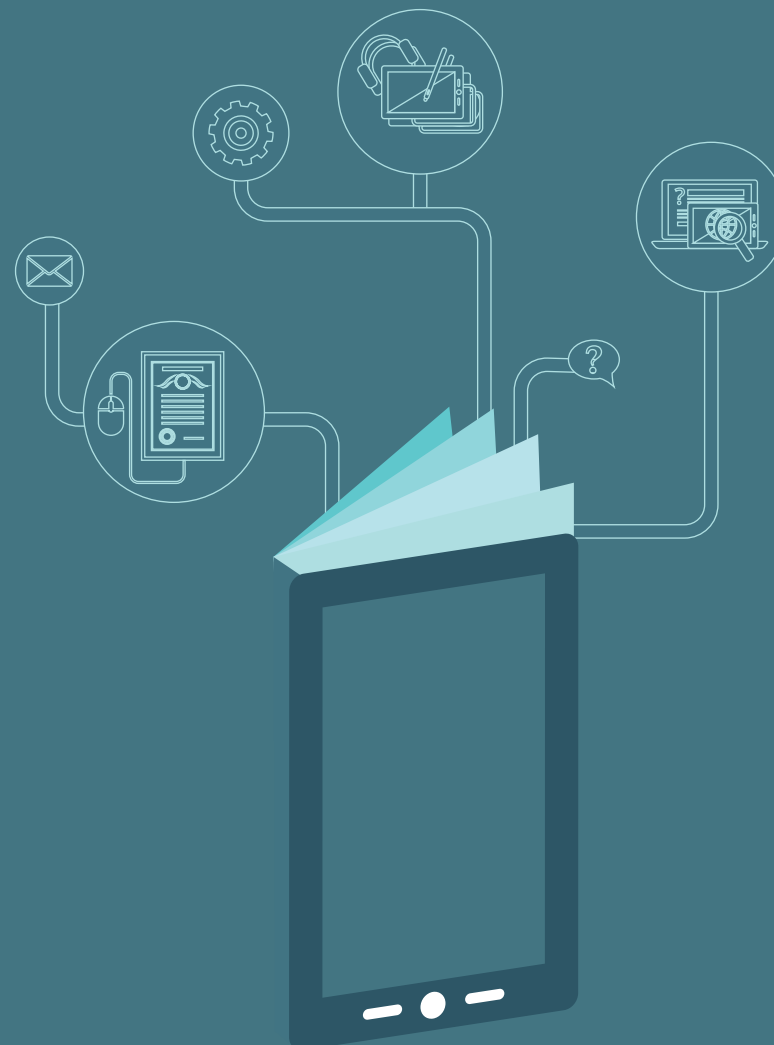




ANA AQRA ASSOCIATION

Pause  
Reflect  
Learn  
& Adapt

A Year Like No Other



# 2020

ANNUAL REPORT

**Independent reader... lifelong learner**

قارئ مستقل ... متعلم مستمر

2020

ANNUAL REPORT

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## WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS

*Our country, hard hit over the past two years by the succession of economic, health and security crises against a backdrop of political instability, has seen its education system severely affected. The COVID-19 pandemic alone has given education systems an unprecedented shock in history, disrupting the lives of thousands of school children and their families.*

*In addition, blended learning (online and in person) has not been effective. Virtual classes for children and adolescents failed to meet the expectations. The goodwill of the teachers was not enough to make a change. COVID-19 appears to have deepened the impact of disparities in access and opportunity facing many students in public schools, including technological and other barriers that make it harder to stay engaged in virtual classrooms. Thus, the gap between private and public schools have widened.*

*Today, more than ever, we must keep hope in our country and in its educational system. Our top priority is to ensure that our schools are not defined by disparities but instead by equity and opportunity for all students. Our determination and our resources must be gathered to prevent an entire generation from facing a disaster in education. It is time for constructive and collective reflection to envision new possibilities to support our education system.*

**Lubna Khalil**

President of Ana Aqra

*2020, a year of learning for all, guided by children, parents and teachers. Pause, reflect, learn and adapt became common practice for all Ana Aqra's team. The sudden shift in the role of parents and caregivers has resulted in their imminent engagement in children's education. An opportunity that Ana Aqra will leverage to ensure access to learning for the most vulnerable. The multi crises (pandemic, economic, financial and political) have highlighted the importance of resilience in education and the importance of investing in continuous capacity building for teachers with the aim of maintaining children's and families' interest in education. Distance learning with all its challenges has presented alternative sustainable possibilities for the future to increase access and retain children in education. Ana Aqra continues to prioritize public schools and is committed to collaborate with education stakeholders to make learning accessible to the most vulnerable children.*

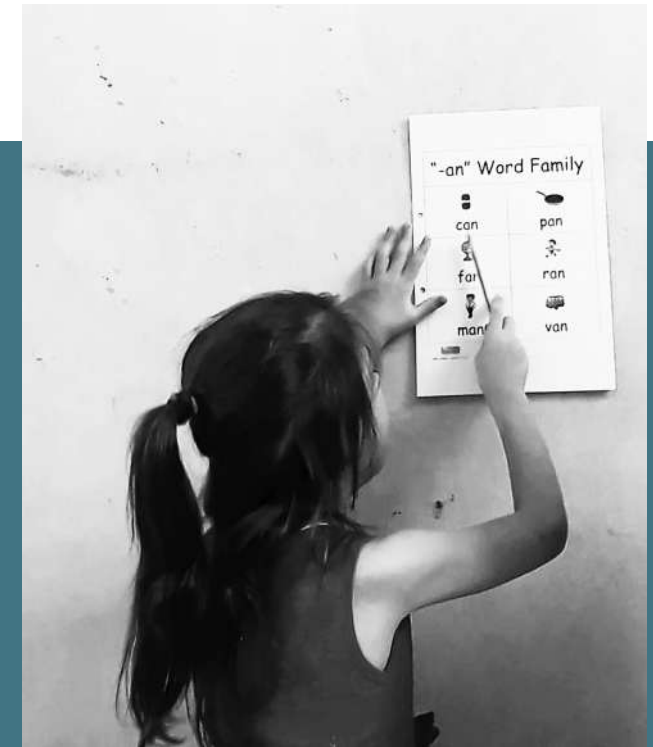
**Rima Musallam & Amina Kleit**

Executive Director & Director of Programs



**Teachers** were creative  
in finding ways to keep  
children & their caregivers  
engaged in learning.

**Siblings, Relatives,  
and Caregivers**  
became the  
primary facilitators  
of learning.



**Bedrooms,  
Kitchens,  
Hallways & Sitting rooms**  
turned into classrooms.

# Learning much more about *'learning to learn'*

Rima Musallam, Ana Aqra Executive Director

## ABOUT US

### Vision



**Ana Aqra** aspires to make learning accessible to all children

### About us

**Ana Aqra** Association is a Lebanese non-profit, non-sectarian, non-political association benefiting vulnerable children, ages 3 to 14 – who are attending, or on their way to attend, Lebanese elementary schools – as well as their parents, teachers, and school administrators. Within the below two pillars, Ana Aqra integrates play-based learning and PSS.

**Ana Aqra** aims for sustainable impact through innovative approaches that respond to educational needs.

#### Pillar 1

##### Improving Access and Retention in Formal Education:

Preparedness and Retention  
Resource Provision  
Promotion of Reading, ECE and Public Schools

Children ages 3-14 years old

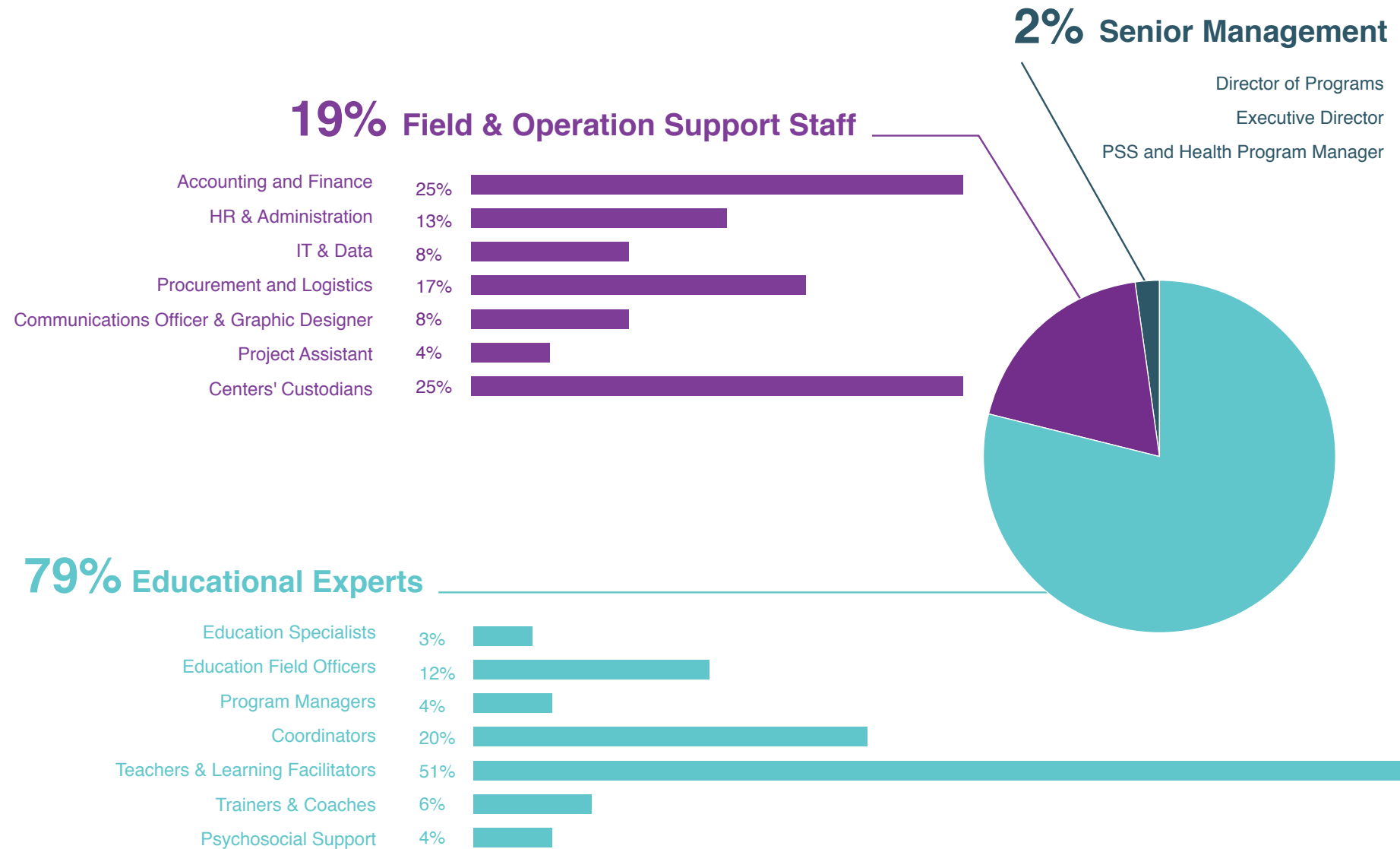
#### Pillar 2

##### Enhancing Quality of Teaching and Learning:

Arabic Language Reading and Writing (G1 - G6)  
Early Childhood Education (KG1 - KG2)  
PSS & SEL (KG1 - G12)  
Distance Learning

Teachers of grades K-9

## OUR TEAM



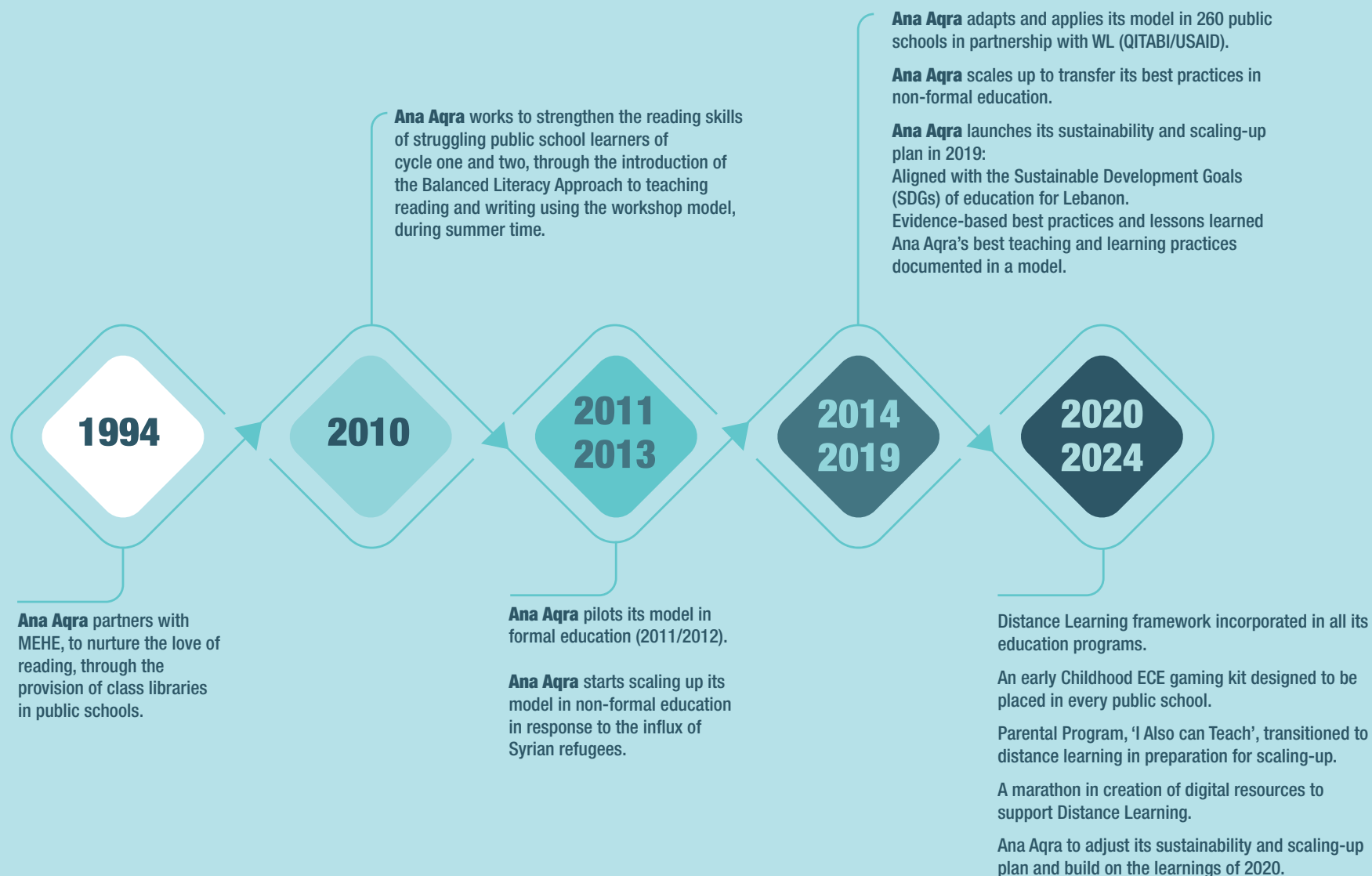




Ana Aqra team switched from in-person meetings in 2019 to virtual meetings in 2020.



## OUR MILESTONES, SUSTAINABILITY AND SCALING-UP GOALS 1994-2024



## WALKING THROUGH 2020

This year, Ana Aqra celebrates its 26th anniversary, during a time of multiple crises. Pause, reflect, adapt and learn were common practice all through the year responding to the challenges in the education sector arising from the pandemic, economic and financial crises.

Digital resources became a necessity at the onset of the pandemic. Ana Aqra had already foreseen the need to complement the 'I play and learn' gaming kit with a mobile digital application to generate revenues. However, due to the pandemic and the economic crisis, Ana Aqra decided to make it available free of charge to all children. The QITABI2/USAID project will make it accessible to all public school children through CERD's Digital Learning Platform in cycles 1 and 2.

**"Hafila Hafila"** features 6 educational games with 3 different difficulty levels targeting learners in cycle 1 and cycle 2. The Mobile App was launched and made available free of charge to all children via Apple and Android online platforms in December 2020.



#Arabic  
#Mother Tongue  
#Mobile App Hafila Hafila

In response to the pandemic, Ana Aqra continued delivering quality teaching and learning by adapting its modality to fit the distance learning. The transition to distance learning was holistic and started by training teachers and preparing Ana Aqra team to such new modality of implementation.

Internet bundles and homeschooling kits were procured for all the learners to facilitate access to the remote instructional materials and to support with hands-on resources.

Parents were supported with self-care packages and with tips and strategies to empower them in their newly assigned role of facilitating the teaching and learning of their children at home.

Ana Aqra developed the **distance-learning framework** to guide its education programs.

<https://ana-aqra.org/i-can-always-learn-and-thrive/>

In addition to providing capacity-building opportunities to its teachers, Ana Aqra supported other NGOs and private school teachers in implementing distance learning and other learning modalities with trainings and coaching activities.



#Retention Support Program, Public School





#Learning Mentor #Caregiver



#Access-To-Equitable-Education



#Distance Learning

## Kids Life Coach

- **Building Connections**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdRLB\\_axa-XN8nnbTW4aaY25DH4I1f5jR](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdRLB_axa-XN8nnbTW4aaY25DH4I1f5jR)

- **Setting Daily Routines**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdRLB\\_axa-XOi\\_ozEmDAYmSL3vu7mW1Kj](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdRLB_axa-XOi_ozEmDAYmSL3vu7mW1Kj)

- **Developing a Growth Mindset**

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdRLB\\_axa-XOCMtQz1CBhI8P98qMlv5SK](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdRLB_axa-XOCMtQz1CBhI8P98qMlv5SK)







#Swiss Philanthropy Foundation  
#Rapid Response



#Swiss Philanthropy Foundation  
#Rapid Response



#Reducing Health Risk

## Ana Aqra adapted the QTL approach for remote implementation

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Ana Aqra shifted its existing face-to-face educational programs to remote learning in a very short period of time, taking into consideration the specifics, aims, and objectives.

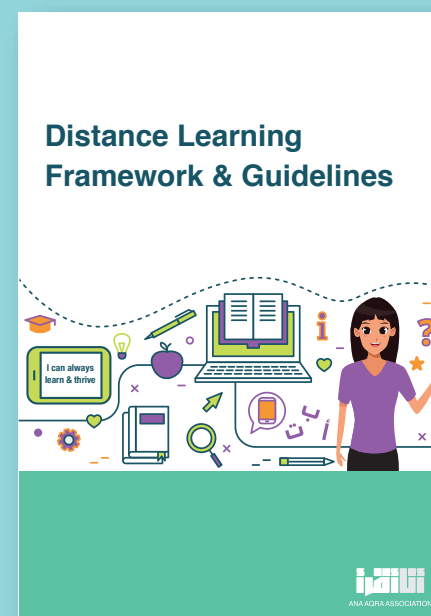
The objectives of shifting the modality were:

- Ensuring health and safety and complying with the country's health measures
- Maintaining students' engagement in the learning process
- Supporting students' and parents' psychological well-being
- Supporting child development at different ages and stages
- Decreasing the dropout rate

The shift to remote learning required Ana Aqra to capitalize on its expertise in the field of education within the Lebanese context to guide and direct student's learning in the new modality.

Ana Aqra relied on its existing Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) approach to ensure a smooth and solid transition to remote learning. The below QTL eight elements were thoroughly reviewed and adapted to guide the implementation of remote learning.

This transition was holistic and started by training teachers and preparing Ana Aqra team to a new modality for implementation.





## Improving Quality of Education Services

Ana Aqra prepares training materials tailored to the needs of all educators including trainers, coaches and teachers. Our professional development intervention occurs over an extended period and allows for educators to practice, discuss, adjust, and reflect. The adopted collaborative and reflective approach supports the building of learning communities and results in significant improvement at the level of instructional practice and in student achievement. While our trainers simulate and model the desired practice during the training sessions, our coaches work with the teachers inside and outside the classrooms to help them recognize their core knowledge and strengths, improve their abilities to implement the Ana Aqra workshop model and other instructional strategies, and benefit from support as they grow and learn professionally.

Professional development services are offered to our stakeholders within our programs and can also be offered to other entities locally or internationally. Training and coaching teachers in the non-formal and formal settings continued throughout this year despite the challenging circumstances caused mainly by the pandemic.

At the beginning of year 2020 and before the lockdown, Ana Aqra team was able to support UNICEF-Mauritania teachers by conducting the Quality Teaching and Learning (QTL) training in Mauritania as well as in other INGOs in Lebanon.

On the other hand, the need for preparing teachers on implementing the remote learning after the overall lockdown was of high demand. Ana Aqra team and after a great work of planning and preparation were able to train and coach teachers implementing the adapted QTL model for remote learning in the non- formal setting: Community Based Early Childhood Education (CBECE), Basic Literacy and Numeracy (BLN) and Retention support programs. Additionally, Ana Aqra team trained mainstream teachers to implement the adapted QTL model for remote learning in private schools.



#UNICEF Mauritania  
#Akelius Digital Language Learnin

## Ana Aqra collaborates with CERD for PSS and SEL

In response to the pandemic, the Beirut port blast, and Lebanon's multiple crises, Ana Aqra initiated a new collaboration with CERD, aiming to respond to the psychosocial support needs of learners, teachers, and parents.

The agreement with CERD included the digitization of newly developed/adapted activities in the form of interactive lessons and awareness videos, targeting all age groups.



#Awareness Videos  
#LUMINOS FUND #Teachers Wellbeing



#Social Emotional Learning  
#LUMINOS FUND #Access to Learning for All

## In Response to Beirut Blast

- Learners from public schools affected by Beirut blast receive PSS and literacy sessions facilitated by the mobile classroom in a bus in Beirut gardens.



- Ana Aqra distributes hygiene kits to communities affected by Beirut blast.
- Ana Aqra distributes food parcels to 330 families in the area to improve learners' nutrition.

- Ana Aqra volunteers distribute CHANTA



#Access-To-Equitable-Education

## Expanding the Learning – Training

Ana Aqra staff participated in a training of trainers on the principles of Distance Learning. The ToT was delivered online under the QITABI2/USAID project and included sessions on Zoom basics, Google Classroom, creating surveys and online quizzes, and effective teaching in a Distance Learning classroom.

The training on Zoom basics was cascaded by the trained staff members to colleagues and teachers across Ana Aqra programs.

QITABI2 learning facilitators and field coordinators attended an introductory virtual training on Zoom aimed at sensitizing the field team on the project, its pedagogical model (The Holistic Learning Approach) and their scope of work in preparation for field implementation.

The training included sessions on communication and Interpersonal skills, monitoring and evaluation, visibility, gender, HR, and ICT.



### WHAT IS ZOOM?

Zoom is a Cloud Meeting solution that provides schools, universities, and workgroups with live video conferencing and collaboration tools to conduct virtual classrooms, administrative meetings, webinars, and more.





### USE CASES



**Main Features:**

- Video conferencing
- Screen sharing
- Whiteboard
- Chatting
- File sharing
- Raise hand
- Control participants
- Lock meeting

(c) Zoom




### RECOMMENDED DEVICES

**For Hosts (Presenters)**

- ❖ Laptop
- ❖ Desktop with a webcam
- ❖ 2-in-1 laptop with a stylus
- ❖ iPad/Tablet with a keyboard and a stylus

**For Participants**

- ❖ Laptop
- ❖ iPad/Tablet
- ❖ Smartphone





## Teachers' professional development & capacity building

Ana Aqra teachers attended trainings with “Inspiration Gardens” to deepen their understanding and knowledge about different aspects of remote teaching. The trainings covered synchronous and asynchronous learning, blended learning, engaging parents during distance learning, and maintaining teachers’ well-being during distance learning, among other topics. AAA project coordinators and specialists also attended courses provided by “Cambridge MENA Online Experience 2020” that covered the following topics: Creativity in young learners, From teaching learners to teacher learning, Providing challenges for young learners, Exploiting materials, and Why we shouldn’t (always) reinvent the wheel.

## Silver lining of Saving Brains in Kenya

Saving Brains Transition-to-Scale Workshop took place in Nairobi-Kenya, from February 11 till February 13, 2020 and was attended by Ana Aqra's Director of Programs and by the ECE Program Manager.

Saving Brains supports innovators from grassroots with a promising idea, in the field of Early Childhood Development, focused on children in adversity. The purpose of the event was to advance individual and collective learning about the pathway to achieve impact at scale.

The workshop outcomes were as follows:

- Innovator teams make progress on what they see as critical challenges.
- Innovator teams advance their thinking and action ideas on scaling-up and partnerships.
- Innovators share learning with one another and develop insights that can be applied to their own projects and more widely in the ECD field.

*Ana Aqra team presented their case clinics and received recommendations from experts and from other innovators about their scaling-up action plans for the early childhood education program.*



## OUR PROGRAMS

*Improving Access to Education Opportunities*

### Community-Based Early Childhood Education Program

Ana Aqra designed a non-formal Community-Based Early Childhood Education (CB-ECE) program in line with the MEHE developed CB-ECE program for children of ages 3-5 years. The program intends to provide children who lack access to formal pre-schools due to socio-economic challenges, lack of capacity, or geographical restrictions, with the pre-requisites needed to transition to formal compulsory schooling.

**The main components of this program include:**

- Social-emotional skills
- Integrated domains of language, cognitive, artistic, and motor skills
- Learning through play and structured experiences
- "I Can Also Teach" parental program that provides parents with tips and strategies to develop their children's skills according to the developmental milestones
- Classroom resources, such as classroom library and educational games

● The CB-ECE program, with all its integrated components, was amended to fit the distance learning modality through:

- Creation of virtual classrooms
- Developing instructional materials targeting core subjects such as languages, math and sciences, as well as social and emotional skills.
- Implementing synchronous and asynchronous sessions
- Providing families with homeschooling kits and internet bundles to facilitate access to teaching and learning
- Amending the monitoring and evaluation tools to track learners' progress and teachers' skills improvement.
- Engaging parents in a remote modality of "I Can Also Teach" program



## Basic Literacy and Numeracy Program (BLN)

The BLN program is designed to prepare children, aged 10-14 years, who have either dropped out or have never been to school, for formal school enrollment. The program focuses on developing foundational reading, and writing and math skills that are aligned with the official Lebanese curriculum.

This allows learners to be better equipped to pursue the proper pathway to formal schooling or enroll in the Accelerated Learning Program offered by MEHE.

The main components of this program include:

- Basic language and math skills
- Social-emotional skills through arts and music
- Problem solving and learning strategies
- Learning through projects
- Psychosocial support activities
- Parental engagement
- Levelled readers
- Educational games

The BLN program was modified during remote implementation, with delivery of similar content modified for offline and online learning as needed. Offline learning included delivering workbooks and activity booklets directly to children.

Online learning included open-source e-learning videos that are aligned with expected learning outcomes and are grade-level appropriate. The videos contain lessons, stories, rhymes, and songs, and links to these videos were delivered through WhatsApp groups created by the teachers, each group representing a virtual classroom.

BLN learners also utilized the "CWTL - Can't Wait to Learn" Online Application, a custom gaming technology application that delivers quality education in Math and Arabic. The evidence-based program was developed by War Child.



## Retention Support Program (RS)

### Homework Support Program

The Homework Support Program prepares the Lebanese public school learners enrolled in grades 1 to 9 for enhanced performance and long-term learning.

The program creates a conducive environment where learners are taught the necessary study skills and offered the needed guidance to complete their homework in any subject.

This program supports learners to catch up on their learning and complete their homework assignments independently. Through this program, learners are taught learning and critical thinking strategies to help them close achievement gaps.

### Summer Remedial Program

This program provides extensive support during the summer break to improve literacy skills across subjects and close achievement gaps for learners who are at risk of dropping out of school due to poor performance.

#### The main components of this program include:

- Language, math, and science support
- Metacognitive learning strategies
- Learning through projects
- Psychosocial support
- Parental engagement
- Levelled readers and educational games

The Retention Support program was modified during remote implementation, with delivery of similar content modified for online learning. Ana Aqra education team worked on aligning and linking the Lebanese curriculum objectives to open-source e-learning videos, covering all core subjects and ensuring videos are aligned with expected learning outcomes and are grade-level appropriate.

The selected instructional videos were short, with effective demonstration of specific skills, and were delivered progressively to enhance retention of knowledge. All video links were delivered through WhatsApp groups created by the teachers, each group representing a virtual classroom.



*The Retention Support Program is comprised of two programs offered at different periods of the year to support underperforming or struggling public school learners in grades 1 to 9*



## Psychosocial Support Program (PSS)

The PSS program is embedded in all of Ana Aqra's educational programs and consists of an established set of activities that aim to promote the wellbeing of learning communities including children, their parents/caregivers as well as teachers and other supporting staff.

All PSS activities conducted with children are tailored to serve the needs of the targeted population based on a preliminary needs assessment.

Parental engagement is also a key constituent of the PSS program. Bi-weekly meetings are held with the parents/caregivers in each school or center to enhance safe and enabling learning environments for the learners. These meetings, which often take the shape of workshops, facilitate discussions with the parents and raise awareness on key topics such as positive parenting, social and emotional development, health and hygiene improvement, violence prevention, social cohesion, basic methods of teaching and learning for parents, and children's rights - including the right to education.

At the onset of the pandemic, learners received online and offline instruction in such topics as organizational skills, goal setting, breathing techniques, physical exercises, as well as coping mechanisms.



## Emotional learning including life skills.

In support of the wellbeing and resilience of the public school community during the multifaceted crisis that Lebanon was facing, psychosocial support activities and awareness videos were developed. The online and offline activities included organization skills, goal setting, positive thinking, positive behavior, coping mechanisms, and awareness raising and hygiene practices related to COVID-19.

Ana Aqra's psychosocial wellbeing program is designed to support all our learning communities including learners, parents/caregivers as well as teachers and other support staff. All psychosocial wellbeing content is tailored or adapted to respond to the needs of the targeted population.

Faced by the negative impact of the pandemic and the financial constraints and instabilities, psychosocial support activities and awareness videos were developed during this year to build resilience and to support our learners, their families, and teachers.

These activities focus on health issues, awareness and prevention of COVID-19, importance of hygiene including hand washing, positive behavior, positive thinking, adaptation to distance learning and social and emotional learning.

As part of the Psychosocial wellbeing program, parents remained an essential player on the healthy development of our learners. Supporting PSS material and awareness videos were tailored for their wellbeing and resilience as well. Parents or caregivers' close collaboration with their children's teachers facilitated the positive outcome of the psychosocial wellbeing program.



## Resource Provision

The ongoing pandemic reinforced the necessity for digitized educational resources to serve remote and blended learning. Ana Aqra professionals designed and published contextualized e-content to support the learning process for both teachers and learners. The digitized teaching materials such as e-lessons and instructional videos are made accessible for use in virtual and face-to-face classrooms

This exceptional year with its lockdowns, school closures, and financial burdens necessitated the supply of home schooling resources to support learners and their caregivers. Ana Aqra provided learners who enrolled in CB-ECE and Retention Support with customized hands-on education materials (e.g., flash cards) and stationery to complement the digital resources.







## Volunteer Program

Ana Aqra welcomes volunteers and is grateful for the generosity of supporters donating their time and expertise towards the fulfillment of its mission.

Ana Aqra is an inclusive association that thrives on the contributions of volunteers who add value to the various aspects of our work through their experience, skill, and dedication. Opportunities for volunteering vary and we are receptive to volunteer-driven initiatives and recommendations.

From fundraising and administrative work in the office to working directly with children or teachers in the classrooms, our volunteers inject new ideas and energy to our work and support us in our day-to-day activities.

We also offer volunteering opportunities for high school and university students who are looking to complete their community service hours while gaining real world experience. Whatever our volunteers choose to do, they will be contributing to increased literacy and undoubtedly helping make a difference in the lives of marginalized children in the region.



## OUR IMPACT



## BENEFICIARIES

Direct Beneficiaries			
Re-enrollment Rate 36%	Service Type	Total Enrolled	Unique Number of learners Per Program
	Basic Literacy and Numeracy Program	775	703
	Early Childhood Education Program	5,699	3,044
	Retention Support= HSP + RP	3,385	2,561
	Homework Support Program (HSP)	2,929	2,105
	Remedial Program (RP)	456	456
Grand Total			6,308

Indirect Beneficiaries	
Service Type	Unique Number of Learners Per Program
Volunteering Program through School Spirit Activities	1,050
Improving Reading Outcomes for Primary Level Public School Students	7,191
Quality of Teaching and Learning for Semi-Private Schools Students	1,300
Grand Total	9,541

Direct Beneficiaries Breakdown		
Demographic Breakdown		Total
Gender	Female	3,034
	Male	3,274
Age	[3-5]	2,784
	[6-14]	3,456
	Above 14	68
Nationality	Lebanese	1,048
	Syrian	5,237
	Palestinian	7
	Other Nationalities	16
Region	Baalbeck-Hermel	1,485
	Beirut	699
	Bekaa	2,038
	Mount Lebanon	1,665
	North	421



## FINANCIAL REPORT

### FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020 STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE (in USD)

REVENUE	Amount
Grants Received	2,967,511
Services Income	21,670
Total Revenue	2,989,181
EXPENDITURE	Amount
Direct cost on projects	3,048,745
Indirect cost on projects	287,338
Interest and similar expenses	9,916
Difference of exchange (Loss)/ Gain	210,212
Total Expenditure	3,115,955
Surplus/(Deficit) of revenue over expenditure	126,774

## PARTNERS





### Call us

+961 1 365 149/59



### Write to us

info@ana-aqra.org



### Volunteer with us

volunteer@ana-aqra.org



### Donate to us

+961 1 365 149/159 extension 120 URL:<http://anaaqra.org/donatebank>



### Take an appointment & Visit our Premise

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Beirut, Lebanon [www.ana-aqra.org](http://www.ana-aqra.org)

