



ANA AQRA ASSOCIATION



ANA AQRA ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2016

For all activities that took place under the auspices of the Lebanese Ministry of Education & Higher Education in partnership with UNICEF, World Learning, Al Madad Foundation, Alfannar Foundation, CSR & Private Donors

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FOREWORD

FOREWORD

Ana Aqra is proud and appreciative for its continued ability to scale up with quality in support of the public schools in all areas of Lebanon. Our commitment to make learning accessible to more children would not have been feasible without the support of MEHE and the ongoing/new partnerships with national, regional and international organizations.

In 2016, the education team placed a milestone in Ana Aqra's timeline, through its valuable contribution to the development of the curriculum for the Unified Retention Support and Community Based Early Childhood Education under the supervision of CERD.

We look forward to more milestones in the years to come summing up the extensive expertise gathered in teacher training/coaching, curriculum development and community outreach with the goal of establishing learning communities within and around public schools.

Rima Musallam
Executive Director

ACRONYMS

ACRONYMS

ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
BLA	Balanced Literacy Approach
BLN	Basic Literacy and Numeracy
BTS	Back to School
CBECE	Community Based Early Childhood Education
CERD	Center for Educational Research and Development
DOPS	Department d'Observation Pédagogique Scolaire
ECE	Early Childhood Education
HWS	Homework Support
MEHE	Ministry of Education and Higher Education
NFE	Non-Formal Education
PMU	Program Management Unit
PSS	Psychosocial Support
QITABI	Quality Instruction towards Access and Basic Education Improvement
TOT	Training of Trainers

ABOUT ANA AQRA ASSOCIATION

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History

ANA AQRA ASSOCIATION, founded in 1994 under the name Iqra' Association, is an independent nonprofit organization that advances literacy and independent learning for disadvantaged children in Lebanese public schools. In recent years, ANA AQRA has expanded its offerings to address the educational, cultural, and psychosocial needs of these communities.

ANA AQRA's core programs focus on student integration and retention, as well as teacher training to ensure long-term sustainability. By end of 2016, ANA AQRA's programs benefitted **89,775** children, **4,600** teachers, as well as **13,680** parents/ caregivers.

ANA AQRA has also responded to the influx of refugees to Lebanon, throughout the war in Syria. These programs aim to alleviate educational needs in alignment with national and INEE standards for Education in Emergency.

Mission

To foster an equitable and sustainable learning environment for all through:

- Empowering children to be independent learners
- Building teacher capacity
- Advocating active learning communities
- Developing differentiated state of the art tools and techniques for Arabic language learning
- Providing essential resources and tools
- Supporting public schools to become the school of choice

Vision

To make learning accessible to all children

YEAR IN REVIEW

YEAR IN REVIEW

Ana Aqra's priority for the year 2016 was to support the integration, enrollment and retention of learners into 1st and 2nd shift public schools in Lebanon. The management's directing and guiding principles at all levels were to refer to specialized 'knowhow' and result based inclusive decision taking. The compounded efforts of the specialized team, the expanded partnerships with local and international organizations, and the collaboration with MEHE (CERD, DOPS and PMU) have contributed to the sustainability of the investments and the sustainable growth of the association, while keeping the public school learners at the center of all work.

2016 in a Glance

Beneficiary	Total
Children	29,625
Teachers	1,864
Parents	6,372

Within formal education, Ana Aqra's outreach team assisted in enrolling **2,295** children in 1st and 2nd shift public schools as well as **616** children in **ALP**. Ana Aqra's **QITABI** training and coaching team, conducted **TOT** for **38** DOPS coaches on the balanced literacy approach (**BLA**), provided direct coaching outside the classroom for **459** teachers of **259** schools and placed **152,513** books in **1,405** classrooms. In addition, Ana Aqra's volunteers promoted reading to the benefit of **800** learners in **18** public schools.

Within non-formal education and contributing towards systems strengthening, the curriculum education specialist of Ana Aqra, British Council and CERD, in partnership with UNICEF and the PMU, provided the unified Retention Support (**RS**) program to be applied by all agencies implementing remedial non-formal education. Also, the curriculum education specialist of Ana Aqra, British Council, AVSI, and World Vision, in partnership with UNICEF and the PMU, developed the community based early childhood education (**CBECE**) curriculum to be finalized in the first quarter of 2017.

Within non-formal education direct implementation, the education field team supported the provision of homework support (**HWS**) for **6,173** learners, retention support (**RS**) for **6,208** learners, community based early childhood education (**CBECE**) for **3,034** learners in addition to basic literacy and numeracy (**BLN**) for **1,622** in a total of **45** public schools and **11** learning spaces. Ana Aqra's training and coaching team conducted **TOT** for **33** trainers and **39** coaches (CERD, DOPS) on the unified retention support (**RS**), provided direct training and coaching for **1,301** teachers on **HWS**, **RS**, **CBECE** and **BLN**. The psychosocial (**PSS**) and health awareness team engaged **6,372** parents and **1,143** educators in support of the development of a community of learners seeking and supporting higher education.

PROJECTS

PROJECTS

QITABI

Quality Instruction towards Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI) in partnership with World Learning, funded by USAID, continued into its 3rd year on *component I* (Improving reading outcomes for primary level public school students) and *component II* (Expanding access to safe and relevant education for vulnerable public school students).

Within *component I* 459 Arabic teachers in 259 Lebanese public schools were trained on implementing the Balanced Literacy Program where 1,405 classrooms received 152,513 books. Moreover, 9,321 learners were assessed as part of the universal screening.



PROJECTS

Within *component II* access to opportunities for learning through non-formal education and accelerated learning programs were made possible through “Classroom on a Bus” operating in Ammara, Miniara, Mohammara, Arqaa and Minieh Camps in Akkar, North Lebanon. **192** children had benefitted from **BLN** in order to facilitate their enrollment in formal education (funded by Al Madad Foundation).



RETENTION SUPPORT FOR AT RISK CHILDREN ENROLLED IN LEBANESE PUBLIC SCHOOLS in partnership with UNICEF

The purpose of this partnership was to support MEHE centrally and in the field, as well as other (I)NGOs, to reach RACE objectives, enabling all children to fulfill their right to education.

Technical Support

Ana Aqra developed a unified **RS** program in partnership with British Council and MEHE through CERD. The development of a six level curriculum in the Arabic language, based on the Lebanese Curriculum Learning Outcomes, was later adapted by MEHE/CERD in order to regulate the implementation of **RS** programs by all implementing partners.

Moreover, Ana Aqra provided technical support to MEHE through CERD to support the development of a unified **CBECE** package. Ana Aqra participated actively in the MEHE-UNICEF technical committee as a resource

PROJECTS

specialist in **NFE** and **ECE**; supported design and development of the package with CERD and other education partners; and supported CERD in the training and coaching of education partners on the use of the package.



Back To School & Retention Support

Ana Aqra implemented the unified **RS** program to benefit **6,208** children at risk of dropping out as well as provided **HWS** to **5,413** vulnerable children enrolled in public schools in Beirut, Mt Lebanon and Bekaa/Baalbek and North Lebanon.

Ana Aqra supported the ongoing **BTS- stay in School initiative** through implementing a series of social mobilization and community engagement activities aiming to increase awareness of parents and caregivers on the education services provided by MEHE, and ensuring on time enrolment of children in age-appropriate grades in formal education. Through outreach activities that were performed, the following learners were referred to and joined formal education programs; **616** children in **ALP** programs, **243** in 1st shift schools, and **2052** children in 2nd shift schools.

PROJECTS

Access & Integration

Ana Aqra implemented the CBECE program with 2,432 children aged 3-6 years old and their families, who have no access to KG, prioritizing those about to enroll in Grade 1 for the 2016/17 school year.



PROJECTS

Universal Children's Day Celebration (PSS activity)

All implementation sites implementing our different NFE programs celebrated Universal Children's Day. A notable visit was made to one of our sites at Ouzai, Mt Lebanon by Kids United.



RETENTION AND INTEGRATION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE AND HOST COMMUNITY GIRLS AND BOYS AGES 3 TO 14 in partnership with Olayan Financing Company

For the second year, this partnership aims to provide basic non-formal education for in school and out-of-school refugee and affected host community girls and boys in order to integrate them into the **ALP** program or formal schools as soon as an opportunity arises.

PROJECTS

Access & Integration

1,304 out-of-school children benefited from educational school readiness and integration preparatory programs to enable and facilitate their enrollment in formal education eventually. **90** children were enrolled in **ECE** while **1,214** in **BLN** programs. Programs were implemented in Bekaa, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, and North Lebanon.



Classroom Resources

As a cost share to the QITABI project, Olayan's CSR contributed to equipping **20** public schools out of the 259 public schools that were equipped with 152,513 books.

Capacity Building in Support of Monitoring and Evaluation

Furthermore, in order to achieve optimum levels of effectiveness and efficiency, Ana Aqra realized the need to automate its processes in order to accommodate for its growing needs and development. This could not have happened without the kind support of Olayan CSR and UNICEF. Accordingly, a highly customizable and flexible system was acquired which combined both Enterprise Resource Planning (**ERP**) and Customer Relationship Management (**CRM**) for an overall improved quality in planning, implementation and analysis, capturing both operational and non-operational aspects. The system is expected to be live starting February 2017.

PROJECTS

EDUCATION FOR ME TOO AND THE CHILDREN'S LITERACY CENTER in partnership with Al Madad Foundation

The project aims to support disadvantaged refugee and host community children with tailored non-formal education programs ensuring continued schooling and readiness to integrate into formal education.

This partnership continues to provide support to programs running at the Children's Learning Centre (CLC) in Baalbek in addition to two mobile classrooms in Bekaa and Akkar to reach refugee and underprivileged children in remote areas including tented settlements. Both the center and the buses operated at full capacity, two shifts/day to benefit **1,819** children in total.



PROJECTS

Children's Literacy Center

The CLC initiated its **ECE** program with **216** children. A catch-up summer program followed benefiting **130** children. As a result, **110** children successfully managed to register in formal education for the scholastic year 2016-2017.

Another **168** children enrolled for a new cycle of **ECE** that began in October 2016. This included the re-enrollment of children who could not yet access formal schooling due to limited space or their young age as well as the enrollment of new beneficiaries.

In parallel, **760** learners received **HWS** and **408** out-of-school children benefited from **BLN**.

Classroom on a Bus

The classroom-on-a-bus initiative started in 2014. The children who have access to this facility are selected based on their inability to access public schools or non-formal educational community centers due to challenges pertaining to transportation or other security-related matters. Two buses served **310** children in Akkar and Bekaa

Additionally, the buses were utilized in performing outreach and awareness sessions in remote areas and villages in order to spread information about the **BTS** Campaign that the Ministry of Higher Education and UNICEF were conducting.



PROJECTS

Art Project

To build cultural awareness, Ana Aqra and Al Madad worked on other complementary projects. An art project involved learners in eight public schools where their artwork was later auctioned in order to raise funds for sustaining programs.



Like every year, a yearly calendar was put together, this time based on the artwork of out-of-school children.

Twinning Project

The Twinning Project aimed at expanding learners' cultural knowledge involved the exchange of letters between **420** Lebanese learners in 4 public schools with learners from the United Kingdom and Germany. Learners shared their life experiences being introduced to and learning about each other. This not only bridged distances and exposed them to new cultures, but also allowed them to express themselves freely while adding to their self-confidence.

PROJECTS

PROJECTS LAUNCHED IN DECEMBER 2016

The Just Right Start

A three-year partnership started in December 5, 2016 aiming at enhancing school preparedness for the integration and retention of **1,200** refugee and disadvantaged host community children ages 4-6 years old in Akkar, Bekaa and Mount Lebanon.

After a month into the program, **128** out of school refugee girls and boys (ages 4-5) were enrolled in a safe and protected inclusive **CBECE** learning environment at a community center in Akkar in partnership with Malaak.



A Second Chance

The project will provide **600** learners who are currently out of school with **BLN** helping them transition to the formal schooling system. This, in turn, will be followed by **HWS** to help them cope academically reducing their chances of dropping out.

Improving quality teaching and learning for vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugee children in Lebanon (QTL), funded by Caritas Switzerland. This project aims at improving the quality of teaching and learning environments for vulnerable refugee and host community children by applying methods to strengthen, measure, and evaluate the pedagogic performance of teachers and school employees in line with a 'Teacher Capacity Development Package'. This project aims at **4,040** direct beneficiaries; **3,600** school children, **340** teachers, and **100** school directors and other school personnel.

CONSULTANCY & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALFANAR FOUNDATION

CONSULTANCY & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES in partnership with Alfannar Foundation

The purpose of this three-year partnership with Alfannar Foundation aims at marketing Ana Aqra products & services through targeting new clients as well as maintaining already existing ones, in order to support the sustainability of the organization.

In 2016, Ana Aqra's training and education team trained **1,760** facilitators; **1,688** teachers, **33** Trainers and **39** coaches/ members from DOPS. The capacity building sessions aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills of participants to become and to prepare independent lifelong learners. Although trainings covered a wide variety of programs, the main purpose of all trainings was to prepare trainees to train on and implement the balanced literacy program in a workshop setting, teach learning and problem solving strategies, and assess for teaching using differentiated instructions in a multi-levelled classroom within a positive and safe environment.

CONSULTANCY

Ana Aqra was approached by local and international civil society organizations as new clients to train facilitators working with those organizations as per the below:

8 facilitators from Heartland Alliance International on BLN implementation with youth girls in North Lebanon

82 facilitators from SAWA on ECE implementation in the Bekaa

35 facilitators from ALPHA on the implementation of the Unified Remedial program in South Lebanon



CONSULTANCY & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALFANAR FOUNDATION

TEACHER CAPACITY BUILDING & TOT

Project	Number of Trainees
QITABI in partnership with World Learning	459 Facilitators/Teachers
Retention Support for At-Risk Children Enrolled in Lebanese Public Schools in partnership with UNICEF	976 Facilitators/Teachers 33 Trainers 39 DOPS Coaches
Retention and Integration for Syrian Refugee and Host Community Girls and Boys Ages 3 to 14 in partnership with Olayan Financing Company	90 Facilitators/Teachers
Education for Me Too in partnership with Al Madad Foundation	30 Facilitators/Teachers
The Just Right Start	8 Facilitators/Teachers
Consultancy Services; SAWA, HAI & ALPHA	125 Facilitators/Teachers
Total Participants	1,760 Trainees



CONSULTANCY & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ALFANAR FOUNDATION

COACHING

Ana Aqra coaches conducted visits to all implementing sites post training for continued follow up and support in order to ensure quality. Ana Aqra coaching team closely accompanied facilitators to ensure the quality of work executed and to maximize the opportunity for facilitators to learn by doing. The coaching and evaluation process of facilitators' performance is guided by the Danielson's framework on the four domains for teaching [Planning and Preparation, Classroom Environment, Instructions, and Professional Responsibilities], which represents an evidenced based comprehensive and coherent framework for improving facilitators' performance, and students' learning.

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

In addition to the previously mentioned unified **RS** and **CBECE** programs, the below curricula were developed, modified and adapted as per intervention:

- **BLN Curriculum**

The development of a BLN Curriculum preparing children ages 6-15 for formal schooling.

- **ECE Program Units of Study**

The development of units of study for KG1, KG2, and KG3 in English and Arabic.

Moreover, Ana Aqra education experts were in continuous contact with publishers and sought for adding new titles and expanding on the current lists of book titles as per program of implementation. This process follows specific criteria that entail stories are suitable for students as per their age group, the appropriateness of and the educational purpose behind the story while matching learners' needs.

SCHOOL SPIRIT READING PROJECT FUNDED BY INDIVIDUAL DONORS

SCHOOL SPIRIT READING PROJECT funded by Individual Donors

Ana Aqra's longest running project that started in 2011 based on activities that were implemented since its inception in 1994, focuses on developing a school reading culture.



SCHOOL SPIRIT UNESCO EVENT

Ana Aqra' Association held its yearly UNESCO Palace Celebration for **18** schools that participated in the school reading program 'school spirit'. Head of Regional MEHE in Beirut, Mr. Mohammed Al Jamal represented former Minister of Education and Higher Education Mr. Elias Bou Saab. The event hosted around **800** cycle 1 & 2 students along their school principals and teachers who engaged in the association's reading program where the teachers who effectively took part in activating class libraries were honored. The event involved entertainment programs prepared by the participating children. Schools also displayed their students' artwork. (May 2016).

SCHOOL SPIRIT READING PROJECT FUNDED BY INDIVIDUAL DONORS



BEIRUT INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

Each year, Ana Aqra' Association invites a group of students from a number of public schools to participate in a set of activities within the Beirut Book Fair. The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness about the importance of reading as well as to activate classroom libraries therefore, encouraging students to engage more in reading activities.

207 students from 6 schools from different regions in Lebanon were invited to participate in the fair. There were guest authors who shared personal stories with the young readers. At the end of the fair, each learner received a book-bag gift. (December 2016).



PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

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Ana Aqra partners with the several local and international non-for profit organizations as well as having gained the support of for profit organizations through their CSR departments. Among them are the following:



CONTACT INFORMATION

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ANA AQRA ASSOCIATION

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Your Involvement Matters