

# Arab Network For Early Childhood (ANECD)

Introductions  
and Pathways

2022 - 2023

For the **Sake of**  
Every **Child,**  
Every **Boy and Girl**  
**Nurturing** Today,  
Enabling a **Future**  
They **Desire**



**We communicate for Happy Children**

For the **Sake of**  
Every **Child,**  
Every **Boy and Girl**  
**Nurturing** Today,  
Enabling a **Future**  
They **Desire**

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# 1

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**Introduction**

## 1. Introduction

Dear friends and partners,

It is with immense pleasure and a solid sense of accomplishment that I present the Annual Report of the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD) for 2022-2023, which reflects the achievements and challenges of our network, which aims to promote the rights and well-being of young children in the Arab region.

As we navigate through a world with crises as its “new normal” and the multi-dimensional turmoil of wars, refuge, climate crisis, political instability, economic deterioration, poverty, and gender inequity in the Arab region constantly present new challenges, the resilience and dedication of our team and partners continue to drive our mission forward.

Driven by the ANECD’s vision to create a world where every child enjoys their rights and lives with hope, peace, equity, and justice, and by our mission to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of children and their caregivers, and influence policies and practices, four strategic interventional areas lead our way:

Encompassed by the Convention of the Rights of the Child are Children in Crisis, Environmental erosion and Climate justice, EC workforce, Cyber safety, security, and empowerment; this year’s report encapsulates the ANECD’s diverse partnership and innovative research initiatives in these fields.

Our efforts have been multi-faceted and impactful, through expanding our reach by establishing EC national networks and working groups in the Arab countries Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Tunisia, and Morocco, and initiated in Egypt and Yemen, fostering collaboration and coordination to address the unique needs of young children in these countries.

This led to the convening of the first-ever ECD regional forum attended by over 60 representatives from 13 Arab countries—multi-disciplinary representatives of governmental entities, academic institutions, and international and local NGOs. The attendees validated the ANECD strategy and deep-dived into its components, focusing on the role of different disciplines in its implementation.

Also, ANECD launched the first-of-its-kind Arab Working Group for EC Research in the Arab region to serve to put ECD on top of the regional and national agendas, prioritise ECD research topics, involve the academia with action research related to implemented ECD programs (e.g., the Strategic Research Model) and sharing and mapping recent ECD-related research work to enrich the ANECD database.

Our innovative Strategic Research Models (SRM) have delved into the five strategic critical ECD areas: the legal framework for children’s rights in the Arab region, climate crisis impacts on children, early childhood crises, and the working conditions and qualifications of the EC workforce in Arab countries.

The significant focus of our work has been on the holistic, integrated, and inclusive approach to early childhood development, with a commitment to empowering parents and caregivers of children from the beginning (even before birth) to eight years of age, underscoring our dedication to promoting comprehensive development and well-being for young children. Through networking, resource production, and facilitation of national and international initiatives, we aim to impact early childhood in the Arab region to fulfil their rights.

In response to the challenges posed by the COVID19- pandemic and humanitarian crises, we have digitised our programs and interventions and made them available online. Our Parents’ and caregivers’ training



programs and knowledge HUB “URJOUHA” (the swing) demonstrate our commitment to providing support and resources to vulnerable and marginalised families, even in unprecedented circumstances.

The “Nawwara for Wellbeing” program was also developed for mental health and psychosocial support, which aims to provide and exchange knowledge to support ECD professionals, frontliners, and caregivers. Collaboration has been a cornerstone of our work, as evidenced by our partnerships with organisations such as the LEGO Foundation, Bernard van Leer Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Early Childhood Regional Network Fund, Global Challenges Research Fund, Porticus, and Two Lillies Fund, and many others.

These collaborations have allowed us to participate in global initiatives, conferences, and workshops, contributing to the broader discourse on childhood care, development, and education toward hope, peace, and justice.

As we reflect on the achievements and challenges of the past year, we express our gratitude to all those who have been part of our journey – our team, partners, donors, and the communities we serve.

Together, we have made strides in advancing the well-being of children in the Arab region. Looking ahead, we are excited about the opportunities to expand our impact further, refine our strategies, and contribute meaningfully to the field of childhood development.

Your continued support is crucial, and we invite you to join us in shaping a future where every child in the Arab region can thrive.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment to the rights of all young children in the Arab region and the world.

Sincerely,



**Ghassan Issa, MD**  
General Coordinator  
Arab Network for Early Childhood  
(ANECD)/  
Arab Resource Collective

# 2

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**The Arab Network For Early  
Childhood**

## 2. The Arab Network For Early Childhood



ANECD is an Arab organisation that works on early childhood care development, and protection by providing support and networking with institutions concerned with early childhood and working through Knowledge production and promotion, Partnership and advocacy, and Policy intervention.

Building on ARC's experience and its regional aspect, the Arab Network for Early Childhood was formed in 2014. ANECD's values are rooted in a collaborative and participatory network of multisectoral and multidisciplinary international and regional organisations,

experts, academicians, and similar-minded local and international NGOs.

ANECD works with national early childhood networks in several Arab countries that ANECD initiated or contributed to establish. ANECD is one of four regional global early childhood networks that address young children's rights issues.



ANECD's **mission** is to 'Connect, empower, harmonise, advocate, produce and communicate regionally adapted early childhood development experiences and resources to Arab societies on the rights of young children to health, education, family life, play and entertainment, to an adequate standard of living, and protection from abuse and harm, through networking effectively.'



ANECD's **vision** is that 'Children within Arab countries and societies enjoy their rights, happiness, and well-being in an enriching environment of freedom, social justice, and equality.'

ANECD works within five strategic intervention areas:

### ● Child Rights

Through this area, the network works to enhance the knowledge and capabilities of children in Arab societies from conception (B: Beginning - Birth) to the age of eight years - along with their caregivers - to enable them in demanding their rights. It also develops policy briefs, shares knowledge and practice, and influences child rights legislation and laws at the national and regional levels.

### ● Early Childhood in Crises and Emergencies

Through this intervention area, the network prioritises early childhood development on the agenda of preparedness, humanitarian response, and early recovery.

One of its priorities is strengthening the preparedness and capacities of community-based organisations, actors, and caregivers in early childhood development to respond effectively and accountably during crises.

### ● Climate Change & Environmental Hazards

Ecological challenges are increasing, and climate change and crises are at a stage that may be irreversible.

While the Arab library lacks studies on the impact of these changes on early childhood, ANECD decided to fill the gap, focus on enhancing research to understand environmental risks to children's health and develop ICT materials to raise awareness and improve knowledge about these risks.

● **Cybre security, safety, and Empowerment**

An area of intervention chosen by ANECD to research ways to connect early childhood specialists, parents, and children digitally effectively and efficiently. On the other hand, the network works to promote safe digital spaces and practices and enhance the role of cyberspace as a priority in the early childhood ecosystem.

● **Early childhood Workforce**

In its fifth intervention area, the network focuses on “the early childhood workforce.” This field aims to improve the status of professionals working in the early childhood sector. Among its priorities is increasing knowledge and building on the capacities of specialists in this sector, in addition to communication and advocating for the implementation of coordinated and integrated policies to support and develop the diverse workforce in the early childhood development field in Arab societies and ensuring the provision of appropriate working conditions for them.

ANECD and its members selected three intersecting and complementary working approaches to achieve strategic goals and change in the five above strategic intervention areas.

● **Knowledge production and dissemination**

The focus is on developing evidence and proof used to support and enable the following approaches in a participatory manner with network members and based on the network’s history emerging from the Arab Resource Collective and the members’ experiences.

● **Partnership and advocacy**

ANECD and its members raise awareness and communication to deliver compelling, evidence-based, solution-oriented messages to the public, decision-makers, stakeholders and those they influence. It also develops partnerships and alliances at national, regional, and global levels to generate organisational support and momentum behind early childhood development issues and achieve common advocacy goals.

● **Policy Intervention**

The network engages its members in advocating for changing trajectories, power relations, and ecosystems in Arab societies to promote early childhood development as a holistic, inclusive, and integrative approach.

# 3

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**The Arab Resource Collective, ARC:  
The hosting organisation**

### 3. The Arab Resource Collective, ARC: The hosting organisation



The Arab Resource Collective was established in 1989 and has produced more than 200 resources in Arabic to date.



A promising **vision** towards a society of social justice, freedom, and equality in the Arab world.

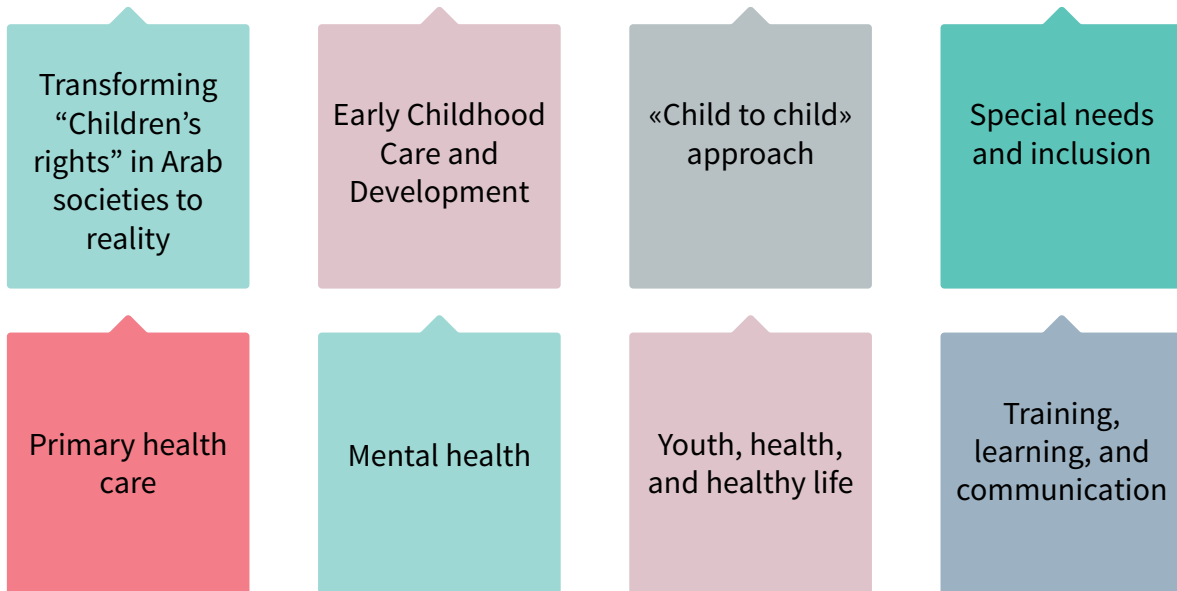


A **mission** whose essence lies in facilitating existing partnerships around the production and contextualisation of knowledge, building on human capabilities, and promoting the principle of participation, communication and networking, and the culture and practice of advocacy to translate the rights of children and youth in society into reality.

ARC, through its partners in Lebanon and the Arab world, works to produce knowledge; where in addition to producing resources such as training technical guides and specialised books, it conducts evidence research and designs and implements capacity-building programs for caregivers and workers in the fields of early childhood and mental health.

To achieve its mission, ARC adopts a Holistic, Integrated, Inclusive, Participatory, and Empowering Approach (HIIPEA) for defining its needs and objectives.

ARC's fields of activity:



**You can learn more about ARC's resources in the above fields developed between 1988 to 2015**

[Here](#)  
in Arabic



You can read more about ARC's updated programs and resources developed and adapted after 2016 below.

# 4

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**ARC and ANECD: State of unity  
A joint and continuous workstream  
from the beginning with networking  
until the establishment of a network**

## 4. ARC and ANECD: State of unity

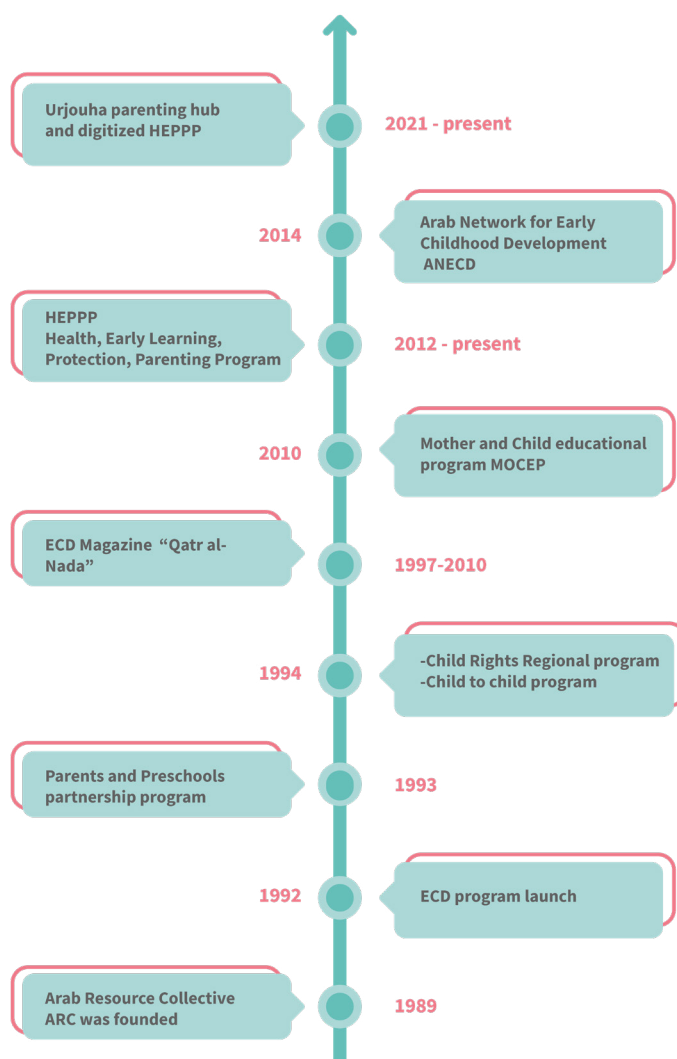
### A joint and continuous workstream from the beginning with networking until the establishment of a network

In 2011, the Arab League for Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) launched the “Arab Program for Improving the Quality of Education,” which included five sub-programmes, one of which was the “Arab Program for Early Childhood Development” that was hosted by ARC. The program produced many resources and activities, and based on the ARC’s experience and regional work, the Arab Network for Early Childhood was established in 2014.

While ARC focuses on producing content on early childhood and mental health, piloting innovative approaches and methodologies for scientific evidence, and direct implementation based on the Holistic, Integrative, Inclusive, Participatory, and Empowering Approach, ANECD focuses on coordination, dissemination and distribution of evidence-based resources and programmes, advocacy and policy impact.

ARC now hosts ANECD in its office in Beirut, where they both work under the supervision of a management team and a technical support team to the programs and initiatives coordinators.

## Making History in Arab ECD



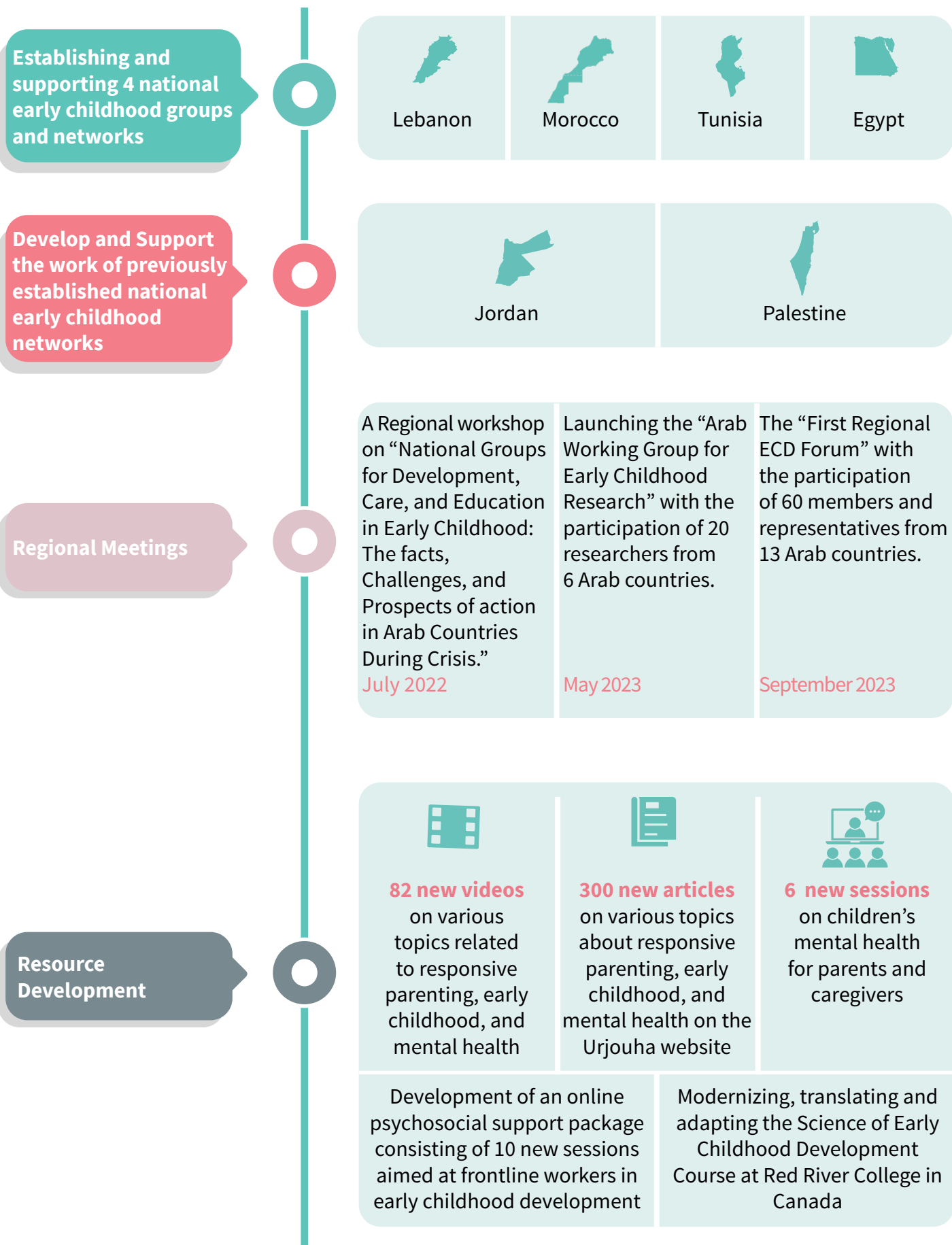


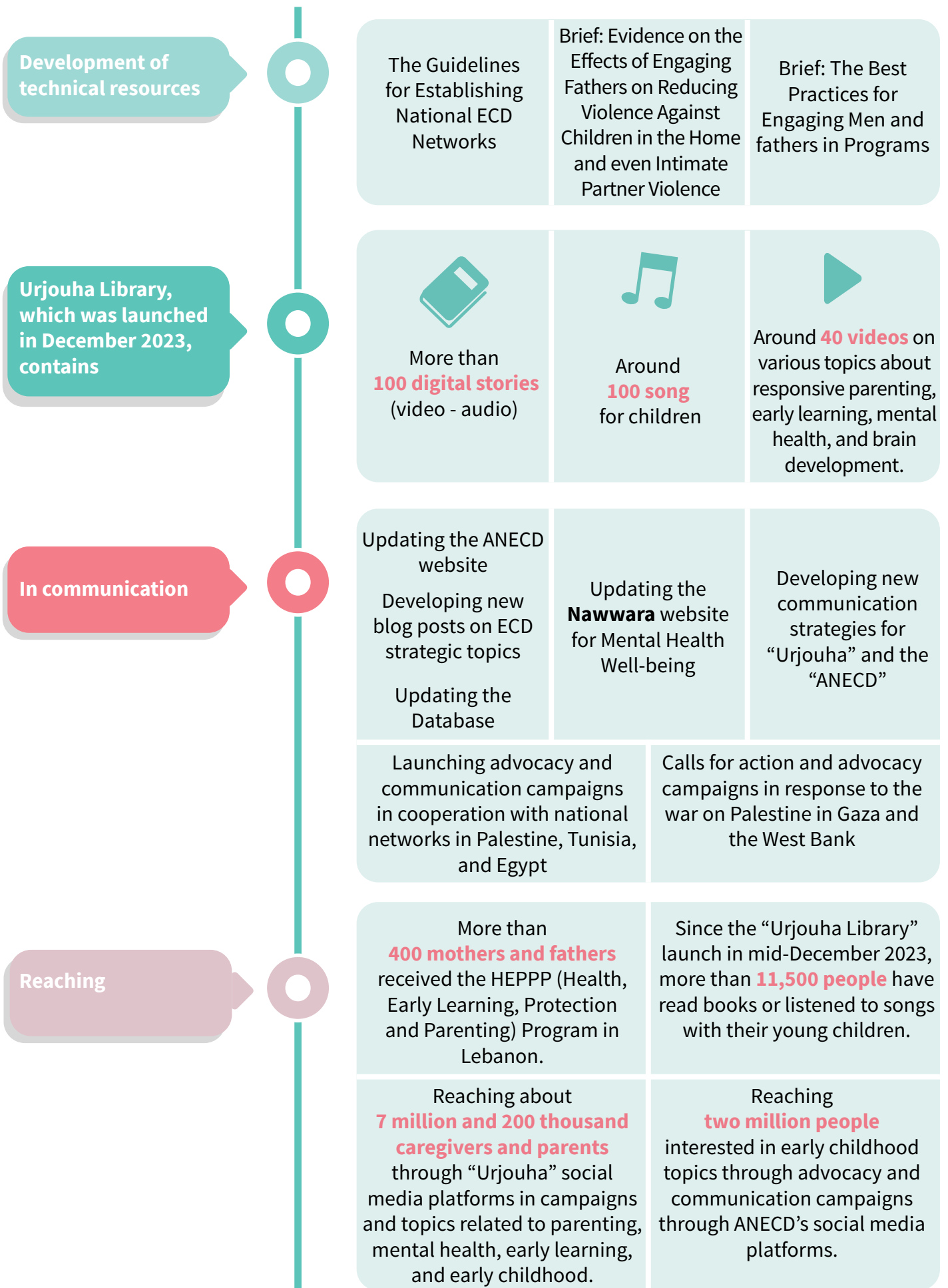
# 5

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**ARC & ANECD's Most Notable  
Achievements 2022-2023**

## 5. ARC & ANECD's Most Notable Achievements 2023-2022





Research

Working conditions of educators in nurseries and kindergartens in 7 Arab countries	A legal and legislative review of children's rights in 6 Arab countries	Knowledge and practices related to the climate crisis and its impact on children (from birth to 8 years) among parents and caregivers in 6 Arab countries
Situational Assessment: the situation of young children and their families during the multifaceted crisis in Lebanon	Situational Assessment: the mental health, quality of life, coping mechanisms, and professional performance among the early childhood workforce in Lebanon in light of some demographic and work-related variables.	Two studies to evaluate the impact of implementing the HEPPP in Lebanon and Jordan with parents from birth to 8 years

Regional and global initiatives

The Early Childhood Workforce Initiative with the three regional early childhood networks	The third Joint Advocacy Group (JAG3) Lebanon, Jordan, and Uganda of the Moving Minds Alliance	The Global Research Forum for Early Childhood in Emergencies
The regional initiative for Nurturing Care Framework	The Four Regional EC Networks Initiative with the "Center for the Developing Child" - Harvard University to support and benefit from the science of ECD directed at countries and national early childhood networks	Participation in organising the and presenting during the "Regional Convening in Support of Parents in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa Regions" - Global Initiative to Support Parents

Participating in more than 20 regional and global events to shed light on early childhood issues in Arab countries, and the programs and initiatives of ANECD and ARC.

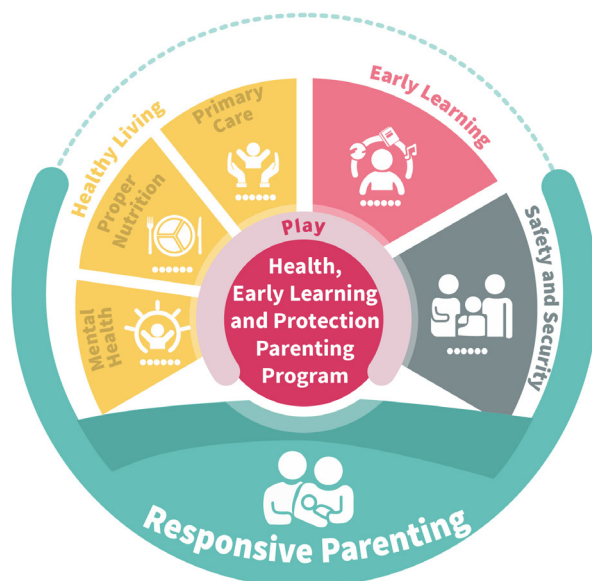
# 6

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**ARC's Programs**

## 6. ARC's Programs

### 6.1. Health, Early Learning, Protection, Parenting Program (HEPPP)



ARC's Holistic, Integrative & Inclusive Approach to ECD

The Arab Resource Collective developed the “Health, Early Learning, Protection, Parenting Protection for Young Children” (HEPPP) in 2012. HEPPP is an innovative, holistic, integrated, inclusive, evidence-based program designed to support fathers and mothers together as a unit throughout their parenting journey with their children under the age of 8.

It was implemented by ARC and its partners in Lebanon, Jordan, and Egypt, and it has been continuously developed and updated over the last 11 years.

With the start of the COVID19- pandemic in 2020, ARC’s team updated and converted the content of the program sessions into a digital format available on the Urjouha website, which can be implemented remotely with parents and caregivers of young children.

The curriculum consists of 38 digital topics/sessions related to issues concerning parents of young children, divided into four primary axes:



The program is being implemented with more than 900 families in different regions of Lebanon in 2022 and 2023.

ARC also worked on developing a training guide based on the HEPPP sessions. It is intended for early childhood and mental health specialists to build on their capacities and enhance their knowledge of parenting and early childhood between birth and eight years.

The program's implementation is usually accompanied by a scientific research study based on approved and scientifically validated scales and questionnaires that investigate the program's impact on parents' and caregivers' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours. So far, two scientific articles have been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. Two new studies are being worked on (2023-2024) that address documentation, comparison, and impact on children and caregivers' mental health, parents' behaviours, and children's early learning skills based on the recently added and developed sessions.

Between 2019 and 2021, the research team at ARC conducted a study on the HEPPP. It compared the results and impact of three applications of the program: two face-to-face implementations with parents (one by master trainers and one by Sanad (support in Arabic) parents who received the HEPPP and a Training of Trainers) and a digital modality of the sessions after the Covid19- pandemic.

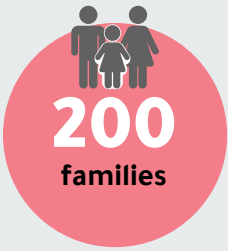
The implementation areas for this study included Lebanon and Jordan, with the participation of Lebanese, Jordanian, Syrian, and Palestinian refugee parents. The target audience consisted of families with children in the early childhood stage, from birth to eight years. Based on the study results, the curriculum sessions were modified and updated. The digital version of the HEPPP was adopted as a modality for future implementations due to its ability to reach a wide number of families (without the physical limits of a specific geographical location to meet) and since its results confirmed the program's effectiveness in enhancing parents' participation, and especially father's commitment. This study was published in November 2023 as a chapter in the book: "[Young Children in Humanitarian and COVID19- Crises: Innovations and Lessons from the Global South](#)" under the title: "[Parenting Support for Refugee and Vulnerable Communities in Lebanon and Jordan during the COVID19- Pandemic and Humanitarian Crises.](#)"

A second study was later worked on after updating the curriculum and sessions based on the results of the previous one, and it is expected to be published in the year 2024. ARC's team is working on a third study based on a larger sample.

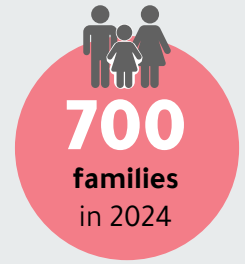
During the years 2022 and 2023, ARC developed partnerships concerned with implementing the program in Lebanon with:



### The program was implemented with



with the participation of the mother and father, during the previous period, and work will be continued to complete the implementation with



## 6.2. Urjouha Parenting Website



In 2021, “[Urhojha](#)” (Swing in Arabic) was born. It is an educational platform launched to support parents and caregivers from pregnancy until age eight and accompany them in their parenting journey. The swing (Urhojha) is one of the most well-known games in the collective human memory. The “Arab Resource Collective” team chose it as the name of its website to become a pioneer in the “parenting” field.

“Urhojha” addresses the largest number of Arabic-speaking caregivers around the world, based on the fact that the mother and father - as well as educators - are directly responsible for the children within their families and their communities and are, therefore, the people closest to them, that is, the most influential on them. Their roles vary between health, care, protection, learning, and stimulating the child’s development.

“Urhojha” responds to these needs by producing and developing modern, studied, and diverse written and audio-visual materials while facilitating caregivers’ access to them and enhancing their knowledge and capacities through approaches that emphasise justice in the mother and father’s partnership in responsive parenting, and linking effective caregiving to the ever-present expression of love.

“Urhojha” is supported by an advisory board composed of specialists from various Arab countries in education, health, care, early learning, and mental health for young children, who provide specialised opinions and advice on the platform’s content. The Advisory board was established to meet as many early childhood needs as possible and cover additional areas, such as special needs and learning difficulties.



“Urjouha” creates its content exclusively in Arabic and produces it in visual, audio, and written forms. It shares its articles through its website and daily posts on social media platforms. It covers several topics intended to cover the most needs: pregnancy, breastfeeding, psychological health, physical health, nutrition, early learning, special learning needs, and responsive parenting.

In 2022-2023, Urjouha worked on developing and producing:



It also participated in **6 events** targeting parents and caregivers of young children.

### Urjouha Library:



The [Urjouha Library](#) was launched through the Urjouha website in December 2023. It is an Arabic, free, and open-source library directed to parents. It addresses the child through parents and caregivers with the aim of:

- Providing a collection of digital and audible stories for parents and caregivers.
- Supporting access to quality resources related to children’s literature to a broader segment of Arabic-speaking parents and caregivers.
- Supporting children’s holistic and integrative development through reading and interaction with parents, caregivers, and other children.
- Enhancing parents’ quality time with their children while reading and listening to audio materials.
- Enhancing communication tools of parents and caregivers.

The Urjouha Library contains **three main sections:**



A story library for children with around 100 digital stories (video and audio). The library has categorised the stories according to the topics addressed in them.



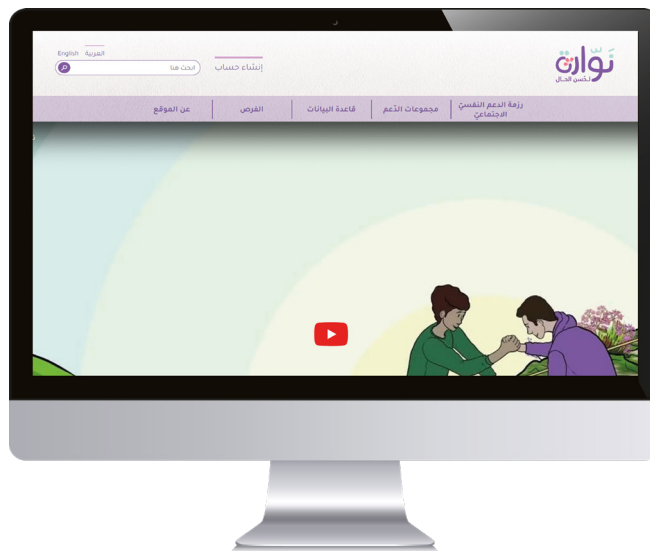
A music library that includes around 100 children's songs and theatrical songs for children from the plays of the Lebanese Puppet Theater/Khayal (Imagination in Arabic)



A video library that uses whiteboard videos as a presentation and simulation method. This section is directed to parents and caregivers and is divided into the following topics:

Children's behaviours and Responsive parenting - Early learning - Children's health - Children and caregiver's mental health - Child Development - Child brain development - Protection from abuse

### 6.3. Nawwara for Wellbeing: Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Website



After assessing the need for contextualised, rights-based and rights-sensitive Arabic Mental health and psychosocial support knowledge and resources, the Arab Resource Collective (ARC) started working on its “Mental Health and Psychosocial Support” project. This resulted in the birth of “Nawwara”, an Arabic MHPSS website which aims to provide and exchange information about mental health and psychosocial support. “Nawwara” in Arabic means “shining through the darkness” or “blossoming flowers.”

Nawwara MHPSS Website supports professionals, frontliners, caregivers, and anyone interested in MHPSS, believing everyone should be able to reach accessible, valid, and contextualised resources and benefit from peer support on the MHPSS level.

Following ARC's continuous assessment of the website's state and the need for MHPSS safe spaces and

resources in the Arab World, this website is being updated in 2023 by the ARC & ANECD team, including professionals and experts in the Mental Health field responding to today's needs. It will proceed to respond to any emerging ones.

Nawwara aims to provide reliable and credible resources about mental health and to enhance this health among all individuals by building on capacities, supporting and advocating, as well as highlighting the importance of mental health in achieving personal well-being and considering it an essential pillar for any individual to live a healthy, balanced, and productive life. Nawwara aims to combat the stigma associated with mental health in society and provide a safe platform in the Arabic language to exchange experiences and discuss opinions about mental health.

One of the current initiatives of this website targets the Early Childhood Workforce by providing a 10-session (online and mentored) MHPSS curriculum for ECD frontliners and focusing on their mental health & well-being with a psycho-social support component; topics include the importance of mental health, emotional regulation, resilience, burnout, work-life balance, stress management, mindfulness techniques, etc. This initiative will be piloted in Lebanon at the beginning of 2024 and disseminated through ANECD to other Arab countries afterwards.

In 2024, ARC will launch the MHPSS sessions package for frontline workers and implement them with 60 teachers and educators in Lebanon. It will also invite 200 early childhood workforce workers to support groups on the Nawwara website, where they will have access to a safe space to exchange, participate, communicate, and seek and provide support to peers and colleagues.

#### 6.4. The Science of ECD Course



The Arab Resource Collective translated and contextualised the “Science of Early Childhood Development Course” (SECD). The course is a new training curriculum on the sciences of early childhood development taken from broader material produced by the Red River College in Canada (RRC), which developed an “international” version of the SECDc in cooperation with The Agha Khan Foundation (AKDN). AKDN is also a partner investing in and developing the early childhood sector in Arab countries.

The SECDc resource is available in two forms: The first is an extended version in English, and the second is the short version prepared for a five-day training workshop that was piloted and tested by the Agha Khan Foundation in English in several places in the world and was then relayed and contextualised to the Arabic language by the “Arab Resource Collective”.

And, under the framework of the Arab Program for Early Childhood Development (the program that established the Arab Network for Early Childhood), the 5-day Arabic version was piloted during a workshop in October 2014.

The course comprises five modules: Brain Development, Coping and Competence, Communication and Learning, The Ecology of Childhood, and Developmental Health. Each Module includes scientific and experimental material presented in written texts; Filmed interviews with specialists that demonstrate the scientific and empirical foundations on which concepts and knowledge are based; activities to be used by the facilitator to stimulate the interaction between trainees and boost their knowledge; and useful annexes for distribution on participants.

The Arab Network for Early Childhood is currently reviewing the version translated and contextualised in 2014-2015 and updating it based on the upgrades made by Red River College over the past eight years. ANECD will also add photos, videos, and examples of Arab programs, initiatives, and research studies to the course.

# 7

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## ANECD's Initiatives

## 7. ANECD's Initiatives

### 7.1. The First Regional ECD Forum



The Arab Network for Early Childhood held its first regional forum, “Caring for Young Children in a Turbulent World: Development Strategies in Arab Countries,” in September 2023, in Cairo, Egypt. The forum was hosted by the Arab Council for Childhood and Development. It was attended by more than 60 members and representatives from various sectors concerned with early childhood from 13 Arab countries.

The regional forum identified strategic directions for Early Childhood Development in light of the multiple crises affecting Arab countries. It also laid the foundation for continued collaborative efforts to improve the well-being of young children in the Arab region. The forum highlighted visionary policies, cooperative initiatives, and research presentations, emphasising the importance of advocating for children’s rights.

Additionally, it clarified the role of ANECD and its partners in supporting Early Childhood Development research and identifying leading programs in the Arab world.

After the opening speeches and the presentation of the ANECD strategy, action plan and its areas of intervention, the participants were distributed to several specialised sessions that addressed the network’s strategic research models, such as early childhood in emergencies and crises, the impact of climate change on young children, and the rights of the early childhood workforce.

In addition, discussions in the specialised sessions focused on children’s rights, digital empowerment, cybersecurity and safety. The forum also included an exhibition of programs related to early childhood development and care from various Arab countries.

The regional forum concluded with the participating sectors (ministries and government agencies, non-governmental agencies, and the academic sector) submitting recommendations to ANECD. The recommendations include networking and coordination, developing and establishing joint guiding principles for research in the field of early childhood, creating a platform for sharing research and data in ECD, enabling collective work in strategic planning, conducting an environmental and historical context mapping, planning a theory of change, along with other recommendations, which can be found in full in the forum’s detailed report.

## 7.2. National Early Childhood Networks

### 7.2.1. A Regional workshop on “National Groups for Development, Care, and Education in Early Childhood: The Facts, Challenges, and Prospects of Action in Arab Countries During Crisis.”



In July 2022, the “Arab Network for Early Childhood” organised an online regional workshop titled “National Groups for Development, Care, and Education in Early Childhood: The Facts, Challenges, and Prospects of Action in Arab Countries During Crisis.” Participants in the workshop were experts, academicians, and representatives from ministries, government institutions, organisations, and networks concerned with early childhood from seven Arab countries: Jordan, Palestine, Lebanon, Yemen, Oman, Egypt, and Tunisia.

The workshop included a presentation by ANECD’s General Coordinator, who discussed the network’s efforts to expand and consolidate its relationships and partnerships with governments, organisations, and individuals active in the early childhood field at the level of Arab countries, in particular, and the global, in general.

He also presented the ANECD’s strategy and action plan. He asserted the importance of encouraging the establishment of national ECD networks and working groups in the various Arab countries, which intend to enhance communication, unify efforts, and exchange necessary experiences, especially during the current phase that is witnessing multidimensional crises and what that requires of solidarity and intensification of collaborative action so that early childhood development and care are at the top of Arab countries’ agendas.

The Secretary General of the National Council for Family Affairs gave a presentation about the experience of the Jordanian multi-sectoral national team for early childhood development. The presentation included several points, the most notable of which are National team duties, Internal organisation and coordination of the team, Most notable achievements, Challenges faced by the team, Organizing and institutionalising the relationship with the “Arab Network for Early Childhood”; And the future plan for the national team.

The workshop also included a “Palestinian Network for Early Childhood” presentation regarding the network’s work during the previous period. The presentation addressed the objectives and intervention areas of the Palestinian network, its internal structure, major achievements, most prominent current challenges, and future steps.

After that, the participants were distributed to eight breakout rooms where they discussed the

importance of establishing national networks, the tasks and roles these networks should play, and the challenges they may face. The participants were then divided into breakout rooms by country and discussed the first steps and requirements needed to establish national networks in each participating country.

### 7.2.2. Establishing National Networks in Tunisia, Morocco, Lebanon, and Egypt

#### ● The establishment of the «Tunisian Network for ECD.»



In May 2023, in implementation of the memorandum of understanding between the “Arab Network for Early Childhood” and the “Tunisian Association of Childhood Inspectors,” the initial founding meeting of the “Tunisian National Network for Early Childhood” was held, with the participation of several actors and supporters of early childhood issues and the rights of young children on the national and regional levels.

The most notable goals of the “Tunisian Network” were the following:

- Supporting the early childhood development field inside and outside Tunisia,
- Contributing to the advancement of this field through networking among the various actors in it,
- Producing and disseminating knowledge and advocating for children’s issues so that they can enjoy their rights, especially their right to protection, holistic development, and well-being, in a way that guarantees healthy and balanced nurturing and care.

#### ● The establishment of the «Moroccan Network for ECD.»

In March 2023, the Arab Network for Early Childhood and the “Moroccan Foundation for the Promotion of Pre-School Education” (FMPS) in Rabat signed a cooperation agreement to support and develop the “Moroccan Network for Early Childhood” (MNECD) and facilitate its activities at the national and international levels.

The agreement aimed to develop and support the “Moroccan Network for Early Childhood” work by FMPS, which assumes the hosting and organisation of MNECD activities under a mandate from ANECD.

The agreement also organises the relationship between the FMPS and ANECD concerning joint work to achieve the child’s best interest in Morocco and the Arab countries.



## ● Launching the “National Group for Early Childhood Development” in Lebanon



In May 2023, the “Higher Council for Childhood” in the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA) announced the launch of the “National Group for Early Childhood Development” in Lebanon in the presence of senior officials from MoSA, the “Higher Council for Childhood,” and representatives of the Ministries of Public Health (MoPH), Education and Higher Education (MEHE), as well as the Federation of Private Educational Institutions, the Syndicate of Specialized Nursery Owners, the Syndicate of Nursery Owners, UNICEF, and ANECD.

The parties agreed during the first meeting of the “National Group”, which was held in the Ministry of Social Affairs, on the principal pillars that the group will work to implement, most notably updating and launching the national strategy for early childhood development in Lebanon to which the “Higher Council for Childhood” will be the primary national reference.

In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs, through the “Higher Council for Childhood,” signed a memorandum of understanding with the “Arab Network for Early Childhood” to proceed in supporting the work of the “National Group” under the supervision of the coordination team charged with implementing the terms of this MoU.

In turn, ANECD’s General Coordinator emphasised the importance of partnering with the “Higher Council for Childhood”, a founding member of ANECD, intending to follow through with the action plan for early childhood issues in Lebanon and the Arab region. Consequently, Lebanon will be present formally to keep pace with the Arab and regional movements undertaking early childhood issues.

In June 2023, ANECD officially signed the memorandum of understanding with the “Higher Council for Childhood” after a long path of successful cooperation in early childhood development and care programs.

## ● Preparing for the launch of the Egyptian Committee for Early Childhood

In 2019, the Arab Network conducted a training on the science of early childhood for a group of representatives of ministries, associations and institutions working with early childhood under the auspices of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood (NCCM) in Egypt. Subsequently, the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD) took preparatory steps to establish a national committee for early childhood, communicating with the Ministry of Social Welfare and NCCM and a group of active institutions. This culminated in a group of joint activities based on the memorandum of understanding signed between the Arab Network and ACCD, where they are working strategically together on specific and urgent issues in early childhood at the level of Arab countries.

In January 2023, the Arab Council discussed its strategy until 2025 during a workshop attended by experts from several Arab countries and with the participation of ANECD. The Council’s strategy is an extension of its previous strategies that focus on the development and upbringing of the Arab



child and the protection of his rights, especially in light of the accumulated and multidimensional crises that Arab countries are witnessing, including wars, refugee crises, displacement, epidemics, and climate deterioration.

### 7.2.3. The National Early Childhood Development Team in Jordan



The [National ECD Team](#) in Jordan was established in 2018 at the National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA) initiative and in cooperation with Plan International in Jordan (PI-Jo). This was done with the encouragement and support of the Arab Network for Early Childhood.

In 2017, the group received training from the Arab Resource Collective on the Science of Early Childhood Development, and this training was the first experience using the SECD to build a homogeneous early childhood working group in terms of concepts and terminology.

The team works to network and coordinate between all parties working in early childhood in Jordan to ensure integrated and synergic efforts and integration, gain support for early childhood issues, and ensure the best investment of resources and time to achieve the goals within a common-wide national vision. The team includes representatives from various national governmental, non-governmental and international institutions and bodies.

### 7.2.4. Motivating and supporting the Palestinian institutions working in ECD in Palestine to establish a national network and Sign a memorandum of understanding between the “Palestinian ECD Network” and the “Juzoor for Health and Social Development” Foundation.



The [“Palestinian Network for Early Childhood”](#) is a chapter and a member of the “Arab Network for Early Childhood”.

One of the most notable goals of PNECD is to place the National Program for Early Childhood Development on the national agenda and push towards its development and other ECD-related programs in line with global development goals and advanced theoretical frameworks in this field.

The Palestinian Network is keen to place its emergency and humanitarian inputs within development programs in a way that allows for integration and cohesion between humanitarian and development programs to serve early childhood at the developmental and humanitarian levels and the immediate and long-term levels.

In April 2022, the Palestinian Network for Early Childhood (PNECD) and the “Juzoor for Health and

Social Development” Foundation signed a memorandum of understanding.

In 2023, the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD) signed a work agreement with the Palestinian Network for Early Childhood (PNECD). The agreement included some activities that the Palestinian Network will implement during 2023, such as participating in the Arab Network’s strategic research models and carrying out advocacy campaigns.

### 7.3. The Guidelines for Establishing National ECD Networks

Within the cooperation framework between ANECD and the “National Council for Family Affairs” (NCFA) in Jordan, the two parties agreed that NCFA would work on drafting the “Guidelines for Establishing National Early Childhood Networks,” which provides detailed instructions on establishing ECD networks in Arab countries based on the successful experience of establishing the “Jordanian National Early Childhood Network.”

The guide was launched out of the belief of the Arab Network in the importance of early childhood and the necessity of investing in it, whereas working towards advancing ECD requires a participatory approach from all parties through establishing early childhood networks. ANECD has worked on delivering this guide to inspire and support Arab countries in their efforts to establish early childhood networks in the Arab world.

### 7.4. Signing a tripartite memorandum of understanding for early childhood care between the “Arab Network for Early Childhood”, the “Arab Council for Childhood and Development” (Egypt), and the “National Council for Family Affairs” (Jordan)



In May 2023, the “Arab Network for Early Childhood,” and the Arab Council for Childhood and Development, and the National Council for Family Affairs, signed a memorandum of understanding to enhance collaborative work between the three parties in the early childhood field, in the Jordanian capital, Amman and in Cairo at the same time via Zoom.

The MoU aimed to facilitate cooperation between the signatory parties, keep up with developments, and benefit from the latest and most prominent advancements in the science of early child development and care, in addition to organising necessary webinars and conferences to promote the benefit of the above, as well as other points and commitments that are in the interest of the early childhood issue.

It was agreed between the three parties that this MoU would be followed by cooperation agreements that include several activities, such as participation in preparing advocacy campaigns and completing studies on Arab early childhood topics.

# 8

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Research

## 8. Research

### 8.1. Launching the “Arab Working Group for Early Childhood Research” in Amman



From May 26 to 28, 2023, the Arab Network for Early Childhood held a workshop to launch the work of the Arab Working Group for Early Childhood Research (AWG-ECR) in the Jordanian capital, Amman. The workshop was held with the participation of experts, committee members, academicians from Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Palestine, Morocco, Tunisia, and other international experts.

The workshop aimed to develop projects to institutionalise the AWG-ECR to conduct research. The beginning of the workshop presented the foundations of the work of the “Arab Network”, which is based on networking and accumulation, which leads to further internal organisation and the establishment of specialised working committees. It was also agreed that “at the present moment, we are not a research committee, but rather an Arab working group working to institutionalise itself.”

During the workshop, the ANECD team delivered a presentation on the “Arab Resource Collective” and the “Arab Network for Early Childhood.” The presentation discussed the history of early childhood development at ARC and ANECD, the stages of establishing the network in 2014, the financial and logistical obstacles at the time, its various programs, and the partners and members.

At the end of the workshop, the participants put forward future action steps, the most notable of which are:

- further networking and communication between researchers in the working group and the national networks based on the relevant needs of each national network.
- Creating a database on the ANECD’s website containing specialised topics published after 2012.
- In light of the magnitude of the climate change crisis and its effects on ECD, revamping a budget to include more time and additional phases of work will make it more convincing during fundraising.

As for subsequent activities, the AWG-ECR is currently working on

- Researchers share their studies and reports, or those they were part of the research team that prepared them, with ANECD, who reviews everything submitted and adds it to the database.
- Review studies and reports related to early childhood issues published during the last decade. Each researcher selects five influential papers to review according to the following criteria: defining the characteristics of the research, its objectives, methodology, results and recommendations, and identifying strengths and weaknesses. Then, the researcher summarises the study and expresses an opinion on it.

## 8.2. ANECD's Strategic Research Model (SRM)

### 8.2.1. What is the Arab Network's Strategic Research Model (SRM)?

ANECD's 2020-2024 strategic plan identified five intervention areas: children's rights, the early childhood workforce, early childhood in crises and emergencies, early childhood and the climate crisis & environmental hazards, and ECD in cyber security, safety and empowerment. Furthermore, the plan identified three working approaches: knowledge production and promotion, partnership and advocacy, and policy intervention.

Based on this, the network has developed an action plan for the coming years, including conducting a "strategic research model" in each intervention area mentioned above. The SRM consists of activities that serve the goals of the intervention areas and the three cross-cutting working approaches.

The network secretariat and members have selected the topics of the five strategic research models to be implemented in a participatory approach that reflects the network's values.

The eight participatory steps of a strategic research model:



### 8.2.2. SR 1: The Situation of Parents and Caregivers in Six Arab Countries During Crises»

The novel coronavirus (COVID19-) pandemic has disrupted the world and life as we knew it, resulting in massive loss of life and economic activity. The COVID19- pandemic has represented a severe and long-term crisis for early childhood care and education, and interruptions to early childhood development services and increased stress due to health concerns, job insecurity, and closures have negatively impacted the ability of parents and caregivers to provide enhanced care.

This study came to provide quantitative and qualitative indicators about the condition of caregivers for children during the pandemic and to investigate the condition of early childhood, or parts of it, in emergencies and crises, especially in six Arab countries: Palestine, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Tunisia,

and Morocco. Data was collected from 3,645 caregivers.

The report brief can be read in English

[Here](#)



### 8.2.3. SR 2: The Working Conditions of Educators in Nurseries and Kindergartens in 7 Arab Countries

After the success of the first strategic research model assessing the situation of parents and caregivers of young children in crises, the Arab Network launched its second strategic research model in January 2023. This model aimed to study educators' working conditions in nurseries and kindergartens in seven Arab countries, including Tunisia, Oman, Palestine, Morocco, Jordan, Egypt, and Lebanon.

A literature review was conducted in all countries participating in the study. Data was also collected through an online questionnaire that included questions about the nature and content of the employment contracts of educators with their institutions, in addition to an assessment of their working conditions in terms of income, additional working hours, vacations, training courses, and so on.

### 8.2.4. SR 3: Child Rights in 6 Arab Countries

The third strategic research model aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the legal framework for child rights in the region and to conduct a desk review of child rights laws and declarations in Arab countries while seeking to fill the gap in the lack of data and information by providing a comprehensive and holistic overview of child rights laws and declarations in the selected Arab countries:

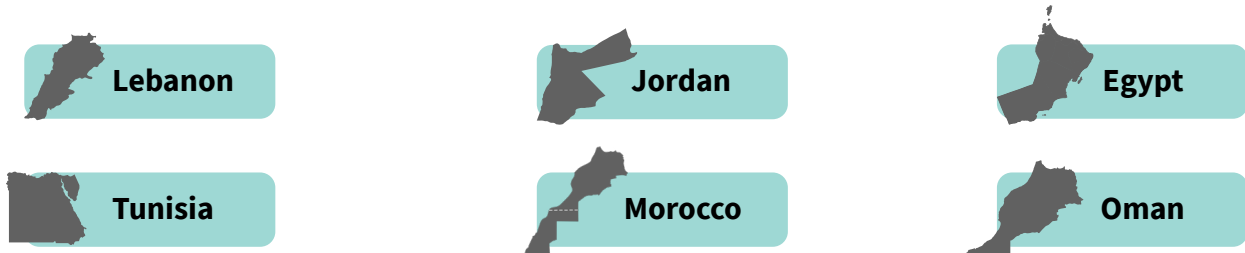


### 8.2.5. SR 4: Knowledge and practices related to the climate crisis and its impact on children (from birth to 8 years) among parents and caregivers in 6 Arab countries.

The fourth strategic research model aims to achieve three goals:

- Investigating parents' and caregivers' knowledge of the dimensions of the climate crisis.
- Investigating the practices of parents and caregivers to respond to the climate crisis and its impact on their children.
- Coming up with recommendations and suggestions for policies that would reduce the repercussions of the climate crisis on early childhood.

Six Arab countries participated in the research:



### 8.3. Situational Assessment of Young Children and Their Families During the multi-layered crises in Lebanon

In 2022, ANECD conducted a situational assessment study of the ECD status in Lebanon. Lebanon is a middle-income country in the eastern Mediterranean region that suffers from a high level of inequality, with significant disparities between the rich and the poor. Working for early childhood development in Lebanon has become complicated due to the multiple unprecedented crises it is experiencing, especially the economic collapse, the historic and unprecedented Beirut port explosion, the political instability, and the COVID19- pandemic.

You can read the situation assessment brief

[Here](#)



### 8.4. Situational Assessment: the mental health, quality of life, coping mechanisms, and professional performance among the early childhood workforce in Lebanon in light of some demographic and work-related variables.

In 2023, ARC conducted a study in cooperation with a team from the Modern University of Business and Science (MUBS) to identify and evaluate the reality of mental health among frontline workers in early childhood development in Lebanon. The study aimed to determine the levels of mental health and quality of life among frontliners and to identify the most prominent coping mechanisms they use to deal with stress. The study also aimed to investigate the relationships between mental health, quality of life, coping mechanisms, job performance, and the extent of using playful techniques in education.

Based on this study, during the year (2024), three scientific articles will be published in peer-reviewed scientific journals to disseminate the results to the largest number of researchers, workers, and people interested in the field of early childhood development, mental health, and the ECD workforce. Work will also be done to develop national plans and strategies to advance the field of early childhood in Lebanon and support the workforce.

### 8.5. Two studies to evaluate the impact of implementing the Health, Early Learning, and Protection Parenting Program (HEPPP) in Lebanon and Jordan with parents from birth to 8 years

#### 8.5.1. Study 1:2019 - 2021

Between 2019 and 2021, the Arab Resource Collective conducted research under the title: Parenting Support for Refugee and Vulnerable Communities in Lebanon and Jordan during the COVID19-

Pandemic and Humanitarian Crises, through the Health, Early Learning, and Protection Parenting (HEPPP) programme, which provided comprehensive support to parents in Lebanon and Jordan during the Covid pandemic19- and the multifaceted humanitarian crisis.

This study was published in November 2023 as a chapter in the book: “[Young Children in Humanitarian and COVID19- Crises: Innovations and Lessons from the Global South](#)” under the title: “[Parenting Support for Refugee and Vulnerable Communities in Lebanon and Jordan during the COVID19- Pandemic and Humanitarian Crises.](#)”

### 8.5.2. Study 2022

In 2022, the Arab Resource Collective conducted research using a pre/post design without a control group to evaluate the impact of the HEPPP intervention program on families affected by the recent crises in the suburbs of Beirut while adding two components: Early learning and Mental Health for caregivers.

Preliminary results showed that fathers benefited to the same extent as mothers according to the analysis of the gender predictor with the different measures. Work is now underway to write scientific articles, with the results to be published in 2024 in peer-reviewed scientific journals.

## 8.6 Two briefs on the involvement of men and fathers in programs and the impact on reducing violence

In 2023, ANECD developed two briefs covering the participation of fathers and men in programmes, with the titles: [The Best Practices for Engaging Men and Fathers in Programs](#) and 2) [Evidence on the Effects of Engaging Fathers on Reducing Violence Against Children in the Home and even Intimate Partner Violence.](#)

This first brief provides an overview of a few Programs, especially for men/fathers, to improve Early Childhood Development (ECD) and parental collaboration. It shows how programs are designed to promote active, involved parenting, parenting skills, fathers’ engagement in caregiving, parent-child interaction and relationship quality, violence reduction, key evaluation findings, implementation challenges, lessons learned, and considerations for future adaptations.

The second brief highlights the importance of Fathers’ involvement, even those who experienced violence during childhood, and how it can improve the paternal connection. It offers concrete examples of how social norms improve or hinder the father’s engagement.



9

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Communication

## 9. Communication

### 9.1. The ANECD Website



In 2022, ANECD updated and renewed its [website](#), which was issued with a new look that is easy to navigate and browse. Some additional pages on the website are still under development. This update is a further step within the network’s plan to produce knowledge, partnerships, and advocacy for early childhood issues in Arab countries.

Moreover, the new website will develop pages for each national ECD network, which ANECD is working on supporting and facilitating their establishment, as well as a new page for the “Arab Working Group for Early Childhood Research,” where member-researchers will publish their previous research and studies, in addition to those that will be written as the result of the working group.

With the beginning of the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in Palestine, the “Arab Network” modified the design of its home page to keep pace with the events and their impact on young children.

### 9.2. Country Profiles



Since 2019, UNICEF, in cooperation with the “Countdown to 2030 for Women’s, Children’s, and Adolescent’s Health” project, has been developing country profiles for early childhood development for all countries of the world annually.

The country profiles show data on key early childhood development indicators, specifically across the five components of the Nurturing Care Framework: good health, adequate nutrition, safety and security, responsive caregiving and opportunities for early learning, and an enabling policy framework to support families and caregivers.

Before the COVID19- pandemic, the Arab Network for Early Childhood worked on translating the updated profiles for fourteen Arab countries. The network’s new website also includes a page for [profiles of Arab countries](#).

### 9.3. Blog posts

The new website includes updates, reports, and a rich database linking Arab communities active in the early childhood field. It included blogs on the five strategic intervention areas the network is working

on Early childhood in crises and emergencies, digital empowerment and cybersecurity, safety and empowerment, children’s rights, ECD and climate change and environmental hazards, and the early childhood workforce.

Each blog post includes the network’s vision, methodology, and position on each issue and a collection of news, resources, articles, and related reports. The blog post “[Early Childhood in Crises](#)” has been launched, and work is underway in 2024 to launch the four other blogs through ANECD’s team and cooperation with a diverse group of researchers at the National ECD networks and others.

#### 9.4. ANECD’s Database

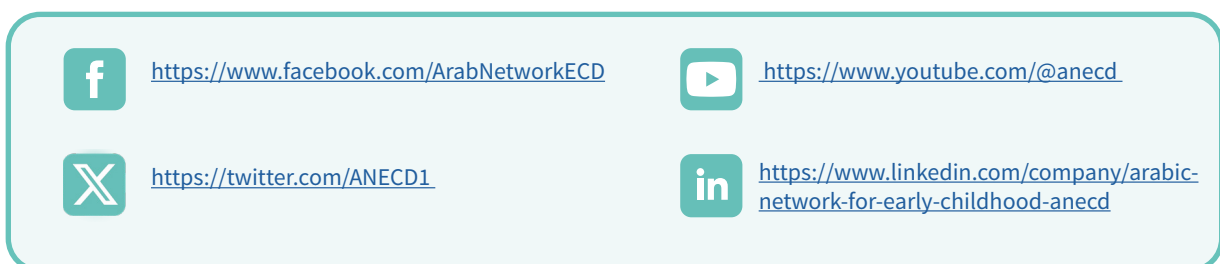
The [Arab Network for Early Childhood database](#) is an integrated environment that collects resources categorised based on ECD areas. The database has been set to make the search engine specific and more accessible to find specific resources to read or use as references. The user can browse the database for each field and add new resources to the database. It includes many written, audio and visual resources, including research, reports, books, articles and visual content (video) related to early childhood issues in Arab countries in recent years.

#### 9.5. The Arab Network’s newsletter and updates

ANECD issues periodic newsletters covering various topics related to early childhood, from emergencies such as the earthquake in the Eastern Mediterranean, wars and conflicts in Yemen, Sudan and Somalia, and various news about the network’s latest activities, publications, partnerships, and news of national, regional and international partners.

#### 9.6. ANECD’s Social Media Platforms

Over the past two years, the network has worked to support and increase its activity through social media platforms:



The Arab Network for Early Childhood has covered many topics related to the five strategic intervention areas in which it works. It also published many news updates, reports, and calls for action in 2022 and 2023. The network uses social media sites effectively and daily to interact with its audience and regional and global partners continuously. Among the most prominent topics and issues covered across the network’s various social media platforms are:

- Media coverage of the launch and establishment of national groups and networks.
- A public invitation was published on the network’s social media sites to attend the signing of the joint memorandum of understanding between the “Arab Network for Early Childhood,” the “Arab Council for Childhood and Development,” and the “National Council for Family Affairs,” in addition to the live broadcast via Facebook.

- Live coverage of the launch of the “Arab Working Group for Early Childhood Research” workshop through live broadcast, publishing the quotes and opinions of the participants, and updating the audience with steps that followed the workshop through posts and the story feature.
- Publishing the network’s reports that covered the situation of children in Sudan, the tragedy of Yemen, the situation of the children of Lebanon, the tragedy of Jenin camp, Libya and the needs of its children. Highlighting the importance of taking action towards these issues.
- Full media coverage of convening the first regional ECD forum through a live broadcast via Facebook and the announcement of the live broadcast timings for several sessions to intensify the audience’s attendance. The live broadcast covered the following sessions: the opening session - the early childhood in crises session - digital empowerment, cybersecurity, and the role of technology in enhancing fathers’ participation - dialogue sessions and a discussion session on establishing national networks for early childhood. In addition to the countdown to the start of the forum and sharing the opinions and quotes of the forum’s participants.
- Sharing posts from the advocacy campaigns launched by the network’s partners that addressed the importance of the first stage of a child’s life and children’s rights.
- Publishing the news of the signing of the memorandum of understanding between the Ministry of Social Affairs and the “Arab Network” and covering the event via live broadcast on Facebook.
- Announcing the Arab Network’s joining the Early Childhood Workforce Initiative (ECWI) and publishing ECWI documents such as publications to introduce EC workers and their working conditions and assess their needs. In addition to the EC workforce training and professional development report. The team also shared a public invitation across all social media platforms to attend a webinar about initiatives to support the workforce in the early childhood sector.
- Covering the Palestine war and setting up dedicated campaigns about the war by publishing several topics related to the five areas in which the network works, including:
  - The condition of children during the war crisis.
  - Sharing EC in war and crisis resources from ANECD’s database in addition to the resources of the network’s partners,
  - Publishing articles and reports on the condition of the medical staff and the reality of hospitals in Gaza, in addition to sharing doctors’ statements and pleading with them for a ceasefire and providing hospitals with basic medical supplies.
  - Publishing reports on pregnant women and their condition during the war and focusing on appealing to the importance of women’s rights to healthy childbirth and the right of the child to a healthy environment away from war.
  - Publishing video evidence of the condition of children in Gaza
  - Publishing three emergency calls to action and a donation campaign for the children of Palestine in cooperation with the Palestinian Early Childhood Network and partner associations.
  - Sharing the activities carried out by partners in the field in Palestine during the Palestine War, which

included photos and video clips, including psychosocial support, that the partners conducted with children affected by the war.

- Sharing reports of international organisations that cover the topics of the Gaza War and the five strategic intervention areas in which the network works, such as UNICEF, Save the Children, Human Rights Watch, and others.

### 9.7. ANECD's response to the war on Gaza and the West Bank in Palestine

In response to the Israeli war on the Gaza Strip and the West Bank in Palestine, the Arab Network for Early Childhood established an Emergency Unit made up of representatives from national networks in Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, and Yemen. The cell aimed to develop a plan to respond to the urgent needs of children in the bloody war and follow up on the course of events. The “Palestinian Early Childhood Network” formed the focus of the unit’s work.

As part of the response, the Emergency Unit launched a donation campaign for the children of Gaza. It issued three calls to action, calling for an immediate ceasefire and establishing safe corridors to provide aid. It also highlighted Israeli violations of international humanitarian laws and conventions. You can view the appeals via the following links:

[No Peace for Palestine's Children Without Justice. No Future for them Without Protection](#)

[One Child Martyred Every 15 Minutes in Gaza](#)

[Save the children of Palestine...Ceasefire NOW!](#)

In cooperation with the national networks and the “Juzoor” Foundation in Palestine, the ANECD team followed the daily events in Gaza and their impact on young children. ANECD published relevant news, reports and videos through the network’s website or social media.

**Donate to the children of Palestine**

[Here](#)



### 9.8. ECD Advocacy campaigns in Palestine, Tunisia, and Jordan

In the implementation of the memorandums stated above, a joint activity plan was developed between the Arab Network for Early Childhood and its local partners in three countries, which included several activities and events, including the organisation of an advocacy campaign by each national network based on one of the network’s strategic areas of intervention.

The ECD National networks in Palestine, Tunisia, and Egypt are working on local advocacy campaigns for early childhood development based on considering each country’s specificity and the circumstances of the children in it.

These campaigns seek to enhance collective work in the early childhood field, keep up with developments, and benefit from the latest and most prominent advancements in the science of early child development and care.

● **In Tunisia:** The Tunisian Network for Early Childhood (TNECD), hosted by the Tunisian Association of Childhood Inspectors, signed an MoU with the Arab Network for Early Childhood, which included several activities, including the Tunisian Network launching an advocacy campaign on one of the early childhood issues that the Network is working on and that is particularly relevant and important in Tunisia. The Tunisian Network chose the climate change crisis and its impact on early childhood as the subject of the advocacy campaign.

The first activity of the advocacy campaign was represented by a meeting of members of the Tunisian network with representatives of national and regional organisations active in the field of environment and with representatives of the Ministry in charge of childhood. During the meeting, the parties identified areas of cooperation related to the campaign on climate change and early childhood. They discussed the possibility of TNECD's participation in "The National Strategy on Childhood and Climate Change", which is being prepared by the Ministries of Childhood and Environment in cooperation with UNICEF.

In the second activity, the "Earth Hour" association developed a training course for members of the Tunisian network. It was delivered on June 17, 2023, and elaborated on concepts related to climate change and the importance of advocacy in this field. The Earth Hour Association officially represents the Climate Action Network - Arab World in Tunisia.

As for the next steps, the Tunisian network will work on completing a study on the psychological effects of the climate change crisis on parents and children, followed by a workshop to develop recommendations and prepare a policy brief. In preparation for the subject of the study, the Tunisian network will prepare digital content via social media, followed by promoting the study results and its recommendations upon completion.

● **In Egypt:** The campaign came within the framework of the joint memorandum of understanding between the "Arab Council for Childhood and Development," the "Arab Network for Early Childhood," and the "Jordanian National Council for Family Affairs," signed on May 24, 2023.

The advocacy campaign theme in Egypt is "Children's Rights in Early Childhood," and the campaign's target audience is caregivers.

The campaign's central activities are:

- A campaign on social media platforms that includes messages and whiteboard videos on issues related to children's rights.
- Release the Council's calendar for 2024, which revolves around the campaign content.
- Publish a special issue for "Khotwa" (Step) magazine.
- Organise a webinar on one of the campaign issues

● **In Palestine:** (Campaign report [here](#))

The Palestinian Child Institute, in cooperation with the Palestinian Network for Early Childhood, implemented an advocacy and communication campaign entitled "The First 1,000 Days of a Child's Life Matter," which aimed to highlight the importance of the first 1,000 days in a child's life and development.

The most notable activities in the campaign are:

- Radio and television interviews to introduce the campaign and its objectives and present some of its important topics, such as the importance of psychological support, the role of parents and caregivers, brain development, speech skills, developmental difficulties, etc.
- Messages on social media platforms directed mainly to parents and caregivers on topics such as screen use, spending time with children, and the importance of a balanced diet and a safe environment.
- Community activities such as participating in open days for children, in addition to volunteer activities.
- Meetings with representatives of target communities, such as village councils and municipalities, to support early childhood programs and create spaces and activities that support the advocacy campaign messages in particular.
- Awareness videos: Develop three educational videos about the first thousand days of a child's life.
- Emergency Response: Since the first day of the war in the Gaza Strip, the "Palestinian Child Institute" has worked to develop psychological support messages for children and parents to provide parents with information and advice for coping and managing with children during the war. The Psychological Support Unit also communicated with specialists and families in the Gaza Strip and Jenin camp in the West Bank, and they worked with many cases requiring individual and group intervention.

# 10

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**Partnerships & Support**



## 10. Partnerships & Support

The “Arab Network” is part of global partnerships, with whom it exchanges experiences and information, holds periodic meetings, and participates with each other in drafting and reviewing documents and plans, including:

### 10.1. Arab Partnerships and support:



المجلس العربي للطفولة والتنمية  
Arab Council for Childhood and Development

Arab Council for Childhood and Development - Egypt



المجلس الوطني لشؤون الأسرة  
NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR FAMILY AFFAIRS

National Council for Family Affairs - Jordan



The Higher Council for Childhood  
الجلس الأعلى للطفولة

Higher Council for Childhood, Ministry of Social Affairs - Lebanon



الجمعية التونسية  
للتفتيش الطفولة  
A.T.I.E

Tunisian Association of Childhood Inspectors



وزارة الأسرة والشباب والطفولة  
والشيخوخة

Ministry of Family, Women, Children, and Seniors - Tunisia



المؤسسة المغربية  
للشؤون بالتعليم الأصيل

Moroccan Foundation for the Promotion of Pre-School Education

KINGDOM OF MOROCCO



Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training,  
Higher Education and Scientific Research

The Higher Council of Education, Training, and Scientific Research - Morocco



JUZOOR

Jouzour Foundation for Health and Social Development - Palestine



Al-Makassed Association - Lebanon



مركز  
الطفولة  
AL-Turfa (N.N.S)

Childhood Center in Palestine



المركز الفلسطيني للإرشاد  
Palestinian Counseling Center

Palestinian Counseling Center



Early Childhood Resource Center - Palestine



مركز إبداع المعلم  
TEACHER CREATIVITY CENTER

Teacher Creativity Center - Palestine



مؤسسة نهر الأردن  
Jordan River Foundation

Jordan River Foundation



Dubai Cares



Ahlan Simsim



ABDUL LATIF JAMEEL POVERTY ACTION LAB (J-PAL)



Abu Dhabi Early Childhood Authority



Plan International - Jordan



Arab Gulf Programme for Development (AGFUND)



Arab NGO Network for Development



Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO)



Arab Campaign for Education for All



UNESCO



Education Ministry of the Palestinian National Authority



Ministry of Education and Higher Education - Lebanon



Ministry of Primary Healthcare - Child and Mother Health Unit- Lebanon



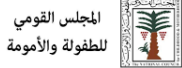
Ministry of Education - Early Childhood Directorate - Jordan



Modern University for Business and Science



Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood - Yemen



The National Council For Childhood & Motherhood - Egypt



Early Childhood Development Center - University of Sana'a, Yemen



Sultan Qaboos University - Oman



Arab Regional Agenda to Improve Education Quality - ARAIEQ



Regional Center of Quality & Excellence in Education



Palestinian Network for Early Childhood



Palestinian Childhood institute (PCI) - An Najah National University



Tunisian Network for Early Childhood Development



Child Institute - AL Quds University

## 10.2. Global Partnerships and Support:



The Africa Early Childhood Network



The Asia-Pacific Regional Network Early Childhood



The International Step by Step Association



Early Childhood Regional Networks Fund (ECRNF)



The Lego Foundation



Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), where ANECD is a member of the ECD Working group



Moving Minds Alliance (MMA)



Nurturing Care Framework



Harvard Center on the Developing Child



Early Childhood Peace Consortium (ECPC)



Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN)



World Health Organization



UNICEF, globally, regionally, and several country offices



Harnessing Global Data for Young Children



Child Arise



PORTICUS



Two Lilies Fund



RED RIVER COLLEGE



University of Oxford (PARENTING for LIFELONG HEALTH)



Global Initiative to Support Parents



International Rescue Committee (IRC)



RESULTS FOR DEVELOPMENT



Global Mental Health Action Network (GMHAN)



International Developmental Pediatrics Association



Yale University - Child Study Center



Save the children



Mother Child Education Foundation - ACEV



International Labour Organisation - ILO



AGA KHAN DEVELOPMENT NETWORK

Agha Khan Development Network - AKDN



Path Foundation



Oak Foundation



ChildFund International



Asfari Foundation

**In addition to the support of other agencies.**

### 10.3. Partnership with the Regional ECD Networks

The Arab Network for Early Childhood is one of four global networks that work diversely in the field of global early childhood.

#### 10.3.1 The Africa Early Childhood Network AfECN

The Africa Early Childhood Network (AfECN) is a registered non-profit established in 2015 to serve as a platform to champion excellence and collaboration in protecting children’s rights, influence policy and practice, strengthen partnerships, and share experiences and knowledge in ECD on the

African continent. The network comprises organisations from civil society, academia, government, and the private sector at national and regional levels.

AfECN is involved in knowledge generation and exchange, providing opportunities to policymakers, researchers and practitioners to share experiences and best practices to inform country-level ECED dialogues. AfECN also supports African scholars working at the intersection of research, practice, and policy to advance ECD in the region. In this regard, AfECN supports sub-regional research communities of practice that involve ECED scholars in the sub-regions.

### **10.3.2 The Asia-Pacific Regional Network Early Childhood ARNEC**

ARNEC is a network established to build strong partnerships across sectors and different disciplines, organisations, agencies and institutions in the Asia-Pacific region to advance the agenda on and investment in Early Childhood.

ARNEC is one of the Asia-Pacific region's most extensive and fastest-growing networks for Early Childhood Development (ECD). It provides a common platform for ECD professionals from diverse sectors and professions, ranging from practitioners, experts, government institutions and NGOs, as well as regional and global agencies and networks.

ARNEC promotes holistic and inclusive early childhood development (ECD) and advocates for responsive caregiving and playful parenting; multisectoral approaches to ECD; ECD and climate resilience; and ECD workforce.

### **10.3.3 The International Step-by-Step Association ISSA**

Established in 1999, the International Step-by-Step Association (ISSA) facilitates learning and collaboration across sectors, disciplines and borders in Europe and Central Asia to advocate for and support competent Early Childhood Systems.

Building on Open Society Foundations' Step by Step Program, ISSA's vibrant community of nearly 100 members unites diverse organisations on a mission for quality, equity, workforce development and multisectoral approaches in integrated early years services. The network is a platform for members and partners to share, create and disseminate knowledge and practices—weaving a rich tapestry of collective wisdom and action towards greater impact for young children.

## **10.4. The Early Childhood Regional Networks Fund - ECRNF**

With four regional early childhood networks established, the opportunity was ripe to support the sustainability, capacity and collaboration required of these networks to move the needle on early childhood development outcomes. As a result, the Early Childhood Regional Networks Fund was launched in June 2022. ECRNF is a philanthropic initiative that supports strong, resilient and representative networks to promote early childhood development.

The ECRNF team supports ECD networks to remain powerful forces with the rights and development of children at the very heart of what they do. ECRNF supports the four regional networks, of whom ANECD, through core funding for the networks' secretariat to achieve their strategies, strengthen the capacity and impact of each network and learning between them, and enable collaborative projects that the networks deliver with their members and other partners.

The Fund is currently working on several initiatives with the regional networks, including:

- Work on specific issues: young children in crises, fatherhood and men’s engagement,
- Network Health Framework and Network Impact Measure,
- An exchange and learning platform for regional networks.

## 10.5. The Arab Network for Early Childhood joins the Early Childhood Workforce Initiative

In 2023, the “Arab Network for Early Childhood” announced it is joining the “[Early Childhood Workforce Initiative](#)” (ECWI), which works to support and advocate for the EC workforce issues by sharing knowledge, practical and scientific tools, and common experiences.

These efforts provide decision-makers with the resources and information needed to understand the workforce’s realities, challenges, and opportunities while ensuring that professionals working with young children and their families are provided with the necessary support and training to achieve the best early childhood development outcomes.

The Early Childhood Workforce Initiative results from a comprehensive global partnership launched by the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) and Results for Development (R4D) in the service of early childhood development.

### 10.5.1. ANECD’s webinar On the Early Childhood Workforce



In July 2023, the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD) hosted a webinar in partnership with the Early Childhood Workforce Initiative (ECWI) titled “Initiatives to Support the Early Childhood Workforce”. The event featured the participation of the International Step-by-Step Association (ISSA), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Center for Lebanese Studies (CLS).

ANECD’s General Coordinator opened the webinar by providing an overview of the network’s vision, mission, and interest in the ECD workforce. He highlighted ANECD’s flexible structure encompassing various sectors and specialisations. He also discussed the national ECD networks, emphasising their importance as key partners of ANECD. Dr. Issa nodded to ANECD’s “Arab Working Group for Early Childhood Research”. He also discussed ANECD’s five strategic intervention areas and the three working approaches within its framework.

In a recorded video, the Senior Program Manager at the International Step by Step Association (ISSA) affirmed that the initiative, launched in 2016, aimed to raise awareness about the importance of the

early childhood workforce, which needs to be recognised, prepared, supported, and empowered to provide quality services to children and their families to guarantee their wellbeing. Mrs Trikić also highlighted ECWI's key achievements over the years.

The International Labour Organization's "Women's empowerment in care economy" Project Manager addressed workers' rights in Arab countries, emphasising the importance of linking care to decent work principles and fundamental labour rights. She highlighted the need for workers to be able to negotiate with employers and governments. She also pointed out the importance of the role of caregivers, especially after the COVID19- pandemic, speaking of how they are absentees from the possibility of benefiting and the need for various initiatives to create fair care policies, even within the home. She stressed the importance of approaching care from a gender perspective, which is needed when approaching socioeconomic policies. She introduced the "Global Care Policy Portal", launched by the International Labour Organization, which publishes data and resources related to care policies and services to advance gender equality and non-discrimination. The portal provides over 60 legal and statistical indicators on maternity protection, parental leave, and other care-related services in more than 180 countries.

The Center for Lebanese Studies (CLS) presented the results of studies conducted by the centre since 2020 on teachers' working conditions in nurseries and kindergartens amid the Lebanese crises and the drastic devaluation of their salaries.

Afterwards, the Senior Programs & Operations Manager at ANECD presented the workforce aspect within the Network's strategy. She explained that the strategy for the next five years focuses on establishing a comprehensive professional registry for early childhood development specialists and advocating to integrate knowledge and training courses on early childhood development into university curricula. The goal is to make early childhood development a multidisciplinary approach through coursework at selected universities and technical schools in the Arab world. She also talked about the "Nawwara" website for MHPSS and the "Health, Early Learning, and Protection Parenting Program" (HEPPP) in Lebanon and Jordan, supported by the online platform "Urjouha".

ANECD's Coordinator discussed the second strategic research model focusing on the working conditions of nursery and kindergarten teachers in six Arab countries: Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco.

Finally, ARC's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support coordinator presented preliminary findings from a situational assessment of the reality of the mental health of the early childhood workforce during crises in Lebanon.

You can watch the webinar

[Here](#)



### 10.5.2. The Early Childhood Workforce Initiative 2023-2024

Within the framework of the new cooperation and ANECD joining the "Early Childhood Workforce Initiative" (ECWI), an MoU between the two parties was signed to work on the following activities until the end of 2024:



- **Knowledge production:** Conduct regional research on the topic of professional development for the early childhood workforce. After completing the second strategic research model on the working conditions of educators in nurseries and kindergartens in Arab countries, the network will work on conducting a supplementary study to investigate training and professional development opportunities for educators. This study seeks to collect quantitative and qualitative data from educators and supervisors in nurseries and kindergartens. It will result in the development of national and regional reports and policy briefs.
- **Partnerships:** Building new partnerships with active organisations in the early childhood workforce sector in at least three Arab countries. The previous study will be an entry point for building these partnerships and networking with actors on this topic to implement research activities and training programmes.
- **Coordination efforts** with national networks for early childhood in two Arab countries to organise a training program for educators in nurseries and kindergartens on the science of early childhood development.
- **Advocacy:** ANECD will develop and implement an action plan to promote the results of research on training and professional development opportunities for educators and advocate for issues related to the early childhood workforce by convening and participating in webinars and producing written and audio-visual content.

## 10.6. Early Childhood Development Action Network (ECDAN)

[ECDAN](#) is a Network of Networks and a global platform to catalyse collective action at scale. ECDAN works to mobilise collective action on behalf of young children and their families worldwide by connecting with global and regional partners, facilitating knowledge exchange and learning and coordinating advocacy for increased investment in quality services.

The Arab Network was one of the founders of ECDAN in 2016.

Today, ANECD is a member of ECDAN's Steering Committee, Leadership Council, and Technical Advisory Group. ANECD also joins the periodic meetings of the Global Advisory Group for Policy and Advocacy.

## 10.7. Moving Minds Alliance

The [Moving Minds Alliance](#) was established in 2017 by a group of philanthropies united around a concern that the youngest children affected by crisis and displacement are not getting the support they need to rebuild resilience and achieve their full potential.

### 10.7.1. Joint Advocacy Group 3 (JAG3): Lebanon, Jordan, and Uganda

The network co-chairs MMA's third advocacy group. This group works to build and strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms (field offices of multilateral organisations, international NGOs, government representatives and local civil society organisations) and processes to align ECD in emergency actors and funding at national and sub-national levels.

This group works within the joint strategy for advocacy for early childhood in crises, which aims to increase donor funding in ECDiE (the first group), and to prioritise early childhood development in crises in programs, policies, coordination and humanitarian response (the second group), in

addition to creating demand and support for early childhood development policies in Crises in countries that currently lack them (Group 3).

### 10.7.2. The Global Research Forum on Young Children in Emergencies

In 2022, the Moving Minds Alliance launched The Research Forum on Young Children in Emergencies, bringing together researchers from both the Global North and South to foster engagement, collaboration and knowledge sharing on young children and families affected by crisis and displacement. The Forum aims to identify research taking place worldwide and network researchers to share findings, lessons learned, and measurement tools and approaches.

ANECD is a core member of the core team of the Research Forum, holding regular meetings, exchanging research and contributing to the preparation of publications and webinars.

In 2023, the Research Forum launched the Research Fellowship Program to support local researchers in the Global South to carry out studies on issues related to young children (from pre-natal to school-entry) in emergency contexts, where they would have the opportunity for knowledge sharing, mentoring from the core team, and dissemination of their research to a global audience.

The Forum is working in partnership with MMA and the current hosting organisation, Unbounded Associates, in preparing to transfer the hosting of the Forum and its activities to the Arab Network, which will also document and disseminate the lessons learned from the establishment of the Arab Working Group for Research in Early Childhood, strategic research models, exchange knowledge with other regions and transfer the hosting of the research fellowship program to BRAC-IED.

### 10.8. Nurturing Care framework: workshops and the report “Advancing Nurturing Care in Humanitarian Settings”

ANECD, International Rescue Committee (IRC), Save the Children, UNICEF and World Health Organization (WHO) came together and published a report titled [Advancing Nurturing Care in Humanitarian Settings](#) in November 2022.

The report presents lessons learned from a series of workshops held by the partners in 2021 to strengthen the region’s commitment to early childhood development and highlights efforts made by Iraq, Jordan, Palestine and Syria to ensure care for children living in crisis settings.

The partners, including the Arab Network, are preparing an action plan for 2024 to follow up on the implementation of the outputs and recommendations from the workshops in the concerned countries.

### 10.9. Global Challenges Research Fund and the initiative: Harnessing Global Data to Advance Young Children’s Learning and Development

[The Harnessing Global Data Project](#) is a unique collaboration between multi-disciplinary experts, UN agencies, implementers, early child development and education (ECD-ECE) regional networks, and stakeholder teams. The project builds global research capacity in ECD-ECE to increase the use of data for international decision-making, action, and monitoring.

The Early Childhood Regional Networks partnering with the Harnessing Global Data Project play a key role, wherein the project works to understand how best to represent, communicate and support the use of data to promote young children’s learning and development.

The project supports ANECD and its research activities, as well as the dissemination of results and achieving the desired strategic goals.

### 10.10. Regional Networks Initiative with the Harvard Center on the Developing Child

The four networks worked with Harvard University on a pilot project during 2021-2023 in regions across Africa, Asia Pacific, the Middle East, and Europe regions. The pilot aimed, through Regional Network partners at the national, sub-national and regional levels, to support a deeper understanding and application of the Science of ECD at the policy, programmatic, and strategic levels and build on their capacities to disseminate and apply learnings through their existing projects (e.g. community mobilisation, national ECD strategies, organisational frameworks, learning sessions for decision makers).

### 10.11. Early Childhood Peace Consortium - ECPC

The [ECPC](#) is a global consortium of United Nations agencies, Non-Governmental Organizations, academia, practitioners, and the private sector focused on sharing scientific and practice-based evidence on how investment in early childhood development (ECD) can contribute to sustainable peace, social cohesion, and social justice. ECPC recognises that investing in ECD is a powerful and cost-effective strategy for reducing violence, poverty, and exclusion and building peaceful societies.

The Arab Network participates as a regional advisor to the consortium.

### 10.12. Global Initiative to Support Parents: the Regional Convening in Support of Parents in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa Regions

[The Regional Convening in Support of Parents in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa Region](#) was held in August 2023. The three days framed parenting issues around a continuum that moved from the current landscape of parenting in the region then established a framework for moving from evidence to policy to scale, and concluded with looking ahead to the way forward.

The Arab Network participated as part of the steering and organising committees of the conference. The network and its management team also provided several interventions on the Regional Perspectives on Parenting in the Eastern Mediterranean, Middle East, and North Africa Region; the Status of Parents and Caregivers During Crisis in Six Arab Countries; the Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development: Scaling Integrated Cross-Sectoral Action to Support Parents; and an Introduction to the Issue: Cross Regional Context of Nurturing Care in Vulnerable and Stable Contexts.

Many of the network's national and regional partners, decision-makers, and governments were invited to participate in the conference, and some had interventions on specialised topics during the three days.



11

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**Participation of ANECD in regional  
and international events**

## 11. Participation of ANECD in regional and international events

### 11.1. «Bulbul» Workshop

In February 2022, ANECD participated in the “Bulbul” workshop to explore oral language development in early education and childhood care. ANECD joined participants from Lebanon and other regions and shared visions and experiences in four main areas: formulating language-enriching curricula, innovative public health methods to support language development in the early stages, cooperation between early education care and speech and language therapy, and enhancing the responsiveness of educators in the early stages through training and orientation.

### 11.2. Lego Idea Conference



The “Arab Network” participated in an activity within the LEGO Idea conference in June 2022, where it had the opportunity to present the “Urjouha” parenting website and the “Health, Early Learning, Protection Parenting Program” (HEPPP). The conference focused on the early years of a child’s life, ensuring all children have access to learning through play (including children in crises) and addressing the meagre investment in all areas of education.

### 11.3. Webinar “Leveraging the Science to Promote Resilience in Families and Communities”

The Arab Network participated in a webinar entitled “Leveraging the Science to Promote Resilience in Families and Communities.” The webinar reflected the close cooperation between the “Harvard Center on the Developing Child” and the four regional networks that specialised in early childhood development in their regions, including ANECD, in November 2022. The webinar hosted a discussion that included representatives of the specialised networks and a presentation on the science of resilience in the early childhood years. This event demonstrated the network’s commitment to promoting early childhood development and constructive engagement in knowledge and science exchange to enhance resilience in families and communities.

**11.4.** The “Arab Network” participated in a virtual meeting organised by the “Moving Minds Alliance” under the title “MMA Reconnect” in November 2022, where the network team delivered a presentation on the transition from networking to network based on the experience of the Arab Resource Collective in establishing the Arab Network for Early Childhood.

### 11.5. “UNESCO World Conference” / Tashkent

ANECD participated in the “Second UNESCO World Conference on Early Childhood Care and Education,” held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, in November 2022. The conference included 147 countries and more than 2,600 participants working to support the promotion of care and education at this vital stage.

The conference emphasised the children’s rights to quality development and learning during early childhood and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. During the conference, the ANECD General Coordinator addressed the challenges of regions affected by crises such as poverty, wars, and the climate change crisis, stressing the difficulty of providing primary care and education in these regions, which causes children’s malnutrition, the spread of diseases, and developmental problems.

### 11.6. «Jordanian National Conference for Early Childhood»



The Arab Network participated in this conference in December 2022, along with more than 200 participants from institutions working in early childhood development. The conference focused on the reality of early childhood in Jordan and its importance after adopting the Child Rights Law of 2022. Care and education were emphasised at this stage to build the future and promote sustainable human development. The conference also addressed the challenges facing this sector and the efforts made to promote children’s rights and early care.

### 11.7. “Arab Council for Childhood and Development” workshop



The Arab Network participated in a discussion conducted by the Arab Council for Childhood and Development in January 2023 about its strategy until 2025. The discussion included experts from several Arab countries. It highlighted the importance of protecting the rights of children in Arab countries and their development in light of the region’s multiple challenges. The Council’s strategy was developed to keep pace with these challenges and establish a new vision for raising Arab children.

### 11.8. ANECD at Oxford University



ANECD's General Coordinator held a symposium in the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the University of Oxford, where he addressed the topic of crises and their impact on children, specifically after the earthquake in Turkey and Syria in February 2023. During the symposium, he reviewed ANECD's efforts to support early childhood issues in crisis areas in Arab countries.

**11.9.** The Arab Network joined the “**Porticus Global Early Childhood Development Program Partners Meeting**” in Venice, Italy, in March 2023.

### 11.10. Meeting on Gender-transformative parenting



The Senior Partnerships & Development Coordinator at ANECD presented two briefs on fatherhood during the “Meeting on Gender-transformative parenting,” hosted by UNICEF in the Middle East and North Africa (UNICEF MENARO) in Amman, Jordan, in March 2023. The presentation focused on the role of fathers and the best practices to involve them in programs, challenging the prejudices that men in the Arab world face while raising their children.

### 11.11. A tripartite meeting to follow up on the recommendations of the “Tashkent Declaration”



The Arab Network for Early Childhood, the African Network for Early Childhood, and the UNESCO Education Policy Office held a tripartite meeting in Paris to follow up on the recommendations of the Tashkent Declaration for Early Childhood Care and Education and to develop a map for implementing the recommendations. The attendees discussed a draft of the Declaration's follow-up report, which seeks to ensure inclusive and quality early childhood education for all. They also stressed the importance

of providing equal opportunities for education at this stage, underlining that education must begin from birth and that it paves the way for future trends. It was agreed to follow through on joint work to implement the recommendations and issue the final report.

**11.12.** The ANECD team presented its blogposts project during a workshop entitled “**ECD Regional Networks: Case Clinics**,” which was planned and implemented in cooperation with the Harvard Center for the Developing Child and the four regional networks in May 2023. The network team also discussed the challenges these blogs can face, seeking to benefit from the rich experiences of the participants.

**11.13.** The Moving Minds Alliance Research Forum organised a webinar entitled “**Amplifying Research Voices and Highlighting of Young Children in Emergency Settings**” in May 2023, in which ANECD participated and presented its strategic research model while presenting the results of the first strategic research model “The situation of Parents and Caregivers in six Arab countries during crises.”



**11.14.** ANECD participated in the **Moving Minds Alliance** annual meeting in Amman, Jordan, held from May 30 to June 1, 2023. ANECD gave a presentation on its “Health, Early Learning, Protection, Parenting Program” (HEPPP), along with other projects and research materials that it produced to serve early childhood in the region.

**11.15.** The Arab Network participated in the “**Grand Challenges Canada**” meeting in Rwanda in June 2023. The Network presented the HEPPP, its aspects of innovation, and the HEPPP research results it conducted with Arab societies.



**11.16.** The “Arab Network” led a session entitled “**Recognizing, Reducing, and Redistributing Unpaid Care Work in the MENA**,” which the network organised with the “Lebanese American University” and the “International Rescue Committee” in July 2023.

**11.17.** ANECD participated in organising the “**Regional Conference on Supporting Parents and**



**Caregivers in the Eastern Mediterranean Region,”** held in August 2023. The ANECD lead team gave several presentations and interventions that reviewed this issue and how to respond to it at the program, research, and policy levels.

**11.18.** The Arab Network participated in **the annual meeting of the Global Challenges Research Fund** in South Africa in October 2023. The participants discussed and shared many ideas and initiatives on early learning, the climate crisis, human rights, national and regional data, etc., and how to benefit from this data globally to support children’s development and learning.

**11.19.** ANECD participated in **the annual meeting of the Early Childhood Regional Networks Fund** in South Africa in October 2023, along with the three regional networks.

**11.20.** ANECD participated in the **5th International Developmental Pediatrics Association (IDPA)** 2023 in Johannesburg, South Africa, alongside paediatricians, researchers, and policymakers on this international platform to address inequalities in development in children worldwide.



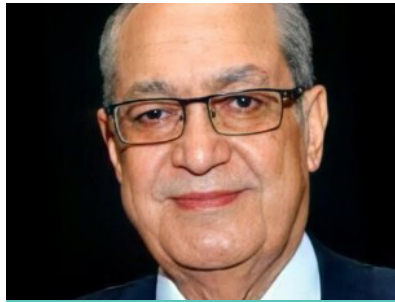
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**ANECD's Advisory Board**

## 13. ANECD's Advisory Board

### The Chairperson



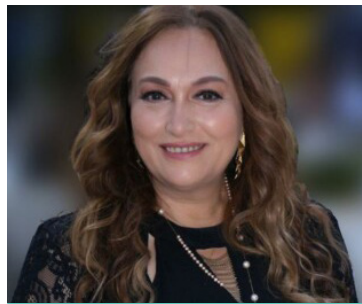
**Dr. Hassan Al-Bilawi**

Secretary General  
Arab Council for Childhood  
and Development  
Egypt



**Aziz Kaichouh**

Secretary General  
The Higher Council of  
Education, Training, and  
Scientific Research  
Morocco



**Souhair zein**

Director of Educational  
Research and Curriculum  
Center  
Makassed Association  
Lebanon



**Dr. Mohammed Fakhri  
Mogdadi**

Secretary General  
National Council For  
Family Affairs  
Jordan



**Dr. Umaiye Mousa  
Khammash**

Director General  
Juzoor for Health & Social  
Development  
Palestine



**Dr. Nabila Espanioly**

Director General  
Al-Tufula (Children)  
Center - Nazareth  
Palestine



**Youssef Hajjar**

Global ECD &  
Development Expert  
Arab Resource Collective  
The United Kingdom



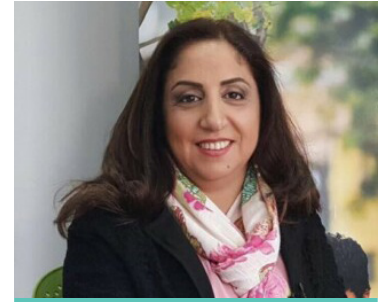
**Hiam Lotfi**

President  
Rafik Hariri University  
Lebanon



**Muna Abbas**

Chief Executive Officer  
The Asfari Foundation  
The United Kingdom



**Rita Karam**

Secretary General  
Higher Council for  
Childhood  
Lebanon



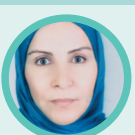

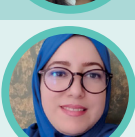

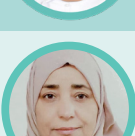


# 13

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**ANECD's Coordination  
Committee**

## 14. ANECD's Coordination Committee

Member	Country	Organisation
 May Sultan	Jordan	National Council for Family Affairs
 Rihab Sandouka	Palestine	Juzoor for Health and Social Development
 Mohammad Reda Fawzy	Egypt	Arab Council for Childhood and Development
 Ghada Mansour	Lebanon	Higher Council for Childhood/ Ministry of Social Affairs
 Beyya Guezzi	Tunisia	Ministry of Family, Women, Childhood, and Seniors.
 Dr. Fatima Al-Zahraa Monsef	Morocco	The Moroccan Foundation for the Promotion of Pre-School Education
 Dr. Amer Al Aisari	Oman	Sultan Qaboos University
 Dr. Najat Al Fakh	Yemen	University of Sanaa

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**ANECD's Team**

## 8. ANECD's Team



### Dr Ghassan Issa

Dr Ghassan Issa is a Lebanese community paediatrician who graduated from the American University of Beirut in 1980. He is the co-founder and has been the General Coordinator of the “Arab Network For Early Childhood” (ANECD) and the “Arab Resource Collective” (ARC) since 2012.

He is a member of the Executive Leadership Board and the Steering Committee of the “Early Childhood Development Action Network» (ECDAN).

Dr.Issa is a regional consultant for the “Early Childhood Peace Consortium.” (ECPC)

He is also a WHO (World Health Organization) regional advisor for the Nurturing Care Framework.

He served as the President of the 4th International Developmental Pediatric Association (IDPA) virtual conference titled “Nurturing Children in Crisis”.

He was also a member of the teaching body of the pediatric department with the faculty of medicine at the Lebanese university.



### Lara Aoude

Mrs. Lara Aoude is the Senior Programs and Operations Manager at the Arab Resource Collective (ARC) and The Arab Network For Early Childhood Development (ANECD). She holds a BA in ECD and a Masters degree in Socio-cultural engineering. She is an ECD expert and a regional trainer in the Science of Early Childhood Care and Development. She works in networking on both national and regional levels.

Mrs Aoude specialises in program design and development and content creation. She contributed to and supervised the creation of numerous early childhood programs and resources, most notably HEPPP (Health, Early Learning, and Protection Parenting Program), the Urjouha Parenting Platform, and the Nawwara for Wellbeing website.



### Grace Boutros

Ms. Grace Boutros is a Lebanese humanitarian and activist with a background in clinical psychology and program management and design. She currently holds the Senior Partnership and Development Coordinator position at the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD) and the Arab Resource Collective (ARC). She is committed to a holistic human rights-based approach in her work. She has more than eight years of experience in community mental health, parenting and early childhood development, psychosocial support and Gender-based violence.

She is also an expert in content development, research, and psychological work. She has contributed to several research papers and ECD and MHPSS resources, most notably HEPPP (Health, Early Learning, and Protection Parenting Program), the Urjouha Parenting Platform, the Nawwara for Wellbeing website, and the MHPSS for frontliners course on Nawwara.





### Mohamad Al Bekaai

Mr Mohamad Al Bekaai is the ANECD (Arab Network For Early Childhood) coordinator.

He has a bachelor's degree in psychology and specialises in early childhood development.

He also specialises in coordinating and managing early childhood intervention programs.

Mr Al Bekaai is a researcher with an emphasis on evaluation of early childhood development intervention in crisis and education in emergencies with refugees in Lebanon.



### Sara Majdara

Mrs Sara Majdara is a Public Relations and Communication specialist who holds the position of Communication Coordinator at ARC (Arab Resource Collective) and ANECD (Arab Network for Early Childhood).

She is responsible for implementing effective communication strategies, managing social media platforms, and improving reach and community engagement.

She specialises in developing and implementing public and media relations campaigns alongside crisis management.



### Rim Othman

Mrs Rim Othman holds a bachelor's degree in psychology and is pursuing a master's in clinical psychology. She is the Urjouha Parenting Website Coordinator at the Arab Resource Collective (ARC) and specialises in mental health and early childhood. She is an article writer and content developer.



### Nisrine Al Akoury

Miss Nisrine Al Akoury holds a bachelor's degree in medical social work. She is the ECD project coordinator at the Arab Resource Collective (ARC). She specialises in crisis and emergency response, pandemic management, youth empowerment, supporting displaced people, drug abuse intervention, and societal development.



### Ayham Nawaya

Mr Ayham Nawaya is a content developer and trainer, and he supported the coordination of the Urjouha library and ANECD database. He has a bachelor's degree in psychology.

He contributed to developing sessions on responsive parenting and mental health for caregivers and ECD frontliners.



### **Zeinab Srour**

Miss Zeinab Srour is a journalist, researcher, and the Senior Editor at the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD). She has previous experiences with various Lebanese newspapers, political-cultural magazines, and Arabic research centers.

She holds a master's degree in journalism from the Lebanese university.



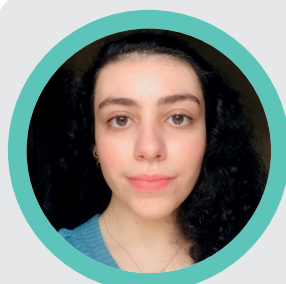
### **Dr Faten Al Skafi**

Dr Faten Al Skafi holds a doctorate in psychology and is an educational psychology specialist licensed from the Lebanese Ministry of Public Health with more than 24 years of experience in teaching, training, and scientific research.

She worked as a teacher in pre-primary education, nursery, and kindergartens. Dr Al Skafi also has experience as a coordinator for math and science subjects and has also held a position as a school principal consultant. She provides counselling as an educational psychologist in schools and with refugees in her private clinic.

Throughout her professional career, she developed skills in supporting individuals' psycho-educational development, capacities and potential, and social and emotional needs.

She currently works as a Research Associate at the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD), developing methodologies and research tools and designing tools for data analysis. She is a course developer and lecturer on therapeutic intervention at the International Open University (IOU).



### **Maria Al Makdissi**

Miss Maria Al Makdissi is the Assistant Coordinator at the Arab Network for Early Childhood (ANECD). She has a bachelor's degree in Education and political science and international affairs from Balamand University and is pursuing a master's degree in Educational Supervision from the Lebanese university.

Among her interests is the intersection between politics, education, and policy-making in Lebanon.



### **Zahra Haidar**

Mrs Zahra Haidar has more than 25 years of experience in finance and accounting and has been the Financial Coordinator at ARC and ANECD since 2003.

She plays a prominent role in preparing the financial and auditory data alongside tax reports and declarations, and also a role in financial reporting and budgeting for investment and fundraising.

She also has experience overseeing and managing budgets of up to 2 million dollars yearly in collaboration with different donors and stakeholders.



### Reem Fawaz

Miss Reem Fawaz is the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Project Coordinator at the Arab Resource Collective (ARC). She is a university lecturer with Al Jinan University's public health faculty. Miss Fawaz is a psychology doctorate student at the Lebanese University. She is a psychology and mental health researcher with published research papers in numerous peer-reviewed scientific journals. She is a licensed therapist from the Lebanese Ministry of Health and a member of the Lebanese Psychologists Order. She is also a member of the American Psychological Association (APA)



### Pia Saade

Miss Pia Saade is the Administrative and HR Coordinator at the Arab Resource Collective (ARC) and The Arab Network For Early Childhood (ANECD). She holds a bachelor's degree in business management and is pursuing an advanced master's in business management. She has experience in accounting and field and administrative coordination.



### Naila Chemaly

Mrs Naila Chemaly holds a master's degree in graphic design and visual communication from the Lebanese University. She is the Graphic Designer at the Arab Resource Collective (ARC) and The Arab Network For Early Childhood (ANECD). She worked with numerous humanitarian organizations and advertising companies. She has experience in designing and creating visual identity and branding, digital drawings, and infographic design.



**We work for the right  
of all young children  
to their full rights.**



Beirut, Lebanon

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