Forum Results incorporated in the action plans

of the ANECD and the National Networks for Early Childhood

The first Regional ECD Forum organised by ANECD under the title "Caring for Young Children in a Turbulent World: Development Strategies in Arab Countries," from September 8 to 10, 2023, hosted several sessions where a wide range of early childhood issues in Arab countries was addressed, with the participation of various sectors, including governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, and academicians.

The sessions' discussions contributed to the identification of recommendations that enrich the strategy of the Arab Network for Early Childhood. These recommendations will also contribute to defining and tuning the agendas of the national ECD networks, in addition to identifying potential action points between the Arab network and the national networks, which enhances the opportunity for collaborative initiatives to advance early childhood development in the region.

	Issues Incorporated in the current ANECD Action Plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the medium-term action plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the long-term action plan

Concerning ECD in Emergencies and Crisis	● Advocacy and Communication for the rights of young children in crises at the regional and global levels.
	
	● Highlighting successful experiences and gaps and exploring how to build on and develop these frameworks and experiences.
	
	● Developing training and continuous learning programs to ensure updating knowledge and keeping up with the latest methodologies and research in early childhood, which enhances community preparedness in responding to crises, including:
	  ● Health, Early Learning, Protection Parenting Program (HEPPP)
	  ● Nawwara Website for Mental Health Well-being
	  ● Urjouha Parenting Website
	
	● Setting priorities in Arab countries by identifying the areas most in need of support in the context of crises through:
	  ● the situational assessments conducted by ANECD
		● Designing frameworks and action plans to address the issues of young children during crises, encompassing local, regional, and global experiences.
		
		● Relying on data analysis sciences in the network's work to respond to the shortage of data and information in Arab countries.
		
		● Developing an immediate response plan to children's most essential and urgent needs during crises.
		
		● Developing a regional communication strategy for ANECD and the national networks to advocate for early childhood issues in crisis.
			● Establish a reference framework and a multi-sectoral strategy that contributes to directing efforts towards achieving holistic and sustainable early childhood development.

	Issues Incorporated in the current ANECD Action Plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the medium-term action plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the long-term action plan
	• Regular meetings with the National ECD Networks • Conducting research and situational assessments that contribute to understanding the challenges facing children and their ecological environment and generate recommendations for policymakers at the national and regional levels. • Responding to crises when they occur, such as forming an emergency unit with partners and actors in the affected areas.		
Concerning ECD and Climate Change and Environmental Hazards	• Conduct specialised research on the climate change crisis and its impact on early childhood, which will produce recommendations for policymakers at the national and regional levels.	• Mainstream climate change crisis issues in ANECD and Partners' programs that address children and their ecological environment based on the informed research results on the climate change crisis and early childhood. • Advocating for integrating nods to the impact of the climate change crisis on early childhood development into environmental and climate policies and for consideration of the development, care, protection, and health of young children and their	• Contributing to developing comprehensive and holistic plans that ensure the attainment of early childhood development goals simultaneously with the climate change crisis.

	Issues Incorporated in the current ANECD Action Plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the medium-term action plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the long-term action plan
		families in national environmental policies. ● Enhance cooperation to exchange experiences and tools in early childhood development and the climate change crisis. ● Creating a coordination space to develop interventions (programmes, policies, awareness) that respond to environmental challenges and consider the realistic societal contexts, values, needs, and capacities of the country, families, caregivers and children. ● Relying on data analysis sciences in the network's work to respond to the shortage of data and information in Arab countries. ● Developing a regional communication strategy for ANECD and the national networks to advocate for early childhood and climate crisis issues.	
Concerning the Early Childhood Workforce	● Providing opportunities to exchange experiences and communicate between actors in the field.	● Hosting virtual workshops, conferences, and webinars related to early childhood workforce topics.	● Contribute to developing a clear professional framework for the

	Issues Incorporated in the current ANECD Action Plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the medium-term action plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the long-term action plan

	● Providing training programs to develop the skills and knowledge of the early childhood workforce.
	
	● Conduct specialised research on the early childhood workforce, which will produce recommendations for policymakers at the national and regional levels.
	
	● Joining global initiatives that support and advocate for the early childhood workforce issues.
	
	● Contributing to developing training programs that support the early childhood workforce:
	
	  ● Developing the "Nawwara" for mental health program and website targeting the early childhood workforce.
	  ● Translating, contextualising, and digitising the Science of ECD course.
		● Proposing the development of clear policies for the early childhood workforce based on the results of situational assessments by the network in Arab countries.
		
		● Relying on data analysis sciences in the network's work to respond to the shortage of data and information in Arab countries.
		
		● Developing a regional communication strategy for ANECD and the national networks to advocate for early childhood workforce issues.
			early childhood workforce.
			
			● Contributing to developing clear job descriptions and Terms of Reference for the different professions in the early childhood workforce.
			
			● Identifying necessary early childhood workforce policies and communicating and advocating for their regular updating to create a healthy and supportive work environment.

	Issues Incorporated in the current ANECD Action Plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the medium-term action plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the long-term action plan
Concerning Child Rights	● Review local child rights laws and legislation available in Arab countries and identify gaps. ● Conducting research to review and monitor gaps in child's rights laws and legislation in Arab countries based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and benefit from successful experiences. ● Developing all programs produced by ANECD based on child rights principles.	● Investigating the extent of implementation of child rights laws in Arab countries. ● Activating communication between the Higher Councils for Childhood in Arab countries to share experiences and build on their capacities and action plans. ● Engaging in international and regional cooperation to exchange experiences and successful practices and work with international organisations to improve capabilities and provide technical support regarding child rights. ● Relying on data analysis sciences in the network's work to respond to the shortage of data and information in Arab countries. ● Developing a regional communication strategy for ANECD and the national networks to advocate for child rights issues.	● Contribute to reviewing and updating laws to confirm their compatibility with international human rights standards and include legislations that protect children from various forms of exploitation and violence. ● Contribute to establishing effective mechanisms for continuous monitoring and evaluation of the impact of policies and programs and identification mechanisms to detect cases of violations of child rights and take immediate action. ● Participate in developing policies and legal frameworks that serve child rights in Arab countries.

	Issues Incorporated in the current ANECD Action Plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the medium-term action plan	Issues ANECD will incorporate within the long-term action plan
Concerning Digital Empowerment and Cyber security and safety	• Conduct specialised research on digital empowerment and cyber security and safety in early childhood, which will produce recommendations for policymakers at the national and regional levels. • Using digital technology to design programs to make them more accessible and less expensive to implement (Such as Health, Early Learning, Protection Parenting Program & Nawwara MHPSS Program).	• Providing opportunities to exchange experiences and communicate between actors in the field. • Relying on data analysis sciences in the network's work to respond to the shortage of data and information in Arab countries. • Developing a regional communication strategy for ANECD and the national networks to advocate for early childhood issues in digital empowerment and cyber security and safety.	• Contributing and advocating for the development of policies and possible procedures to protect children digitally, i.e. protect them from digital threats and risks via the Internet in Arab countries.

	Issues that can be incorporated in the ECD National Networks duties with support from ANECD
Concerning ECD in Emergencies and Crisis	● Adapting international indicators and methodologies such as the Nurtuting Care Framework to suit each country. ● Establishing coordination structures to be an interface between the different sectors contributing to identifying needs and effectively directing efforts through national ECD networks. ● Holding periodic meetings and national workshops to exchange information and determine priorities. ● Setting priorities by identifying the areas most in need of support in the context of crises at the national level. ● Supporting advocacy and communication activities through platforms and websites.
Concerning ECD and Climate Change and Environmental Hazards	● Participate in specialised research on the climate change crisis to produce tools and recommendations. ● Raising awareness about the effects of climate degradation on early childhood. ● Encourage the development of environmentally friendly infrastructure for childcare and education institutions. ● Propose minimum standards for planning projects that are both environmentally friendly and child friendly. ● Encouraging environmental and civic education integration into the curricula according to each country's context. ● Setting priorities by identifying the areas most in need of support in the context of climate crises at the national level.
Concerning the Early Childhood Workforce	● Participate in specialised research to study the reality of the early childhood workforce. ● Launching awareness and marketing campaigns that restore consideration to the value and actual importance of the ECW, professionalising the sector, and creating enabling environments, including decent working conditions. ● Developing an advocacy plan to remove social stigma from the ECW workers. ● Setting priorities by identifying the areas most in need of support in the context of ECW issues at the national level. ● Providing training, building on capacities, and creating a space for exchanging experiences for the ECW. ● Providing professional guidance, mentoring, and counselling programs for students and trainees in early childhood. ● Advocating for strategies to attract and retain workers through awareness campaigns, raising wages, improving working conditions, building on capacities, and training opportunities. ● Design flexible programs and make courses available online to enable access from anywhere.

	Issues that can be incorporated in the ECD National Networks duties with support from ANECD
Concerning Child Rights	● Providing awareness and education programs for the community on child rights and their importance and focusing on changing practices that may threaten those rights. ● Training professionals on child rights, including judges, lawyers, teachers and care workers. ● Promoting community participation in decision-making processes related to child rights. ● Involving NGOs and community networks in program design, implementation, and monitoring. ● Strengthening partnerships between the public, non-governmental, and private sectors, providing opportunities for collaborative participation in designing and implementing policies, and providing effective communication between governmental, non-governmental, and academic organisations. ● Organizing campaigns and events to raise awareness on child rights topics in societies and using the media and social media to spread awareness effectively. ● Establish coordination structures that bring together representatives from all the relevant sectors at the national level. ● Contributing and advocating for developing a comprehensive and holistic approach to providing early childhood services that include health, education, and social dimensions. ● Setting priorities by identifying the areas most in need of support in the context of child rights at the national level.
Concerning Digital Empowerment and Cyber security and safety	● Launching awareness campaigns to enhance digital education by promoting a better understanding of the dangers of the Internet for children and educating children and parents on safe behaviours. ● Contributing to promoting tools and techniques that allow parents and caregivers to monitor and protect children from inappropriate content. ● Create and activate mechanisms for reporting harmful content or digital harassment. ● Contributing to developing laws that protect children from online harassment and exploitation. ● Contribute to periodically reviewing and updating digital policies to keep pace with technological developments and new challenges. ● Develop programs to provide psychological and legal support to children who are victims of digital threats.

	Issues that ANECD and National ECD Networks can collaborate and network on with partner governmental and non-governmental organisations
Concerning ECD in Emergencies and Crisis	● Providing educational resources and advice on holistic care for parents and caregivers. ● Providing training courses for teachers and parents to build on their skills and effectively use education and care resources through appropriate tools. ● Providing remote education programs for children and teachers in the event of inability to reach schools directly. ● Providing online health counselling services to families to meet basic healthcare needs, including mental health and psychosocial support. ● Providing financial and in-kind assistance to affected families through appropriate tools according to the context of the crisis. ● Create safe and supportive social platforms that enhance communication and engage parents and teachers to exchange experiences and support.
Concerning ECD and Climate Change and Environmental Hazards	● Contributing to developing environmental education programs. ● Raising community awareness and using leading role models to influence the values of sustainability and social responsibility, whether through stories or visiting lecturers with experience in sustainability. ● Including environmental and civic education in early childhood development curricula and developing children's endurance and adaptation skills by organising educational activities. ● Provide opportunities for children to learn about and participate in local sustainable initiatives.
Concerning the Early Childhood Workforce	● Establishing practical training programs that unite educational institutions, non-governmental organisations, and local communities. ● Providing opportunities for trainees to work with children in real environments under qualified supervision, including working with children with learning difficulties and disabilities. ● Cooperating to improve and develop curricula for various educational programs in early childhood. ● Include training curricula that reflect the latest research and best practices. ● Integrating practical and experimental elements into curricula to prepare students for actual field work. ● Providing platforms for interaction and exchange among the workforce to stimulate innovation and participation in work experiences. ● Employing technology to improve employees' access to educational resources, training, and exchange of experiences. ● Contribute to developing a tool for continuous assessment of ECW needs.

	Issues that ANECD and National ECD Networks can collaborate and network on with partner governmental and non-governmental organisations
Concerning Child Rights	• Contribute to the development of educational programs that reflect children's local identity and culture and encourage understanding and respect for cultural differences. • Cooperating with community institutions and organisations to provide parents with comprehensive, holistic educational programs and enhance communication. • Providing resources and opportunities for the community to participate in program development. • Build on the capacities of teachers and staff by providing training on cultural diversity and effective interaction with families. • Contribute to developing a tool for continuous evaluation and feedback from families and the community about programs and laws.
Concerning Digital Empowerment and Cyber security and safety	• Cooperating with international organisations and other institutions to exchange experiences and develop international standards for children's online safety. • Supporting the implementation of online programs directed at parents and caregivers. • Contributing and advocating for developing and implementing laws and policies to protect children from the risks of harassment and exploitation. • Providing training programs for the early childhood workforce on digital security and safety and how to integrate it into programs with children, parents, and caregivers.