the best interests of children in all child-related measures. To uphold this, local authorities must meticulously evaluate the potential impact of any law, policy, or administrative decision on children.
- ✓ **Budgeting for Children:** The city budget is a crucial tool for policy implementation. Analyzing the budget's impact on children is essential. The Convention requires states to maximize available resources to promote children's economic, social, and cultural rights. Without a detailed budget analysis and measurement of how each budget item affects children and their rights, it's impossible to gauge the city's success in fulfilling its obligations.

Local authorities should advocate for national legislation and budgets that prioritize children's rights and ensure they receive a fair share of national resources.

Since funding for basic services like education and health is often determined nationally, local authorities should explore possibilities for redistributing existing resources to better address children's needs, ensuring no discrimination.

The budget preparation process should be simplified and made accessible to all citizens, including children, who should be meaningfully involved in budget discussions and approval.

- ✓ **Promoting Children's Rights:** For maximum benefit, human rights, including children's rights, need to be universally known and respected. In a child-friendly city, all entities working with and for children actively promote children's rights as rights holders. The Convention entrusts states with the responsibility to widely disseminate the Convention's principles and provisions to both adults and children through appropriate and effective means.

3. LOCAL FINANCIAL EFFORTS IN THE FIELD OF CHILDHOOD (A CASE STUDY OF 53 MUNICIPALITIES IN ALGERIA):

Algeria's transition from a directed economy to a market economy was accompanied by a redefined role for the state. This involved granting municipalities greater decentralization in decision-making, development program preparation, and public spending plans. Municipalities now have broader powers to target specific groups in various fields, including education, school health, culture, and sports. Notably, they are equipped with material, financial, human, and technological resources to promote greater well-being. Among these groups, children are a primary focus.

Local governments, particularly municipalities, cannot effectively care for children without guaranteed financial resources to address their material and human needs. This is the crux of this study: we will examine the financial expenditures allocated by various municipalities for childhood programs. The study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to analyze the collected data. The research will proceed in stages. First, we will identify the most significant expenditure categories to lay the groundwork for the analysis. We will then delve directly into analyzing data from 53 municipalities for the year 2023. Finally, we will compare this data to information from 2022 to determine trends in financial allocations for children at the municipal level. It is important to note that data and figures are extracted from the administrative accounts of the municipalities under study. This approach ensures we analyze actual expenditures. The data for 2023 is the most recent year for which comprehensive data collection was possible.

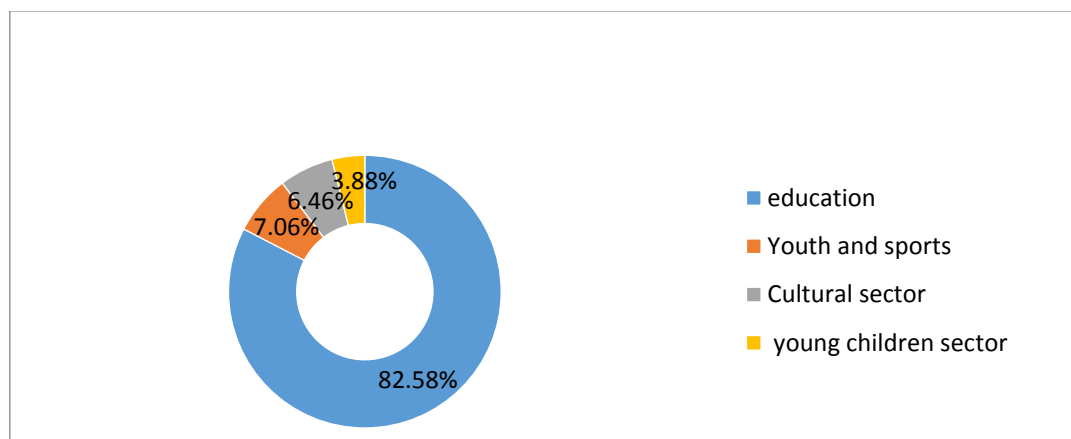


Figure 1: Relative circle for the distribution of childhood expenses by areas

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023.

According to data from 2023, the 53 municipalities collectively spent approximately 686.25 million Algerian dinars on childhood programs. This represents 9.05% of their total budget. Education expenses accounted for the largest share (566.77 million dinars), constituting 82.59% of total childhood expenditures in that year.

Further analysis reveals that employee expenses comprised 329.29 million dinars, or approximately 48% of the childhood budget. This figure excludes education expenses.

Compared to 2022, childhood expenditures in 2023 saw a significant decrease. In 2022, these expenses totaled 867.61 million dinars, resulting in a per capita allocation of 919.42 dinars for each resident in the municipalities under study. Consequently, the per capita share in 2023 dropped by 195.45 dinars. The primary reason for this decline is attributed to a decrease in management expenses for basic education in 2023. Interestingly, employee expenses as a proportion of childhood expenditures decreased as well, from 66.38% in 2022 to 52.01% in 2023.

Table 1: Per Capita Childhood Expenditures by Each Municipality:

N	municipalities	Per capita childhood expenses	N	municipalities	Per capita childhood expenses
1	maghnia	297,61	28	Ouad lakhdar	146,82
2	Hamam	597,72	29	Sidi djilali	209,60
3	gazaouat	3 176,94	30	bouihi	1 042,63
4	Dar yagmoracen	86,64	31	chetouan	3 823,68
5	swahlia	2 545,37	32	Ain feza	792,53
6	tiant	42,40	33	amiyer	3 981,54
7	sabra	264,27	34	honin	499,26
8	bouhlou	533,54	35	Beni khalalad	203,08
9	nedrouma	1 046,58	36	Beni snous	667,07
10	djebala	3 233,31	37	azail	1 103,13
11	ramchi	7 882,36	38	Beni bahdel	353,83
12	Ain youcef	399,27	39	Sidi bousid	3 845,16
13	Bani oursouce	444,04	40	Sidi medjahed	339,83
14	Sea chioukh	802,06	41	Marsa benmhidi	1 697,39
15	fhoul	216,10	42	Msirda faka	4 610,56
16	sebdou	3 919,54	43	falaocen	471,02
17	gour	1 131,45	44	Ain kbira	1 197,81
18	aricha	389,45	45	Ain fatah	623,01
19	Bab assa	6 088,96	46	Ain talout	770,68
20	swani	934,65	47	Ain nahala	532,56
21	Soum tlatha	1 278,03	48	bensakran	229,44
22	mansoura	3 646,99	49	Sidi abdli	6 412,35
23	tirni	1 796,13	50	hnaya	677,58
24	Ain graba	411,27	51	znata	230,98
25	Beni mester	890,01	52	Awlad riah	2 184,19
26	Aoulad mimoun	305,30	53	tlemcen	11 552,01
27	Beni smail	24,01		AVARAGE	723,97

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023.

The table presented details the per capita share of childhood expenses for each resident in the studied municipalities. This value is calculated by dividing the total childhood expenses in each municipality by its resident population.

The table reveals an average per capita share of childhood expenses across the 53 municipalities of 723.97 Algerian dinars for the year 2023. However, significant variation exists. Twenty-six municipalities fall below this average, with some exhibiting very low per capita allocations. For example, the municipalities of Tiant (42.40 dinars) and Beni Smil (24.01 dinars) demonstrate this disparity. Similarly, Beni Senous exhibits a per capita share close to this low range.

Conversely, 27 municipalities exceed the average, with some achieving remarkably high rates. Tlemcen leads the pack with an estimated per capita average of 11,552.01 Algerian dinars. Other notable municipalities include Sidi Abdali (6,412.35 dinars), Ghazaouet (3,176.94 dinars), and Jbala (3,233.31 dinars).

Table 2: Percentage of Childhood Expenditures out of Total Expenditure:

N	municipalities	Percentage of childhood expenses out of total spending %	N	municipalities	Percentage of childhood expenses out of total spending %
1	maghnia	7,42	28	Ouad lakhdar	3,13
2	Hamam	10,36	29	Sidi djilali	5,67
3	gazaouat	10,22	30	bouihi	7,01
4	Dar yagmoracen	4,58	31	chetouan	8,52
5	swahlia	12,66	32	Ain feza	5,59
6	tiant	1,48	33	amiyer	14,20
7	sabra	6,85	34	honin	9,17
8	bouhlou	8,40	35	Beni khalalad	11,10
9	nedrouma	4,71	36	Beni snous	9,56
10	djebala	25,54	37	azail	13,69
11	ramchi	11,21	38	Beni bahdel	13,26
12	Ain youcef	3,44	39	Sidi bousid	33,18
13	Bani oursouce	16,68	40	Sidi medjahed	13,29
14	Sea chioukh	25,89	41	Marsa benmhidi	5,68
15	fhoul	4,55	42	Msirda faka	18,11
16	sebdou	7,55	43	falaocen	5,11
17	gour	17,16	44	Ain kbira	9,84
18	aricha	5,98	45	Ain fatah	4,08
19	Bab assa	46,92	46	Ain talout	3,50
20	swani	10,78	47	Ain nahala	5,89
21	Soum tlatha	17,42	48	bensakran	1,61
22	mansoura	4,39	49	Sidi abdli	23,59
23	tirni	13,66	50	hnaya	12,12
24	Ain graba	8,93	51	znata	11,93
25	Beni mester	5,41	52	Awlad riah	27,37
26	Aoulad mimoun	6,51	53	tlemcen	4,21
27	Beni smail	3,71		AVERAGE	9,05

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023.

This table complements the first one by displaying the proportion of childhood expenditures relative to total local spending for each municipality. The average proportion is 9.05%, calculated by dividing childhood expenses by total expenditures and multiplying by 100. This figure indicates that childhood expenses do not exceed one-tenth of the total budget, despite children comprising more than a quarter of the population in these municipalities.

The data reveals that 25 out of 53 municipalities fall below this average, with some as low as 47%. Examples include Tiant (1.48%), Ain Youcef (3.44%), Bani Smail (3.71%), and Ben Sakran (1.61%). These and others exhibit very low childhood budget percentages compared to total spending.

Conversely, municipalities like Bab Eassa (46.92%), Bani Bousaid (33.18%), and Sidi Abdli (23.59%) show high proportions, exceeding three times the average.

A closer examination of both tables reveals a seeming contradiction. For instance, Tlemcen has a high per capita share of childhood expenses (11,552.01 dinars per person) yet its percentage of childhood spending relative to total expenditure (4.21%) is close to the average. This discrepancy can be explained by the large size of Tlemcen's projects across various sectors, with only a small portion specifically benefiting children. Furthermore, Tlemcen's relatively low population size contributes to the high per capita figure. Similarly, N'douroma exhibits a per capita share of 1,046.58 dinars with a 4.71% share of total spending.

Conversely, some municipalities demonstrate the opposite trend. For example, Bani Bahdal has a low per capita share (353.83 dinars) despite a high percentage of total spending allocated to children (13.62%).

This study demonstrates that municipalities incur expenses in many areas related to childhood, both directly and indirectly. Indirect expenditures benefit children but are not directly attributable to them. Examples include health, sanitation, environmental protection, and civil registry services. For instance, a family benefiting from social housing provides indirect benefits to their children. While the parents directly receive the housing, the children also enjoy a safe and healthy living environment.

Calculating the child's share of these indirect expenses is challenging due to their broad nature. Therefore, we have excluded them from the scope of this study. In contrast, this research focuses on direct municipal expenditures that demonstrably benefit children. We have categorized these into four sections: basic education, youth and sports, cultural activities, and programs for young children.

Table 3: Distribution of childhood expenses by nature and according to their fields:

	Management expenses	Equipment expenses	Partial total	administration expenses
Education sector	470 532 205,93	96 243 205,50	566775 411,43	329291 702,07
Youth and sports sector	22 996 122,00	25 485 005,69	48 481 127,69	18 641 254,00
Cultural sector	8 671 787,32	35 662 900,00	44 334 687,32	5 730 412,32
The private sector for young children	4 045 942,04	22 620 970,60	26 666 912,64	3 325 942,04
Partial total	506 246 057,29	180012 081,79	686258 139,08	356989 310,43
grand total	686 258 139,08			

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023.

The table reveals that education expenses dominate childhood spending, accounting for **over 82.59%** of the total. These expenses primarily relate to basic education, particularly primary schools, student transportation, and meals. Basic education expenditures exceed **566.77 million Algerian dinars**, translating to an average of **597.92 dinars per resident** in the studied municipalities.

Youth and sports expenditures rank second, representing **7.06%** of total childhood spending. They amount to over **48.48 million dinars**, with an average of **51.14 dinars per resident**.

Cultural activities occupy third place, with annual spending reaching **44.33 million dinars (6.46%** of total spending). These expenses include libraries, the House of Culture, and cultural centers.

Expenses related to young children come in last, totaling **22.62 million Algerian dinars** or **3.89%** of total childhood spending.

On the other hand, combined administration expenses for 2023 reached **506.24 million dinars (73.77%** of childhood expenses) or an average of **534.77 dinars per resident**. However, these administration expenses only represent **11.26%** of the total expenditures across the municipalities.

Breaking down administration expenses by sector, private administration expenses in basic education account for the vast majority (**92.94%** or **470.53 million dinars**), translating to an average of **496.39 dinars per resident**. The remaining sectors contribute a combined **7.05%** to total administration expenses for children.

Equipment expenses are significantly lower than administration expenses, totaling **180.01 million Algerian dinars (26.23%** of childhood expenses) with a per capita share of **189.90 dinars**. **Basic education** again claims the lion's share of equipment expenses at **over half (53.46%)**. Culture, youth, sports, and young children's expenses follow, representing **19.81%, 14.16%, and 12.57%**, respectively.

User expenses are also significant within the childhood budget, exceeding **356.98 million dinars** in 2023. This translates to a per capita share of **376.61 dinars** and represents **over 52.02%** of total childhood expenses. **The education sector** consumes the largest portion of user expenses (**58.10%**), followed by youth and sports (**38.45%**), and young children (**12.93%**).

Employee expenses are a critical component, constituting **69.98%** of administration expenditures for basic education (more than half). They also represent the largest share of administration expenses in youth and sports (**81.06%**), culture (**66.08%**), and young children (**82.20%**). Field research suggests that the majority of employee expenses are for wages of maintenance, security, and cleaning personnel within each sector.

Table 4: Basic Education Expenditures for the Year 2023:

	Management expenses	Equipment expenses	the total	administration expenses
elementary schools	294 010 809,18	72 144 349,50	366155158,68	207092 890,34
School transportation	112 354 191,05	2 480 951,00	114 835 142,05	66 291 851,54
School canteens	64 167 205,70	21 617 905,00	85 785 110,70	55 906 960,19
the total	470 532 205,93	96 243 205,50	566 775 411,43	329291 702,07
the total	566 775 411,43			

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023

The table above details various expenditures related to basic education, which unsurprisingly accounts for **over 82.58%** of total childhood expenses. This sector encompasses

all management and equipment costs associated with primary schools, student transportation, and school meals.

Primary schools consume the largest portion of education expenses, representing **64.60%**. **School transportation** follows at **20.26%**, with **school catering** accounting for the remaining **15.14%**.

Table 5: Distribution of Youth and sports expenditures:

	Management expenses	Equipment expenses	the total	administration expenses
Multi-sports stadiums and halls	12 842 326,00	22 696 518,69	35538844,69	9 270 430,00
youth home	2 653 956,00	2 788 487,00	5 442 443,00	1 870 984,00
Youth residence	7 499 840,00	0	7 499 840,00	7 499 840,00
the total	22 996 122,00	25 485 005,69	48481127,69	18 641 254,00
the total	48 481 127,69			

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023

Youth and Sports Expenditures

Youth and sports expenditures rank second in importance within childhood expenses, although their share is relatively low at **7.06%** of the total. This category encompasses expenses for stadiums/multi-sport halls, youth centers, and youth accommodation. It's important to note that some of these expenses may serve both youth and children.

Stadiums and Multi-Sport Halls

Expenses for stadiums and multi-sport halls dominate youth and sports expenditures, accounting for approximately **73.30%** (over **35 million dinars**). This figure, illustrated by the proportional circle, includes both administration and equipment expenses. Administration costs represent **36.17%**, while equipment expenses claim a larger share at **63.86%**. User expenses are lower at **26.09%** (approximately **9.27 million dinars**).

Youth Homes

Youth home expenses are the lowest in this category, totaling roughly **5 million Algerian dinars (11.23%)**. **User expenses** constitute a significant portion (**34.38%**) within this category.

Youth Accommodation Expenses

Youth accommodation expenses consist entirely of administrative costs related to employee wages and exceed **7.49 million Algerian dinars**.

Table 6: Distribution of culture sector expenditures:

	Management expenses	Equipment expenses	the total	administration expenses
Cultural centers	6 768 625,40	238 863,00	7 007 488,40	4 449 132,40
House of Culture	463 027,00	1 666 521,00	2 129 548,00	452 253,00
Municipal libraries	1 440 134,92	33 757 516,00	35 197 650,92	829 026,92
the total	8 671 787,32	35 662 900,00	44 334 687,32	5 730 412,32

Source: Prepared by the student based on the administrative accounts of municipalities for the year 2023.

Cultural sector expenditures represent a small portion of total childhood spending, accounting for only 6.46% (approximately 44 million Algerian dinars). This translates to an average of less than one million dinars per municipality, but it's important to note that only 19 municipalities reported cultural sector expenses. These expenditures encompass the following:

- **Municipal Libraries:** Municipal library expenses are the largest component, exceeding 35 million dinars. However, these expenses are reported by only 9 municipalities. Interestingly, equipment expenses dominate library spending at a rate of **95.91%**, while user expenses make up a minor share (2.35%).
- **Cultural Centers:** Cultural centers rank second, with expenditures accounting for 15.81% of the cultural sector's budget. The provided appendices indicate that 11 municipalities operate cultural centers. Equipment expenses for cultural centers are relatively low at 3.41%, while user expenses represent a larger portion (63.49%).
- **The Role of Culture:** Three municipalities provide services related to culture, with these expenditures constituting 4.80% of the total cultural sector budget.

Expenses for Young Children

Expenses for young children comprise the smallest category within childhood expenditures, totaling only 22.62 million Algerian dinars in 2023. Importantly, these expenses are limited solely to playground and entertainment areas.

Equipment expenses dominate this category, accounting for a significant portion (84.83%). User expenses are considerably lower at 12.47% (approximately 3.32 million dinars).

4. CONCLUSION

Growing international focus on childhood has been reflected in the legislation of local communities worldwide. The Algerian legislature, in line with international trends, has established a legal framework at the local level to protect children and improve their living conditions.

Local authorities, despite limited resources, have demonstrated some capacity to allocate financial resources for children's well-being. This is evidenced by the data presented in various tables and graphs throughout the second section of this study. Our analysis reveals that the 53 studied municipalities collectively allocate an average of 9.05% of their budgets to childhood expenses, impacting numerous areas. However, this spending remains limited, primarily due to two factors: a lack of sufficient financial resources and a need for greater awareness among local managers and decision-makers regarding the importance of increased funding for children's programs and services.

This study also explored potential solutions for improving the situation of children at the local level. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has launched the Child-Friendly Cities Initiative, which promotes the creation of child-centered cities and local communities that prioritize children's rights.

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