

TABSHOURA KINDERGARTEN

Using Digital Resources in Early Childhood Education

FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

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Lebanese Alternative Learning

For: World Vision

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ABBREVIATIONS

CERD: Center for Educational Research and Development

KG: Kindergarten

LAL: Lebanese Alternative Learning

PS: Preschool

WVL: World Vision Lebanon

PROJECT NAME AND STAKEHOLDERS

Name of project: Tabshoura/Kindergarten

Sponsored by World Vision Lebanon

Financed by Global Affairs Canada

Developed by LAL

In partnership with DOT

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, 3 NGOs joined efforts to make learning available to children of vulnerable communities. World Vision, in the framework of its project **No lost generation II** Lebanese Alternative Learning, with its e-learning platform **Tabshoura/school platform** DOT with its project **Teach up!**

BACKGROUND

LAL

LAL was founded in 2013, when a team of education professionals, communication designers and technology experts came together in answer to the need of supplementary resource for children who could not keep up with classes, be it for health, economic or security reasons.

In collaboration with the Saint Joseph University's department of education, LAL created an alternative and free eLearning education resource, based on the official Lebanese curriculum, that would be accessible to everyone, online, in Arabic, English and French: The Tabshoura/School platform.

Project background

In July 2015, and as part of its **No Lost Generation II project**, World Vision partnered with **LAL** and **DOT**. In the framework of this partnership, LAL developed the **Tabshoura/Kindergarten** platform or **TK**, **sponsored by WV** and **financed by Global Affairs Canada**. WV used the TK platform in 3 of its 5 Bekaa centers. DOT, in the framework of its **Teach up! Program**, trained the teachers to the usage of ICT and coached them on the implementation of TK e-learning platform in class practices.

General objective:

- Assist preschool students in World Vision Syrians' refugees' centers in Lebanon in acquiring skills required by the Lebanese Educational Program through ELearning resources.
- Allow free access to Tabshoura Kindergarten resources for all children living in Lebanon or Abroad.
- Support teachers in the World Vision refugee centers in the usage of digital technology in their teaching practices

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

LAL was mandated to create an e-learning platform, and introduce ELearning activities for preschool students. This platform would include **2007** educational activities for the three kindergarten levels and 90 educational short movies.

Those number were largely exceeded: 2350 activities and 107 audio visual are on line.

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION AND COORDINATION

From **July 2015 to March 2016**, LAL developed educational content for the three kindergarten levels, based on the learning objectives of the revised 2015 Lebanese official curriculum for early childhood, and digitized it on its e-learning platform Tabshoura, hence creating the interactive sub-platform **Tabshoura/Kindergarten**. LAL also Introduced the platform to Dot Team who was in charge of training World Vision teachers to use the Tabshoura Kindergarten website in their class practices.

- LAL recruited a team of pre-school teachers from various schools, educational technologists and creative developers, to develop pedagogical and audio-visual content for the e-learning platform.
- LAL hired Mrs. Noha Abi Habib, former head of the preschool department at the CERD, who coached the teachers on the reviewed 2015 Lebanese curriculum, introducing them to the projects of each preschool level, its domains and learning objectives.
- LAL also hired a pedagogical expert Mrs. Marie Jo Ghorra, who ensured that the activities are in line with the learning objectives.

Implementation steps

step 1: introduction to the curriculum

Mrs. Noha Abi Habib coached the teachers on the reviewed 2015 Lebanese curriculum, introducing the five projects of each school level, the fields of competencies and the learning objectives.

The Lebanese curriculum divides the preschool program into 3 levels, each containing 5 different projects (or books) covering one specific theme around which linguistic, scientific and math activities were created.

Teachers were mandated to create activities in accordance with the curriculum learning objectives.

Step 2: The creation of content

Workflow:

1. **Request:** In accordance with the project scope, LAL makes a request to the pedagogical team to create pedagogical content.
2. **Development of pedagogical content:** the teachers, each according to its mandate (each teacher was assigned 1 or 2 specific project(s) for each level), create educational activities based on the new preschool Lebanese curriculum keeping in sight that these activities should be doable on an interactive e-learning platform. They look for images and adapt them to each activity or group of activities.

For linguistics: Activities were originally created in their corresponding language.

For Math and Sciences: Activities were created originally in French and then translated to English and adapted to Arabic.

3. **Editing and validation:** The pedagogical expert edits the content and validates its conformity with the learning objectives.
4. **Translation and adaptation:** After validation, the scientific activities are translated into English and adapted in Arabic.
5. **Digitization:** Content is transformed into E-learning resources by the digitizing team.

Step 3: First assessment and correction

Following a first assessment by World Vision, a new approach in the creation of educational activities was adopted according to WV's recommendations.

While the activities were previously created and digitized as separate and independent ones for each project, the team had to adopt a different approach and major adjustments were made to contextualize the learning. Old activities were therefore grouped around learning situations. And new activities were created according to the same principle.

Step 4: Audio-visual content

Audio-visual content was also developed. All activities were recorded, the instructions are therefore available in the form of written and voice recorded questions.

All activities were illustrated.

Short movies and flip books were also created for some of the learning situations.

Step 5: Technical work

The Moodle platform was adapted to the needs of the project. Specific functionalities (features?) were developed. The platform was implemented on the server.

Step 6: The use of the TK platform in the WV's centers

Coached by DOT teach up! Program, the WV caregivers introduced Tabshoura Kindergarten in their school practices. Children used Tabshoura 3 times a week and showed a lot of interest in using the platform. Their computer skills that were almost inexistent evolved very quickly.

Step 7: Assessment

A study assessing the impact of using TK platform was carried out. (See report)

A FEW FIGURES

	Activities	Films	Flipped books
PS1	323	20	
KG1	265	12	
RA1	247	12	
TOTAL	835	44	
PS2	287	11	
KG2	243	11	

	Activities	Films	Flipped books
RA2	212	10	
TOTAL	742	32	
PS3	256		19
KG3	340	11	
RA3	177		12
TOTAL	773	11	31
GRAND TOTAL	2350	80	31

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES/CONSTRAINTS

Weaknesses/Constraints:

- The delay in signing the contract with WV resulted in a very tight timeline for the project implementation.
- The implementation significantly deviated from its original plan: all activities that were created prior to WV's first assessment. (see implementation Step3) had to be adapted and re-digitized as contextualized ones.
- Technical issues: On the one hand, the platform administrator had to bring adjustments to Moodle, a distant learning platform originally created for University usage (and possibly for middle school). Consequently, Moodle had to be adapted for preschool children. This required two major improvements: 1) - all stories and all instructions had to be recorded and the audio files included in the activities. 2) - it was necessary to adapt the types of interaction to the users: so, the administrator added third party plugins which allow the child to answer by using drag & drop and/or coloring and picture.
- On the other hand, with regard to the team members, namely the teachers who were developing educational activities, it was necessary to first work out a unified system for the creation of activities and then establish an online system of collaboration via cloud.

Strengths:

- The team:
 - very motivated and well organized;
 - working in an extremely orchestrated manner for an optimal performance;
 - showed high efficiency even under a high level of pressure to meet the deadlines;
 - always ready to accept challenges along the way;

- The very helpful input of the sponsor:
 - WV's availability which provided continuous input and guidance helped us to stay in line with the sponsor's requirements

- Volunteers
 - Many volunteers showed great interest in our project and got involved in several ways: professional actors recorded movies at no charge; friends and acquaintances also willingly helped each in their own way to make this project a success.

KEY SUCCESS

- The quality of the platform certified by the educational consultant
- The excitement and interest that the platform generated among WV caregivers and pupils
- The efficiency of the platform confirmed by the positive results of the assessment (cf. assessment report)

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Given the positive impact of the experience in the WV educational centers, it is recommended to use the TK platform for early childhood education.
2. Given the fact that the TK platform is in line with the official Lebanese curriculum, it is recommended to integrate it as a resource in the teaching program.
3. It is important to ensure regular coaching of the teachers to the usage of ICT in their teaching and enhance their technical capacities.