



المجلس العربي للطفولة والتنمية
Arab Council for Childhood and Development

**The Strategic Plan of
The Arab Council for Childhood
& Development (ACCD)**

2011 - 2013
(Summary)



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Introduction:

ACCD is implementing its Strategic Plan which is adopted by the Board of Trustees in 2011. The Strategic Plan concentrates on a number of mechanisms including: advocacy, networking, capacity building, providing information, and arousing social awareness on childhood issues in the Arab world, aiming to make the targeted influence, as well as considering the new international approaches and strategies in the field of child protection, that participates in promoting ACCD's role at the regional and international levels. This requires enhancing and expanding partnership basics, cooperation and coordination among concerned national, regional and international institutions. Moreover, the Strategic Plan seeks to emphasize ACCD's regional role in promoting the movement of civil society, and working with higher councils & national committees for childhood, in addition to children themselves.

Guiding Documents of the Strategic Plan:

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, The United Nations, 1989 (CRC)
- Arab Plan for Childhood (2004 - 2015), The League of Arab States
- Millennium Development Goals, The United Nations, 2000
- Achievements and Projects of ACCD
- The Universal Declaration on Human Rights, The United Nations, 1948
- Arab and International documents and initiatives on childhood.

Guiding Principles of the Strategic Plan:

The implementation of the strategic plan will be guided by the following principles:

- Promoting and spreading the culture of child rights and effective citizenship.
- Combating violence against children.
- Protecting and integrating children in difficult circumstances, marginalized children, and disabled children.
- Promoting child participation.
- Preparing children to interact with the updates of knowledge society at the national and international levels.
- Building effective partnerships with governments and civil society organizations.

Objectives and Structure of the Strategic Plan

Fundamental Basics of the Strategic Plan

In its activities for promoting child rights, ACCD focuses on the following fields:

- 1 - Comprehensive development of the child cognitively, emotionally, physically, recreationally and culturally, and caring for talents and creativity in arts, science and literature.
- 2 - Child protection from violence, abuse, exploitation and mistreatment.

- 3 - Child's participation in all relevant matters that affect his life, and the freedom of expression for his views.
- 4 - The full integration and capacity development of children with disabilities and children in difficult circumstances, in education and all aspects of life.



Objectives of the Strategic Plan:

- Activating participation of Arab children in programs that addressing and influencing them, to ensure their protection. This is in addition to inserting the protection of children and disabled children from violence, mistreatment, and exploitation, into the priorities of national agenda.
- Activating the tools that help in understanding and supporting childhood development, through depending on rooting Arab cultural identity, in the context of respecting diversity and interaction with humanitarian cultures. This is in addition to promote developing national plans and policies, as well as mechanisms to measure the quality of early childhood programs.

- Developing guiding standards in the context of CRC, that help Arab governments to draft policies and programs, aiming to ensure child rights based approach in the field of protection in Arab societies.
- Spreading and encouraging scientific research through reissuing of Childhood and Development Quarterly, to enhance knowledge on the status and issues of Arab child, through studies and researches published in the Quarterly.
- Networking among Arab civil society organizations working in the field of childhood, and establishing relationships with international organizations, in order to exchange experiences and knowledge, as well as strengthening partnerships and cooperation with governmental institutions and private sector, aiming at influencing decision makers to promote childhood issues.
- Mobilizing and promoting the Arab public opinion to support and develop the culture of child rights in cooperation and coordination with the media and other developmental institutions.

Implementation Strategies:

The implementation of the Strategic Plan depends on a number of supporting strategies including: media, advocacy, fundraising, expanding partnerships, as well as capacity building of ACCD's staff, and updating the technological structure of ACCD.

Implementation Mechanisms:

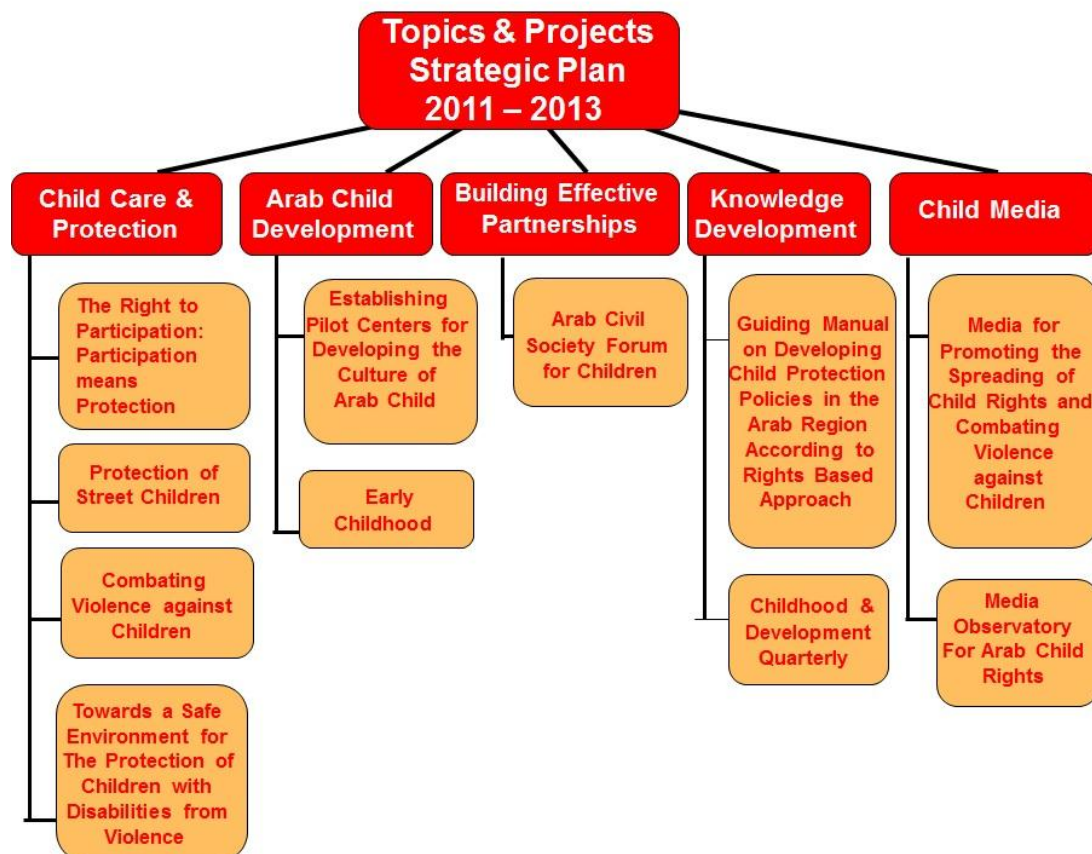
The implementation of the Strategic Plan depends on a number of mechanisms including: annual plans, holding periodical meetings of Internal Coordination Committee of

ACCD, in addition to electronic follow up programs, experts, and team works.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Being a fundamental element in the success of plans, this Strategic Plan adopts the concept of monitoring and evaluation, which focuses on following up, evaluating, and analyzing implemented activities, according to the objectives. This process includes assigning responsibilities, identifying achieved progress, obstacles and problems, as well as suggesting solutions in quarter and annual reports, and ensuring that the performance measures are clear and correct.

Strategic Issues



First Topic: Child Care and Protection

The Right to Participation

"Participation means Protection"

Arab Children Forum



Background

The practice had shown that most programs directed to or addressing children problems in the Arab world were formed and planned without the participation or consultation of children. Children are denied the right to express their views in programs directed to them.

In 2009, the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD) conducted a study on identifying the level of children's knowledge of their rights and roles in planning programs directed to them, which covered eleven Arab countries. The results of the study revealed the weak level of children participation, in addition over 80 percent of the children studied reported the desire to practice their right of participation and freedom of expression.

Therefore, ACCD held Arab Children Forum from 22nd till 25th of February 2010 in Cairo, which aimed to emphasizing children's right to participation in programs directed to them, and affecting their lives, in order to ensure their protection. Thirty one children, representing nine countries, had participated in this Forum.

The Goal:

To ascertain the right of children to express themselves and have their input with regard to programs that are directed to them and affecting their future, aiming at protecting them.

This is going to be achieved through analyzing the status of children's participation in the Arab world, and establishing children's forums at a national level, in addition to launching interactive electronic website for children.

Main Objectives:

1. Identifying the level of children participation in decisions directed to or addressing them, through developing a field study in eight Arab countries.
2. Creating a dialogue between children and adults, and among children themselves, through establishing national forums for children.
3. Identifying children's views and opinions regarding their issues, through electronic website.
4. Raising awareness of Arab children of their rights and the concept of partnership.

Partners:

ACCD is implementing this Project in partnership with AGFUND

Vision of Arab Children Forum:

The vision for the Arab children forum is based on the significance of encouraging and facilitating efficient children participation by providing the suitable social environment for this participation through the establishment of national forums for children whereby their views in their issues would be heard, their participation in

the planning of programs directed to them would be facilitated. As well, these forums are considered to be secured channels for communicating with decision makers.

Arab Children Forum, a Mechanism for Participation:

The outputs of discussions during the Arab Children Forum revealed the desire of Arab children to establish their permanent forum as a mechanism for participation; a forum that believes in every child right to participation without discrimination, and regardless of his/her education, sex, religion, or home land, in addition to encouraging children in difficult circumstances to participate in this forum. The Establishing Forum of Arab Children concluded with a number of recommendations expressed by children in their closing ceremony that included a call for ACCD to adopt the following:

- Hosting and supervising the headquarters secretariat of "Arab Children Forum".
- Establishing an interactive website for the Arab Children Forum whereby children will be able to express their opinions regarding issues related to them.
- Coordinating among the members of the Forum in all Arab countries.

Sawa Online Website: www.sawa-online.org

Sawa online is an interactive website based on the technology of content management system (CMS), and it includes a portal for all national websites of children forums.

The website offers every child the possibility of creating his/her own website, granting Arab children the

opportunity to establish live conversations among them; whether within the National Forum of their country or in dialogues with children from other Arab countries and other national forums. In its provision, activation, and proposing innovations, the website depends primarily on the active participation of the children themselves, by introducing their thoughts about their daily lives, their schools; the activities they do and their relationships to their families, as well as the problems they face in their lives, adding their contributions; whether technical, social, sporting, psychological or historical, through a story, a movie, a painting, a song or an article, etc.. It can also be lively discussions between the children and some officials as shall be agreed upon and arranged.



The Goal:

Providing a constructive dialogue between children in the Arab world on issues related to them.

Target Group:

The website addresses children ages eight to fourteen, aiming at providing children with a permanent sphere to express themselves to decision makers in Arab countries and international community.

Street Children Protection Program

Background:

ACCD has been one of the first institutions that highlighted the issue of street children since 1990 through the pioneering initiative of HRH Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz, President of ACCD, since he announced his call "Together so that no Arab child sleeps in the street". In its efforts to address this problem, ACCD has developed a [Strategy of Street Children Protection in 2005](#), which is based on the following four basic themes:

- Enabling street children through participation;
- Changing the negative perception towards street children;
- Ensuring the legal protection for street children; and
- Building the capacity and Arab networking of the civil society organizations working in the field of street children.

According to the above mentioned Strategy, ACCD is implementing the program of street children protection in five countries: [Sudan](#), [Morocco](#), [Yemen](#), [Lebanon](#), and [Egypt](#). ACCD has started this program since 2006, which is already completed in some countries, and still being implemented in other ones.

The Goal:

Implementing the program of street children protection, as well as measuring and evaluating the achieved effect of the implemented activities by ACCD in the field of child protection within the program's five countries, this is in addition to identify the perspective areas of work.

Main Objectives:

1. Continuing the implementation of street children protection program in four Arab countries: Morocco, Egypt, Lebanon, and Yemen.
2. Measuring the achieved effect of the implemented efforts of this program.
3. Identifying the current services provided for street children.
4. Identifying a perspective framework for street children protection.

Partners:

ACCD is implementing this Program under the auspices of HRH Prince Talal Bin Abdul Aziz, and in cooperation with the concerned Arab higher councils and national committees for childhood.

Combating Violence and Providing

Safe Social Environment for Children with Disabilities

Background:

Disabled children are exposed to violence of all forms. Researchers found out that one third of those children were exposed to different forms of violence in documented incidents. It is expected that many other incidents are not documented. Researchers also noted that disabled children are exposed to violence more than normal children. Children who are exposed to aggression badly need protection services. Besides, children who were exposed to aggression need medical and psychological care services. However, in the absence of such services, children's social, behavioral, emotional and conceptual life will be passively affected.



Hence, there is an importance that people working with disabled children should acquire complete knowledge of the concept "Child abuse and aggression". They should also possess skills and ability to find out children who were exposed to aggression or potential ones.



The Goal:

Raising social awareness of violence against disabled children in the Arab world, and providing safe social environment for those children, through preparing cadres who are active, trained and able to build the capacity of workers at organizations and societies working in the field of disabled children, as well as training them to deal with the media.

Main Objectives:

- 1- Developing a **guiding manual** on basic knowledge and information for handling and protecting disabled children, as well as providing safe social environment for those children.
- 2- Developing a **guiding illustrative manual for disabled children**.
- 3- Developing a **training manual**, through utilizing the guiding manual.
- 4- Preparing **professional trainers (TOT)** able to conduct training on a national level.
- 5- Disseminating the professional development of capacity building of those working in the field of disable children on the national level.
- 6- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of training at a national level.



Partners:

ACCD is implementing this Project in partnership with Islamic Development Bank, Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, The League of Arab States, World Health Organization

Second Topic: Arab Child Development

The Project of Establishing & Upgrading Pilot Centers for Developing the Culture of Arab Child



Background:

ACCD has adopted a project based on the idea of establishing distinguished special cultural centers for children and replicate them throughout the Arab world. The vision behind establishing such pilot center is to create a suitable environment which helps in upbringing the child culturally, and forming his/her character, in addition to developing his/her creative, cognitive, emotional and social skills. This is going to be achieved throughout practicing a number of activities that depends on free performance, self-education and participation. The Cultural Center of Princess Salma for Childhood (affiliated to the Jordanian Ministry of Culture and located in Al Zarkaa governorate, Jordan) has been selected to be the pilot center of this project. The Center is officially opened in June 2008, and ACCD's role concentrates on providing technical and consulting support for this Center, as well as feeding it with the necessary elements and tools for the different cultural and artistic activities.

The Goal:

Completing supporting and evaluating the Cultural Center of Princess Salma for Childhood.

Main Objectives:

1. Completing supporting the Cultural Center of Princess Salma for Childhood.
2. Training administrative and technical staff of the Center on the fields of child rights and mechanisms of child parliament.
3. Establishing child parliament as an internal activity inside the Center.
4. Evaluating and documenting the experience of supporting the Cultural Center of Princess Salma for Childhood, to be a model in Arab countries.



Partners:

ACCD is implementing this Project in partnership with AGFUND, and the Jordanian Ministry of Culture.

Third Topic: Building Effective Partnerships

Arab Civil Society Forum for Children



The Forum:

Arab Civil Society Forum for Children is a periodical gathering aiming at institutionalizing efforts of Arab civil society organizations in childhood areas. It has a permanent secretariat and an advisory committee of Arab organizations, in addition to a website (www.megdaf.org), aiming at raising developmental awareness with regard to children issues in the Arab world, and it adopts rights and development approach, and stems from the Convention on the Right of the Child.

The website contains different reports, information, studies, and news related to childhood events, as well it includes a database for members, that contains over 1000 members of both organizations and individuals, in addition an electronic newsletter is issued by this website entitled "Megdaf Echoes".

Background:

The idea of the forum was first initiated by Arab civil society organizations working in the field of childhood, during the year 2000 in preparation for the UN special

session on children which took place during 2002 under the title "World Fit for Children". This initiation is the direct result of the increased experience of NGOs in providing services for children. As a result of this effort, NGOs acquired professionalism and promoted their relationship to government. In preparation for the above mentioned UN session, a series of NGOs meetings, under the auspices of the League of Arab States, took place and came up with a number of recommendations that called for an increased attention to children issues in the Arab world; institutionalization of the work for children; and promote networking between NGOs working in childhood issues.

Former Sessions of the Forum:

The Forum plays a pivotal role in networking and building capacity of Arab civil society organizations working in the field of childhood, through identifying a main issue to be tackled in each of its meeting sessions.

[In 2001, the First Forum was held in Morocco](#), as part of preparations for the United Nations Special Session on children.



[In 2005, the Second Forum was held in Cairo](#), and was considered to be a new step towards building capacity of

civil society through networking and exchanging experience.



In 2010, the [Third Forum was held in Cairo](#), and focused on identifying the importance of data in changing children situations and in planning and programming on a right based approach and the apprehension of NGOs to that; as well as the availability of this data for civil society organizations.



In 2012, the [Fourth Forum was held in Lebanon](#), and focused on building capacities of civil society organizations and concerned institutions, including networking and advocacy in support of the right of Arab children to participation, and identifying the level of participation of children in the Arab world.

The Goal:

The Forum aims at activating the role played by civil society organizations, seeking to provide a scientific and practical vision on improving childhood status in Arab countries.

Main Objectives:

- Identifying the role played by civil society organizations in developing and implementing childhood policies.
- Networking among civil society organizations working in the field of childhood.
- Extracting the lessons learned in light of the achievements of civil society organizations in the field of childhood issues.
- Disseminating knowledge to Arab civil society organizations on the updated issues related to childhood at the Arab and international levels.

Partners:

ACCD is implementing this Project in partnership with AGFUND

Read more on:

[The Fourth Arab Civil Society Forum for Children](#)

[The Third Arab Civil Society Forum for Children 2010](#)

[The Arab Civil Society Forum for Children 2005](#)

[Regional Arab Civil Society Forum on Childhood 2001](#)

Fourth Topic: Knowledge Development

Development of a Rights - Based Guiding Manual on the Formulation of Comprehensive Child Protection Policies



Background:

Given the difficulties experienced in Arab countries, the Arab Council for Childhood and Development (ACCD) deemed it adequate to set up a programme to advocate the adoption of the Rights-based Approach to the formulation of comprehensive policies for an adequate implementation of child rights.

While advocating the necessity of adopting the Rights-based Approach to formulating child related policies in all domains, the current programme will concentrate, for practical reasons, on one domain: namely child protection.

The Goal:

Developing a rights-based guiding Manual on the formulation of comprehensive child protection policies in

Arab countries that enables to achieve the CRC vision and approach to child protection. Also, to guarantee sustainability, this Project adopts capacity building (TOT) to achieve this goal.

Main Objectives:

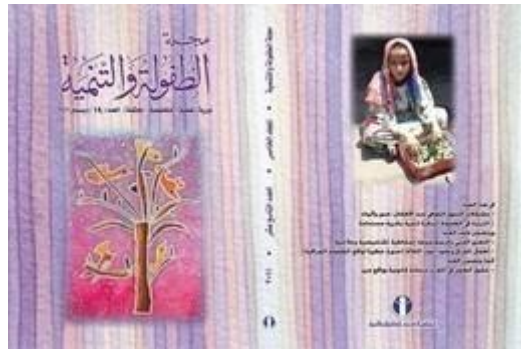
While advocating the necessity of adopting the rights-based Approach to formulating child related policies in all the domains (survival and health, development of children's abilities, adequate living standards and child protection), this Project will concentrate, for practical reasons, on one domain, namely child protection. The project aims to achieve the following objectives:

1. Analyzing the current situation of child protection policies, and its relationships with other clusters of child rights in Arab countries.
2. Developing a Guiding Manual on the formulation of rights-based comprehensive child protection policies in Arab countries.
3. Preparing training cadres (TOT) able to build capacities of those who are working in the field of child protection in Arab countries, through using the Guiding Manual.

Partners:

ACCD is implementing this Project in partnership with AGFUND.

Childhood & Development Quarterly



Background:

ACCD has taken the initiative to issue Childhood & Development Quarterly (CDQ) in 2001, which a scientific periodical is specialized in accurate research concerned with the issues related to childhood and development at the Arab level. The target audience of this quarterly includes: researchers at universities and centers, scientific development institutions, experts and professionals in governmental, non-governmental organizations concerned with childhood and young researchers, in addition to scholars in any relevant academic discipline.

The Goal:

Renewing publishing CDQ aims at developing and mobilizing Arab public awareness on childhood issues and child rights, as well as spreading awareness on the status of Arab child and developing his/her abilities.

This is going to be achieved through publishing and encouraging scientific research, and developing

knowledge on the status of Arab children within studies, researched, and articles published in CDQ.



Main Objectives:

- Enriching Arab scientific knowledge in the field of child rights, with concentration on early childhood.
- Encouraging Arab researchers to publish their studies and researches in CDQ.
- Opening channels of communication with specialized universities and scientific centers, as well as media, information, and cultural networks in Arab and foreign institutions concerned with the fields of childhood and development.
- Exchanging experience and knowledge among Arab researchers.

Partners:

ACCD is implementing this project in partnership with AGFUND.

Fifth Topic: Child Media

The Project of Media for Spreading Child Rights Culture and Combating Violence against Children



Background:

In implementing the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children, ACCD has adopted a project that aims at breaking the Arab silence and gripping attention towards the issue of violence against children, through raising the efficiency of media cadres and investing media channels in orienting the public opinion towards the violence practiced against children.



The first step in implementing this project was given in holding a "Regional Workshop for Arab Media Figures" under the slogan "Together to End Violence against Children" in June 2007 in Cairo. Through this workshop, the establishment of the Arab Media Network to combat violence against children has been announced, selecting ACCD to be the coordinator of the said Network. Also,

during the workshop, A Code of Ethics for Arab Media Figures on Confronting Violence against Children was drafted.



In 2010, ACCD hold a series of national workshops for media people on child rights culture and combating violence against children in four countries: Yemen, Jordan, Qatar, and Lebanon, this is in addition to another two workshops held during 2011 in Saudi Arabia and Oman. Also, in 2012, ACCD hold a workshop in Tunisia.

The Goal:

Developing media awareness on Arab child issues on a rights-based approach, in addition to spreading child rights culture and combating violence against children.



Main Objectives:

- Building the capacities and preparing media cadres able to advocate for child rights and combat violence against children (completing the existing project).

- Spreading knowledge and exchanging experiences in the field of child rights culture and combating violence against children.
- Developing a conceptual framework with the League of Arab States on Media Trainers Project (TOT).



Partners:

ACCD is implementing this project in partnership with AGFUND and the higher councils and national committees for childhood in Arab countries.

Media Observatory for Arab Child Rights



Background:

Research and studies confirm the fact that Arab child rights are violated by media, and recognizing the important role which is played by media observatories in identifying, uncovering, and analyzing such violations, ACCD is going to launch a media observatory in the field of child rights.

The Goal:

Improving the performance of Arab media regarding the issues of child rights.

Main Objectives:

- Launching media observatory for child rights, to identify the positive and negative factors of covering child right issues in media, in addition to pushing media towards the positive tackling of such issues.
- Stemming the learned lessons of media experiences in Arab and foreign countries.

- Analyzing the media approaches that tackle the issues of child rights.
- Monitoring media materials related to child rights issues.

Partners:

ACCD is implementing this project in partnership with AGFUND and the League of Arab States.