

MANAHEL - FEBRUARY 2025

SYRIA
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME

LEARNING BULLETIN

This month's newsletter covers plans for new library spaces, child protection training for Community Committees, the launch of our new After School Clubs and the distribution of tailored learning resources to improve educational outcomes.

Establishing libraries to improve learner wellbeing

A recent assessment of Manahel-supported schools has evaluated the current state of library facilities and established requirements for developments in order to update resources and facilities, creating an engaging and supportive environment for children with a diverse range of educational and recreational resources.

The assessment found that some schools had an existing library, but required new resources, while others needed maintenance and upgrades, and some lacked a dedicated library space altogether. A detailed list of required materials, equipment, repairs and furniture was developed from the assessment and agreed with the Education Department, so that procurement and distribution of appropriate materials could begin.

The impact of these new and refreshed facilities on children's wellbeing is significant. By providing a safe and inclusive space, libraries help children engage in structured psychosocial support (PSS) activities, allowing them to express emotions, build social

skills and develop resilience. This initiative makes schools more inclusive spaces for development and enhances academic learning for all.

Learning: Early and inclusive planning that involves stakeholders can ensure that interventions align with real needs instead of implementing a 'one size fits all' model. The assessment also indicated that infrastructure limitations in some schools require alternative solutions, such as mobile libraries.



Enhancing the capacity of Community Committees

A three-day training program for 45 Community Committee (CC) members at the Education Assembly (EA) level took place in February. The goal was to equip participants with essential knowledge on child protection - including safe case identification, effective communication strategies, facilitation skills and advocacy techniques.

By building these skills, the initiative sought to enhance the members' leadership roles within the local community and empower them to play a more active role in safeguarding children's rights, improving school environments and advocating for community needs. This strengthens members' ability to identify and address child protection concerns proactively and to engage more effectively with parents, teachers and education authorities, fostering stronger collaboration in addressing challenges proactively. For example, they will be more confident in voicing local education and protection concerns to decision-makers, leading to the development of long-term, community-led solutions that promote children's access to quality education in a safe and supportive environment.

Learning: By focusing on targeted topics, the training ensured that participants could immediately apply their knowledge in practical ways. However, it also highlighted the need for ongoing support to maintain long-term effectiveness and emphasised the need to build trust and develop open communication within the community to establish successful protection efforts.



Launching Manahel After School Clubs

Manahel launched its highly anticipated After School Clubs initiative to provide targeted support to children struggling with literacy and numeracy. The initiative operates across 153 centres and offer a range of activities, including specialised literacy and numeracy sessions, teacher-led support for differentiated instruction, recreational activities to promote social engagement, and parenting skills workshops to empower families in supporting their children's learning at home.

The programme will run through April 2025, focusing on enhancing literacy and numeracy outcomes for children at levels 1 and 2 in literacy who were identified as needing additional support based on their performance in assessments.

Each teacher will be assigned a maximum of 20 students to allows for effective follow-up, tailored instruction and better overall intervention outcomes. Teachers selected for this initiative were chosen based on their high performance in previous assessments, ensuring that children benefit from those with proven teaching skills who have attended all trainings/learning circles.

The Education Directorates were actively engaged in identifying students, selecting appropriate centres for the clubs and determining which staff members would be responsible for running the activities. This collaboration ensures that the initiative is well-coordinated and responsive to the specific needs of the schools and students involved.

Learning: By relying on the results of literacy and numeracy assessments, Manahel ensured data-driven decision-making led to the students most in need of support being prioritised for attending the After School Clubs. This approach maximises the impact of limited resources by focusing on those who will benefit the most. In addition, the Education Directorates' involvement helped ensure that collaboration efforts continue to enhance our trust relationship and fosters a sense of shared responsibility, which is crucial for the sustainability and long-term success of educational interventions.

Enhancing learning with literacy and numeracy booklets

A large-scale initiative to print and distribute literacy and numeracy booklets was launched in February and reached students across 225 schools. This provides all primary level students with high-quality learning materials that strengthen foundational skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Manahel worked closely on planning and coordination with partners, Education Directorates and school administrators to ensure a smooth distribution process with minimal disruption to the school schedule. Prior to printing, assessments were conducted to determine the specific needs of students at different learning levels, ensuring that materials were appropriately designed.

Learning: In many areas, students often lack consistent access to learning materials, especially in conflict-affected settings. By providing structured, level-appropriate literacy and numeracy resources, these booklets only support classroom learning and offer students a means of continuous practice outside school hours. This reinforces the idea that even small, targeted educational tools have a significant impact on improving overall learning outcomes.



Manahel, which in Arabic means ‘fountains’ – of hope, of knowledge, and of life -, is the northwest component of the UK aid-funded Syria Education Programme (SEP). Delivered by Chemonics UK, Manahel provides access to safe, inclusive, and quality learning opportunities for children in Northwest Syria. It impacted more than 600,000 children over the first phase of the programme (2018-2023) and a second phase runs from 2024-2027.