

Talent Center in Action: Mawhiba Turns Crisis into Seeds of Opportunity

Sondos S. Al-Wehieb, Manager, Researches and Policies, Email: swehieb@mawhiba.org.sa



King Abdul Aziz and His Companions Foundation for Giftedness and Creativity (Mawhiba) has turned the crisis into seeds of opportunities since the very beginning of the pandemic.

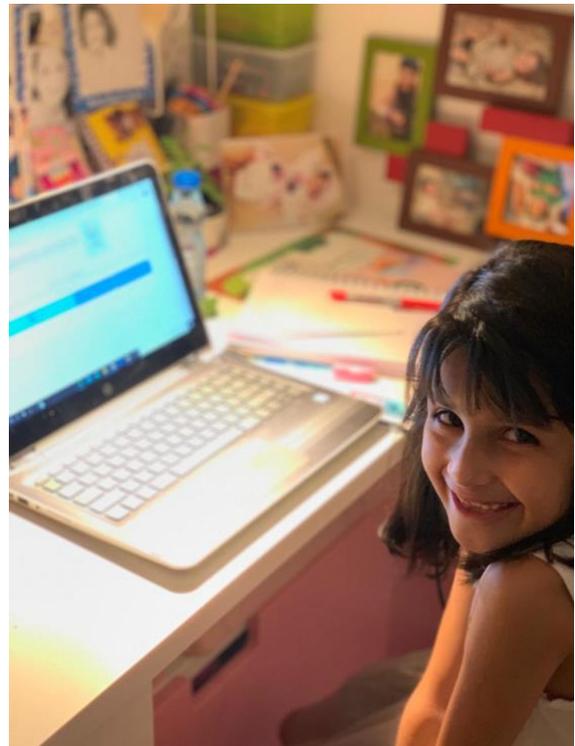
During the foundation's annual meeting that was held remotely, the secretary-general of Mawhiba, Dr. Saud Al-Mathami announced a digital transformation project (e-Mawhiba) to turn the coronavirus crisis into an opportunity and enhance the digital infrastructure of the foundation in a comprehensive way.

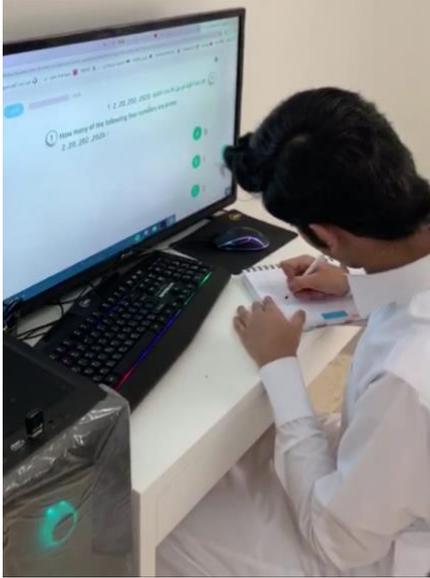
Al-Mathami stressed that digital solutions can strategically pave the way to a brighter future for the institution and establish a work culture, digitization of thinking, and service priorities.

Since the pandemic first occurred, Mawhiba took the initiative to utilize its digital infrastructure and put its partnerships into practice. For example, it held a four-day remote training program in cooperation with the Small and Medium Enterprises General Authority (Monshaat). 150 male and female of Mawhiba students, who participated at the National Olympiad for Scientific Creativity (Ibdaa 2020), joined the training program, which focused on entrepreneurial skills, research and how to change the participants' project ideas into commercial projects. The courses were presented by some experienced trainers from Monshaat and the Saudi Intellectual Property Authority (SIPA).

Moreover, Mawhiba has participated in six international competitions where its students were able to win 17 awards through their remote participation, and that was a result of the extensive training courses they had taken.

The Foundations did not stop its programs despite the COVID-19 pandemic. It even decided to remotely conduct a pilot test for nearly 43,800 students of both genders enrolled in the Kangaroo Math Competition 2020. It also enabled the participants of different academic levels to take the tests for the competition held from June 2-4 academic levels. The number of





registered students from the primary school level reached 26,346, while intermediate school students were around 10,903 along with 6,552 secondary school students. The results were announced on June 15 during a virtual ceremony that was remotely attended by more than 50,000 followers.

In continuation of these efforts, Mawhiba decided to continue conducting its summer enrichment programs for this year remotely. The move comes as part of Mawhiba's keenness to provide its programs with taking into consideration the health of the students through applying all precautionary coronavirus-related health measures in order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the students. These programs will kick off on July 5 and will continue for 21 days across the country, where students who have Internet access can benefit from these enrichment programs.

Additionally, 2,000 students are expected to attend these summer programs that are annually held in cooperation between Mawhiba and its partners from universities, research centers, and a number of distinguished schools.

On the global level, Mawhiba represented Saudi Arabia at the European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad held virtually from April 16 to 20 in the Netherlands, where Thanaa Al-Haidari from Makkah obtained the silver medal and Joud Bahwaini from Yanbu won a bronze medal.

Moreover, Lara Manqal from Jeddah received a certificate of appreciation. Saudi Arabia was ranked 26 in that international competition which was remotely administered due to coronavirus restrictions.

In fact, digital transformation and digital technology is a strategic choice made by Mawhiba to give its employees and customers the opportunity to do business remotely, in a way that can contribute to providing solutions that maintain work durability and flexibility in light of the current pandemic that the world is likely to live longer with.

