UNESCO Regional Conferences
in Support of Global Literacy

QATAR FOUNDATION
Innovations in Education Symposium 3

Literacy Challenges in the Arab Region
Building Partnerships and Promoting
Innovative Approaches

March 12, 13 and 14, 2007
Doha, Qatar
Statement by Her Highness
Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned

Cultivating a literate environment in our region is central to progress. A literate culture feeds from knowledge and breeds self confidence and prosperity. When a culture values literacy, the citizens are empowered to be active players in economic and political progress. They take pride in their achievements and so are open to the ideas and values of other people and other societies. Literacy is the very heart of a culture of quality and equality, for when people gain the power to decode their world they gain the power to affect changes to it. It oxygenates families, schools, civil society, and all types of institutions and businesses. This is why when we speak of genuine reform in our region and the path to peace, we must keep literacy at the very core of this agenda.
Statement by Mrs Laura Bush

We know that education, particularly for girls and women, improves the health of all members of a family. We know that higher literacy levels correlate with lower HIV/AIDS rates. We know that the children of educated mothers are more likely to succeed in school and send their own children to school, creating an ascending spiral that will benefit future generations. And we know that as farmers become more literate, they increase agricultural yields, thereby increasing food security for their families and communities.

Statement by Mr Koïchiro Matsuura

Literacy is a human right, a lever of individual empowerment and an instrument for building stable and prosperous societies. It is both a means of self-expression and a way of understanding realities beyond one’s own borders. Yet the intolerable reality is that hundreds of millions of women, men and children are still deprived of literacy’s benefits. Literacy lies at the heart of the ambitious international agenda of providing Education for All by 2015. The countries in the Arab States Region have made considerable progress in reducing illiteracy over the past few decades, but there is still much to be done. The challenge is for all of us to work together towards the same end, namely, to achieve the complete eradication of illiteracy in the region and throughout the world.
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Literacy Challenges in the Arab Region
Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches

Literacy remains a major challenge globally. Worldwide, more than 781 million adults cannot read or write. More than two-thirds of this population are women. Moreover, millions of children are deprived of quality education. In the Arab Region, the literacy rate is 66.4 percent; about 58 million adults are illiterate, out of which 66 percent are women, and there is a notable disparity of literacy rates between countries. There is a need for sustained commitment and action from countries and their partners to improve this situation. UNESCO and the Qatar Foundation have joined hands to make an impact in literacy in the Arab States.

This Conference is part of a series of regional conferences which will be organized by UNESCO in the framework of United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and UNESCO’s Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE). They are part of a major drive to promote literacy at international and regional levels. The goal is to place literacy on the agenda of national governments and international partners, and to assist countries in addressing their literacy challenges, thereby making a real and measurable impact on the lives of their citizens, and contributing to sustainable human development and poverty reduction. These Conferences build upon and extend the work begun at the White House Conference on Global Literacy in September 2006, hosted by Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States of America and Honorary Ambassador for the UNLD.

Innovations In Education is an exciting series of symposiums hosted by Qatar Foundation to promote sharing of cutting edge research in education. The goal of this series is to offer a forum for international scholars to explore the implications of their research to practical educational applications. The series opened in 2004 with a forum dedicated to The Art and Science Partnership and in 2006 explored Technology, Empowerment and Education. Innovations In Education 3 is being hosted jointly with UNESCO to support the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and to encourage the regional community to take responsibility for the literacy challenges in the Arab region by recognizing and rewarding innovative practices. It is in this framework that UNESCO and the Qatar Foundation are jointly presenting the Conference on ‘Literacy Challenges in the Arab States: Building Partnerships and Promoting Innovative Approaches’.

UNESCO and Qatar Foundation will be guided by these principles when seeking to identify the model literacy programs that will be presented at the conference.
Program

DAY 1, March 12 2007, Monday

3:00 – 6:30 p.m. Conference Registration – Conference Centre Level 1

7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Opening Ceremony – Al Mirqab Ballroom

Master of Ceremony: Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

Opening address: Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned

Address: His Excellency Dr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan, President of the UNESCO General Conference and Permanent Delegate of the Sultanate of Oman to UNESCO

Address: Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO

Address: Ms Mehriban Aliyeva, First Lady of Azerbaijan, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador

Addresses: Other Guests of Honor

Video message of Mrs Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States of America, Honorary Ambassador for the United Nations Literacy Decade

Video on the main literacy issues in the Arab States Region

Introductory Remarks to the Exhibition ‘Enriching literate environments’: Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

Presentation: Mr Tayeb Salih, writer

8:30 p.m. Conference Opening Dinner – Al Mirqab Terrace Tent
DAY 2, March 13 2007, Tuesday morning

**Master of Ceremony:** Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

9:00 – 9:15 a.m.  **Video projection of a learner’s portrait** (Ms Mariam Haroun, Egypt)
Al Mirqab Ballroom

9:15 – 9:25 a.m.  **Keynote Address on Innovations and Challenges in Literacy in the Arab States Region**
Al Mirqab Ballroom
Her Excellency Mrs Nancy Bakir, Deputy Secretary General for Social Affairs, League of Arab States

9:25 – 9:30 a.m.  **Introductions to the ROUNDTABLES**

9:30 – 10:45 a.m.  **ROUNDTABLE 1:** Literacy Policies and Strategies, Costs and Finance – Al Mirqab Ballroom
**Moderator:** Dr Regina Bendokat, World Bank

**Panelists:**
Dr Abdelwahid A. Yousif (Sudan)
Dr Sobhi Tawil (UNESCO Rabat)
Dr Hassan R. Hammoud (Lebanon)
Dr David Archer (ActionAid, UK)

10:45 – 11:15 a.m.  Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:25 p.m.  **ROUNDTABLE 2:** Program Delivery – Al Mirqab Ballroom
(Curriculum Development; Material Development; Teaching Methodologies; Training of Literacy Personnel)
**Moderator:** Dr Aicha Barki (Algeria)

**Panelists:**
Ms Sabah Al Haidous (Qatar)
Dr Laila Iskander (Egypt)
Dr Madiha Al-Shaibani (Oman)
Dr Emad Tharwat Khalil (Egypt)

12:25 – 12:30 p.m.  **Introduction to the BREAK-OUT SESSIONS**

12:30 – 1:30 p.m.  **BREAK-OUT SESSIONS** on the two topics (4 groups): Lessons learnt and the way forward in
1. Literacy Policies, Strategies, Costs and Finance - Al Mirqab Pre-Function Room
2. Program Delivery – Al Daibel Ballroom (Level 1)

1:30 pm – 2:20 p.m.  LUNCH – Al Mirqab Terrace Tent
DAY 2, March 13 2007, Tuesday afternoon

Master of Ceremony: Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

2:20 – 2:30 p.m. Introduction to the panels on effective practices and innovative approaches

Three simultaneous Panels (45 minutes presentation; 60 minutes discussion)

2:30 – 3:15 p.m.  SESSION I PRESENTATIONS

PANEL 1: Mother-Child Literacy and Intergenerational Learning – Al Mirqab Pre-Function Room
Moderator: Dr Richard Wilkins, Doha Institute for the Family- Qatar
Dr Nadim Karam: UNILIT program (Lebanon)
Ms Derya Akalin: AÇEV - The Mother-Child Education Foundation: Functional Adult Literacy Program (Turkey)
Mr Farid Abu Khtesh: The Trust of Programs for Early Childhood, Family and Community Education (Palestinian Territories)
Dr Julie Hadeed: The Mother Child Home Education Program (Bahrain)

PANEL 2: Literacy for Health – Al Daibel Ballroom (Level 1)
Moderator: Dr Ramadan Hamed Mohamed (American University of Cairo), Egypt
Mr Salah Sabri Sebeh: Caritas Egypt (Egypt)
Dr Perri Klass: Reach Out and Read (USA)
Ms Malini Ghose: Nirantar (India)

PANEL 3: Enriching Literate Environments: Culture, Reading, Publishing
Msaimeer Room (Level 1)
Moderator: Dr Clinton Robinson, UNESCO
Dr Najwa Adra: Literacy through Poetry Project (Yemen)
Dr Amin Zaoui: Director of the National Library of Alger (Algeria)
Ms Renad Qubbaj, Director-General of Tamer Institute for Community Education (Palestinian Territories)

3:15 – 4:15 p.m. Discussion

4:15 – 4:30 Coffee break

Three simultaneous Panels (60 minutes presentation, 45 minutes discussion)

4:30 – 5:30 p.m.  SESSION II PRESENTATIONS

PANEL 4: Literacy for Economic Self-Sufficiency – Al Daibel Ballroom (Level 1)
Moderator: Dr Adama Ouane, Director, UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning
Ms Rashida Abdel Mutaib: Sudan Open Learning Organization (SoLo) – Building Literacy (Sudan)
Dr Curtis N. Rhodes Jr.: Questscope for Social Development in the Middle East (Jordan)
Ms Mounia Benchekroun: Fondation Zakoura Education (Morocco)
Mr Ali Zainal and Dr Rabia Kerzabi, Qatar/Mauritania – Alphabétisation et formation professionnelle (Mauritania project of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah) (Mauritania)

PANEL 5: ICTs and Literacy – Msaimeer Room (Level 1)
Moderator: Dr Raj Reddy, Carnegie Mellon University, Qatar Campus
Ms Khadijetou Cheikh Mohamed El Many: Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Basic Education and the Fight against Illiteracy: Distance Education Program via Radio (Mauritania)
Dr Mohamad Adnan Al-Alaoui: ECE Department, American University of Beirut – From Illiteracy to Computer Literacy – Teaching and Learning using Information Technology (Lebanon)
Dr Mohamed Al-Ansari: Supreme Council for ICTs: ICT Literacy for Women Empowerment (Qatar)
Dr Raafat Radwan: Adult Education Authority: ICT in Literacy (Egypt)
PANEL 6: Media Literacy – Al Mirqab Pre-Function Room
Moderator: Wadah Khanfar, Director-General, Al Jazeera International, Qatar
Panelists: Dr Magda Abu Fadil (Lebanon)
Dr Renee Hobbs (USA)
Mr Richard Gizbert, Listening Post, Al Jazeera English (Qatar)
5:30 – 6:15 p.m. Discussion:
Evening event
7:30pm Dinner at the Qatar Cultural Village: depart from hotel
DAY 3, March 14 2007, morning

**Master of Ceremony:** Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

9:00 – 9:05 am  **Video** – a learner’s story (Mauritania)

9:05 – 9:55 am  Reporting on main issues identified during the discussions on the panels to plenary
Al Mirqab Ballroom

9:55 – 10:00 a.m.  **Introductions to the ROUNDTABLES**

10:00 – 11:00 a.m  **ROUNDTABLE 3:** Literacy Interventions for Crisis, Post-Conflict and Emergency Situations
Al Mirqab Ballroom

**Moderator:** Dr Kabir Shaikh, Director, UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education

**Panelists:**
- Mr Rashid Al-Naimi, ROTA (Qatar)
- Dr Mounir Fasheh (Palestinian Territories)
- Dr Mohamed Ali Bile (UNICEF Iraq)
- Dr Qutub Khan (UNESCO Iraq)

11:00 – 11:30 a.m.  Coffee Break

11:30 – 12:30 p.m  **ROUNDTABLE 4:** Benchmarking, Monitoring and Evaluation of Literacy – Al Mirqab Ballroom

**Moderator:** Dr Simon Ellis, UNESCO Institute for Statistics

**Panelists:**
- Dr Adel Al Said (Qatar)
- Dr Nadir El Habib (Morocco)
- Dr Hashim Abuzeid Elsafi (Sudan)
- Dr Mohamed Bougroum (Morocco)

12:30 – 12:35 p.m.  **Introductions to the BREAK-OUT SESSIONS**

12:35 – 1:30 p.m.  **BREAK-OUT SESSIONS** on the two topics (4 groups): Lessons learnt and the way forward in
3. Literacy Interventions for Crisis, Post-Conflict and Emergency Situations
Al Mirqab Pre-Function Room
4. Benchmarking, Monitoring and Evaluation of Literacy – Al Daibel Ballroom (Level 1)

1:30 – 2:30 p.m.  **LUNCH** – Al Mirqab Terrace Tent

DAY 3, 14 March 2007, Afternoon

**Master of Ceremony:** Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

2:30 – 3:00 p.m.  Presentation of main issues/challenges identified in the break-out sessions to plenary
Al Mirqab Ballroom

3:00 – 3:45 p.m.  Responding to the Challenges: Presentation of partners’ roles, future actions, and opportunities
Al Mirqab Ballroom

3:45 - 4:15 p.m.  Recommendations, next steps, conclusion: Mr Peter Smith, Assistant Director-General for
Education, UNESCO – Al Mirqab Ballroom

4:15 – 4:30 p.m.  Closing: Dr Abdulla Al-Thani – Al Mirqab Ballroom
**EXHIBITION ‘Enriching Literate Environments’**

During the Conference, there will be an on-going exhibition with the theme ‘Enriching Literate Environments’.

The ‘literate environment’ is the overall context in which people read and write, and refers to material and infrastructure available for this – books, newspapers, paper, administrative forms, ICT, TV, cell phones. It also includes the places and institutions in which people acquire literacy and produce written material. Literacy for all requires the creation of literate societies – where literacy is central in communication and learning; it is more than merely teaching everyone to master and use literacy skills. The exhibition ‘Enriching Literate Environments’ will tackle this important issue, raising participants’ awareness of this key strategy adopted by the United Nations Literacy Decade to achieve Literacy for All.

The exhibition will present children’s books as an effective tool to consolidate the reading skills of children and youth, while giving parents the means to support their children’s literacy development as well as their own.

Part of the exhibition will focus on how ICT can be utilized in literacy and non-formal education: increasing access, localizing content and creating an environment conducive to literacy.

Videos and films will document experiences of reading promotion worldwide. Participants will have the opportunity to display and distribute their literacy materials in the “Fair of Best Practices”. A series of side events will accompany the exhibit which will offer a comfortable area for debate and informal exchanges.

A large majority of the books presented at the exhibition were gathered thanks to the active collaboration of “La Joie Par les Livres”, the French National Centre for Children’s Books.
Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned

Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned is chairperson of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, a private non-profit organization founded in 1995 on the personal initiative of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa al-Thani, the Emir of Qatar.

Her Highness has been actively engaged in education and social reforms in Qatar and has played a major role in spearheading various national and international development projects.

In the fall of 2003, the Qatar Foundation officially inaugurated Education City, a prototypical university of the future which brings campuses of international universities on site in Qatar sharing research and community based ventures. Currently, Education City provides innovative educational and research opportunities through leading institutions such as Qatar Academy (K-12 school), the Learning Center, the Academic Bridge Program, Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts-Qatar, the Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Texas A&M University in Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, the RAND–Qatar Policy Institute, Georgetown University in Qatar and the Science and Technology Park.

Her Highness is also president of the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, a government institution founded in 1998 with the aim of strengthening the role of family in society. The Council is active in analyzing issues related to family and children’s rights and proposing culturally appropriate solutions.

In November 2002, she was appointed vice-chairperson of the Supreme Education Council, a government institution which oversees Qatar’s reform efforts in the K-12 education system.

Her Highness’ portfolio is becoming increasingly more international. In 2003, UNESCO appointed Her Highness Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education. In this capacity she is actively promoting various international projects to improve the quality and accessibility of education worldwide. In June 2003, she established the International Fund for Higher Education in Iraq which is dedicated to the reconstruction of institutions of advanced learning in Iraq. In 2005 she was selected as a member of the United Nations High Level Group of the Alliance of Civilizations, set up by the Secretary General of the UN to develop creative mechanisms for combating extremism.

Her Highness graduated from the University of Qatar in 1986 with a degree in Sociology and was awarded honorary doctorates from Virginia Commonwealth University, Texas A&M University and Carnegie Mellon University.
H.E. Dr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan

H.E. Dr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan is President of the 33rd session of the General Conference of UNESCO since October 2005.

After studying geography at the University of Beirut, he obtained a doctorate in law from the Sorbonne University in Paris (1990). Dr Bin Hassan has been serving as the Sultanate of Oman’s Permanent Delegate to UNESCO since 1984. Prior to that date, he was Director of Cultural Relations at his country’s Ministry of Education and Youth, and Director General of scholarships and External Relations.

Dr Bin Hassan has worked with, and chaired a number of educational committees in Oman and has a rich experience of UNESCO’s executive bodies having attended the Organization’s General Conferences since 1978. He was Deputy Chairman of UNESCO’s Executive Board (1991-1993) and President of the Arab Group at UNESCO (1986 and 2004). Dr Bin Hassan has also chaired the Consultative Committee of UNESCO’s Arabia Plan since 2002 and was Vice Chairman of the Consultative Committee of UNESCO’s Silk Roads program (1988-1999).

Dr Bin Hassan has also worked with the Arab League’s Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) as a member of Oman’s delegation to the General Conferences of ALECSO, and as member of the Organization’s Executive Board (1976-1981). He is also a Professor Lecturer on North Africa and the Middle East at the American Graduate School of International Relations and Diplomacy (Paris) and has published a number of scholarly and literary works: “The Development of Omani Administrative Law”, “Audat Shanjoub” (The return of Shanjoub), “Wain Zamanak Ya Bahr” (The Lost Glory of Seafaring Days), “Min al Hayat” (From the Life), “Kalam al Nas Youji al Ras” (Gossip Source of Headache), “Al Darawish Sketches”.

Dr Bin Hassan, who is also an actor and theatre director, has penned several plays on social and cultural subjects.
Mr Koïchiro Matsuura

Born in Tokyo in 1937, Mr Matsuura was educated at the Law Faculty of the University of Tokyo, and at Haverford College, where he earned a B.A. in Economics (Phi Beta Kappa, 1961). He returned to the College’s Pennsylvania campus in 2006 to receive an honorary doctorate in law from his alma mater.

Mr Matsuura’s first diplomatic posting was to Ghana in 1961, where he covered ten West African countries. He worked throughout his career in development cooperation and in political affairs. In the 1970s he served as Counselor at the Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC, and later as Consul General in Hong Kong. As Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs from 1992 to 1994, he was Japan’s Sherpa for the G-7 Summit.

In 1999, while serving as Japan’s Ambassador to France and chairing UNESCO’s flagship World Heritage Committee, Mr Matsuura was elected by Member States as Director-General of UNESCO. After a first term marked by program and reform accomplishments, as well as the ascension of new countries, including the United States, to the Organization, he was re-elected to a second term in October 2005.

As Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Matsuura has given particular priority to promoting universal basic education. With UNESCO exercising a lead role in the global movement to provide Education for All (EFA) by 2015, as well as in efforts to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD), he has launched major new initiatives in the fields of teacher training, education and HIV and AIDS, and literacy.

Mr Matsuura has authored books in Japanese, English and French on UNESCO, international relations, the intersection between diplomacy and development cooperation, Japan-US relations, Japan-French, and a history of the G-7 Summit. He is married with two sons and three grandchildren.
Dr Abdulla Al-Thani

Dr Al-Thani is the Vice President of Education at Qatar Foundation and a member of the teaching faculty at Qatar University. Previously he was an associate engineer at RAND-Qatar Policy Institute.

Dr Al-Thani holds a doctoral degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from University of Southampton and masters from Colorado State University. While at the University of Southampton, Dr Al-Thani worked closely with a research group that focus on sustainable management studies within the environmental sector, particularly landfills. The group was involved in numerical and mathematical modeling beside the laboratory models. Dr Al-Thani also served as a teaching assistant in the Civil Engineering Department at Qatar University throughout his graduate studies. In 2003, he became an assistant professor in Civil Engineering at Qatar University, teaching courses related to water resources and environmental engineering. He also represented his department on the College of Engineering’s Industrial Relations Committee.

In 2004, Dr Al-Thani was recruited by RAND-QPI to contribute to a number of research projects. While continuing to teach courses at the University, Dr Al-Thani worked for RAND-QPI on Qatar University’s reform initiative, assisting in establishing decentralized governance policies and procedures, modifying its practices with regard to stakeholder communication and faculty performance evaluation, and identifying leadership training and development activities for the University’s academic and administrative leaders. During his time at RAND-QPI, Dr Al-Thani also collaborated on an effort to develop recommendations for new initiatives that will foster quality and innovation at the national level in Qatar.

Qatar Foundation, where Dr Al-Thani became the VP of Education in 2005, is an organization that is committed to preparing students to take leadership roles in an increasingly global society. In addition to providing opportunities for research and community service, Qatar Foundation supports elite educational institutions in offering a complete range of academic programs, spanning from early childhood education to postgraduate studies. Five leading universities currently have branches in Qatar Foundation’s Education City: Virginia Commonwealth University, Weill Cornell Medical College, Texas A&M University, Carnegie Mellon University, and Georgetown University’s Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service.
Peter Smith

Born in 1945, Mr Smith (USA) received a B.A. (magna cum laude) degree in History from Princeton University in 1968. He earned an M.A. degree in teaching (1970) and doctoral degree (Ed.D) in Education Administration, Planning and Social Policy (1984) both from Harvard University.

After serving for one year as an Assistant to the Commissioner of Education in the State of Vermont, Mr Smith began his career in higher education in 1970 when he founded and served as President of the Community College of Vermont (1970-78), concurrently serving as Director, Office of External Programs of the Vermont State Colleges (1975-76).

A native of Vermont, Mr Smith served that State as State Senator (1980-1982), Lieutenant Governor (1982-1986), and a Member of the U. S. House of Representatives (1989-1990). During his tenure as Congressman-at-large, he served on the Education and Government Operations Committee and on the Select Committee on Children and Youth.

In 1986, he became Vice President (1986-1988) of Norwich University, Vermont, (USA) where he notably succeeded in raising funds in a capital campaign to build a new library. He also served as Executive Director of the US Commission on Responsibilities for Financing Postsecondary Education in 1991.

Between 1991 and 1994, he served as Dean of the Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD) at George Washington University. In this capacity, he directed, administered, and coordinated GSEHD programs collaboratively with Department Chairs and Faculty to support the strategic plan, vision and mission.

Since 1994, he has been the Chief Executive Officer and Founding President of California State University, Monterey Bay (CSUMB) distinctive in serving the diverse people of California, especially the working class and historically undereducated and low-income populations.

Mr Smith is the author of books and numerous articles in his fields of specialization. He has also contributed to the boards of various national and international bodies and is a recipient of several awards and distinctions.

Mr Smith took up his duties as Assistant Director-General for Education (UNESCO) on 20 June 2005.
Tayeb Salih

Al-Tayyib Salih was born in 1929 in Sudan and has spent most of his life outside the land of his birth. He attended Quranic school as a child, and Gordon College in Khartoum for his secondary school education. He went first to the University of Khartoum, and coming from a background of small farmers and religious teachers, his original intention was to work in agriculture. However, after a brief period working as a teacher, he moved to London. He went to university in England before working at the BBC as Head of Drama in the Arabic Service. He later worked as Director-General of Information in Qatar in the Gulf; with UNESCO in Paris and as UNESCO’s representative in Qatar. Culturally, as well as geographically, Tayeb Saleh lives astride the East and West.

Saleh’s writing, drawn from his experience of communal village life, centres on people and their complex relationships. In his novels, Al-Rajul al Qubrosi (The Cypriot Man, 1978), Urs al Zayn (The Wedding of Zein, 1969), Mawsim al-Hijra ila al-Shamal (Season of Migration to the North, 1969), and Daumat Wad Hamid (The Doum Tree of Wad Hamid, 1985), he constructs an impervious unity of the social, religious, and political essence of the African or African Arab. He firmly holds that a harmony of existence is possible for individuals in a society of values and ethics. His books have been translated into several languages.

His novella The Wedding of Zein was made into an Arabic film and won an award at the Cannes Film Festival in 1976. He has also written many short stories which are considered among the best in modern Arabic literature.
About UNESCO

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) is a specialized agency of the United Nations established in 1945. Its stated purpose is to contribute to peace and security by promoting international collaboration through education, science, and culture in order to further universal respect for justice, the rule of law, and the human rights and fundamental freedoms proclaimed in the UN Charter. In total, 191 nations belong to UNESCO which pursues its action through five major programs: education, natural sciences, social and human sciences, culture, and communication and information.

About Qatar Foundation

Qatar Foundation is a private, non-profit organization whose vision is to develop and realise people’s full potential. Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned serves as the chairperson of Qatar Foundation and personally guides the organization’s objectives and programs.

Qatar Foundation is the driving force behind Education City, a center for educational excellence in the region, where world-renowned universities share research and educate students in fields of critical importance to the GCC region. It is, therefore, in a unique position to organize this series and co-host a conference of this kind.

Education City houses educational facilities from school age to research level and branch campuses of some of the world’s leading universities: Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar, Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar, Carnegie Mellon University in Qatar, Texas A&M University at Qatar and Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Qatar. It is also home to Qatar Academy, The Learning Center, The Academic Bridge Program, Qatar Leadership Academy and Al Jazeera Children’s Channel.

Latest projects include the Qatar Science and Technology Park, a research zone committed to the development of regional entrepreneurs and young innovators, a Specialty Teaching Hospital, an Islamic studies centre and a school of communications and journalism.
About UNLD

The action of UNESCO is embedded in the Dakar Framework of Action for achieving Education for All and in particular in the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) which was proclaimed by the General Assembly for the period 2003-2012 in response to the major challenge posed by illiteracy in today’s world of emerging knowledge societies.

UNLD addresses literacy within and outside schools and targets children, young people and adults. Its efforts will contribute to the Education for All (EFA) goals of increasing adult literacy rates by fifty percent; ensuring equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs, and achieving gender equality in education by 2015. Its also aims at ensuring that a mastery level of learning is attained by all learners and their quality of life is improved. UNLD thus complements international poverty-reduction initiatives, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Moreover, as a global strategic framework for achieving the goals of the UNLD, UNESCO launched the Literacy Initiative for Empowerment (LIFE) in 2005. LIFE is put into action in 35 countries that have a literacy rate of less than fifty percent or a population of more than 10 million people who cannot read. LIFE will be implemented over ten years and guided by three core principles: country ownership and diversity, links with national policy, and progressive phasing.
ROUNDTABLE 1

Literacy Policies and Strategies, Costs and Finances

Strong, clear literacy policies and strategies, properly costed and resourced, are required to ensure quality literacy opportunities, and their adequate delivery, as well as their sustainability. This roundtable will showcase what is being done in various countries across the Arab States. The roundtable will:

1. Present policy objectives, strategies and actions, and information about their implementation, as well as budgetary allocations for literacy across the Arab States Region.
2. Identify trends, gaps, main difficulties and challenges as well as strengths.
3. Analyze the variations in the findings within and between countries and identify possible reasons for discrepancies, gaps and achievements.
4. Propose strategies and action for what is required to address key issues and ensure progress.

Discussions during the roundtable will focus on the factors that will influence policies and strategies and on what should be considered in assessing costs and mobilizing funding.

Sound evidence about the patterns of literacy and illiteracy must provide the basis for policy-making, and policies on literacy should be linked closely with wider development frameworks. National development strategies, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Poverty Reduction Strategies and other frameworks form the larger context, while education sector plans, gender policies and policies on linguistic minorities will shape literacy programming.

Feasible strategies must take account of which institutions – both governmental and non-governmental – deliver literacy and how formal and non-formal education are linked. Partnerships at national and community level are vital for effectively reaching diverse population groups; as well as government, these partnerships will include both international agencies and community associations.

The essential aspects of literacy development must find a place in realistic strategies to deliver literacy programs and projects on the ground: curriculum design, facilitator training, fostering an environment which encourages the use of literacy as well as assessing how local communities can manage and sustain relevant literacy efforts. No strategy is complete without appropriate and adequate provisions for monitoring and evaluation.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Dr Abdelwahid A. Yousif: Adult Literacy Policies and Strategies in Seven Countries of the Arab Region

The presentation compares the situation of adult literacy in Bahrain, Egypt, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. It examines adult literacy in each country within the context of declared government policies and strategies for education in general, and for adult literacy in particular. The current situation is analysed with a view to identifying achievements as well as the gaps and challenges to be faced. The analysis deals with some of the most pressing questions that have to be addressed by policy makers and practitioners in their efforts to develop a vision for literacy work in the 21st century, including:

• Is adult literacy really a priority for all of the seven countries?
• Are governments providing constructive legislation and a framework of financial and logistical support that is conducive to the tasks of the next few decades?
• How is literacy defined? Has the concept developed from the conventional notion of being able to read and write a simple statement to a more all-embracing concept like that of “being able to read the world?”
• Is there a genuine spirit of partnership between governments, the private sector and the NGOs?

The presentation concludes with a practical recommendations to governments, the private sector, NGOs, and civil society at large on how to take action to attain “literacy for all”.

2. Dr Sobhi Tawil: Literacy Policies and Strategies in the Maghreb

While patterns of literacy vary widely between countries in the Maghreb region, adult illiteracy continues to pose a serious challenge to national development efforts of countries within the region. This presentation demonstrates current data on the distribution of literacy skills over time based on gender, rural/urban residence and region coupled with literacy policies and strategies in Algeria, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, and Tunisia. It highlights common trends in the region, such as reaffirmed political commitment, increasing (if still inadequate) funding, the enhanced involvement of civil society partners in program delivery and the lack of reliable, timely data. Among the strengths identified in a number of the countries is a more comprehensive approach to literacy action that examines links with the critical patterns of school drop-out observed within the region, as well as with the low levels of learning outcomes documented through both international and national surveys. Finally, a positive trend that is also emerging is the attempt to link literacy action with post-literacy training aimed at socio-economic integration of more vulnerable populations. Based on this comparative analysis, this presentation will conclude with a set of recommendations.
3. Dr Hassan R. Hammoud:
Literacy Strategy for the Arab World

Based on the most recent figures on literacy, this presentation describes the status of literacy in the Arab States Region, and pinpoints the historical trends of improvement of literacy rates among Arab countries.

It analyses the existing gaps and challenges facing the region, which include: inadequate financial and human resources; a high prevalence of female illiteracy; a lack of infrastructure to reach nomadic and rural communities; a deteriorating economic situation in post-war countries; an absence of political will; the increase of poverty along with a rapid population increase; and political unrest.

By grouping Arab countries according to their illiteracy rates and taking their socio-economic conditions into account, the presenter proposes relevant strategies to each group in light of the framework of the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD), including:
- Strengthening the national, regional and international commitment to literacy through campaigning, partnerships, and identifying potential funding sources;
- Supporting the articulation of sustainable literacy policies within sector-wide and socio-economic development frameworks through the formulation of literacy policies and the blending of overall government and NGO development strategies in;
- Developing and strengthening national capacities for planning, programming, management implementation, monitoring and teaching of basic education and literacy through measures related to program design and delivery, human resources and monitoring and evaluation; and
- Supporting and reinforcing cooperation of national and regional, sub-regional, intergovernmental and international networks for research innovation, preparation of materials, training of personnel and evaluation in the domain of basic education and literacy.

4. Dr David Archer:
Writing the Wrongs

Adult literacy programs work. There are 781 million people who cannot read and write according to UNESCO statistics and these people have been abandoned in recent decades. Although governments worldwide have signed up to the EFA goal that aims to reach a 50 per cent improvement in literacy rates by 2015, countries are investing scandalously little in programs to deliver that goal. Illiteracy is a violation of the fundamental human right to education.

The presentation will focus on demonstrating how effective adult literacy programs are. It collates the evidence from the largest ever survey of quality adult literacy programs from across 35 countries, which led to the development of 12 International Benchmarks on Adult Literacy, covering issues such as:
- Understanding literacy
- Developing baselines and evaluating literacy
- Building partnerships
- Financing literacy
**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Dr Abdelwahid A. Yousif** has a BA with Honours from the University of Khartoum (Sudan) and post-graduate degrees in Education from the University of Manchester (United Kingdom), and the University of Leicester (United Kingdom), and a PhD in Education from the University of Toronto (Canada). Since 2000, Dr Yousif has been an Educational Advisor to the Minister of Education in Bahrain. From 1978-2000, he worked as Program Specialist and Chief in Literacy and Non-Formal Education at UNESCO serving in Paris, Cairo, Amman, and Bangkok. At UNESCO, Dr Yousif served as UNESCO’s education focal point for cooperation with ALESCO and ISESCO, established the Regional Program for the Universalization and Renewal of Primary Education and the Eradication of Illiteracy in the Arab States (ARABUPEAL) and coordinated the activities of the International Research Center for Education in rural areas of China. Prior to joining UNESCO, he worked at the University of Zambia, the University of Khartoum and the Sudan National Broadcasting Service.

**Dr Sobhi Tawil** has been an Education Program Specialist at the UNESCO Cluster Office for the Maghreb (Rabat, Morocco) since 2005. Before this, he was Head of the Capacity-Building Program for Curriculum Development at the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (2002-2004), Head of the Exploring Humanitarian Law project at the International Committee of the Red Cross (1999-2001) and research associate at the Graduate Institute for Development Studies at the University of Geneva (1996-2004). His most recent publications deal with educational exclusion, Quranic education and social change in Morocco, as well as education, conflict and social cohesion.

Since 1995, **Dr Hassan R. Hammoud** has been Professor of Social Welfare and Social Work at the Lebanese American University in Beirut. Earlier, he taught Social Policy and Social Work at Kuwait University for 16 years. His interests include illiteracy and poverty eradication, health, education, social protection, social security, and other welfare areas as well as social work education and research, social development, social policy and international comparative social welfare. His research and consultancy work has produced the following reports: The National Plan for the Eradication of Illiteracy in Lebanon, 2002-2004; The Plan of Action on Ageing to the Year 2012, UNESCWA, 2002; The Poverty Alleviation Strategy Paper for Lebanon, 2005; Non-Formal Education in the Arab World, UNESCO, November 2004; Illiteracy in the Arab World February 2005 (background paper for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2006); Globalization and Social Protection in the Arab Region, UNESCWA, December 2005; The Arab Illiteracy Strategy, UNESCO, December 2005.

**Dr David Archer** is Head of Education at ActionAid International. In the 1980s he worked on literacy programs across Latin America inspired by Paulo Freire (eLiteracy and Power: the Latin American Battleground” Earthscan 1990). In the 1990s he was involved in developing the Reflect approach to adult learning, co-authoring “The Reflect Mother Manual” (1996) and “Communication and Power” (2003) (see www.reflect-action.org). He now supports coalitions and campaigns on the right to education across Africa, Asia and Latin America. His recent work includes “Writing the Wrongs: International Benchmarks on Adult Literacy” (based on the largest ever survey of quality literacy programs), “Contradicting Commitments” (2005) and “Cancelling the Caps”, (2006) on IMF obstacles to education spending) and “The Politics of Prevention” (forthcoming, on HIV and Education).

**Moderator:** **Dr Regina Bendokat** is the Human Development Advisor in the Human Development Department of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region of the World Bank. Dr Bendokat has many years of professional experience in development economics and policy: after teaching in the Economics Department of Freiburg University and a field assignment with UNDP, she joined the World Bank as an economist working in the Latin America, East and South Asia, and Africa Regions. For the last 12 years, she had assignments in Human Development (education, health and social protection) in the South Asia and MENA Regions. Before taking on her assignment as HD Advisor, Dr Bendokat was the Education Sector Manager for the MENA Region of the World Bank for five years. Dr Bendokat holds a MA and PhD from Freiburg University (Germany).
ROUNDTABLE 2

Literacy Program Delivery

What people can do with literacy often depends on how they learnt it. Well-designed programs will give the best opportunities for learning sustainable literacy skills. This Roundtable will address the factors and challenges of ensuring that literacy instruction is of high quality and achieves the aim of literacy for all.

A key consideration is the curriculum: what kind of knowledge does it include – that of local people, of a particular institution or from a national perspective? An analysis of learning needs is a necessary prerequisite for designing a good curriculum. It may be useful to combine other skills with literacy learning.

Gaining literacy skills implies practice. Literacy programs require materials – in print form or other media. Who develops these materials, and what role do the learners themselves play? Themes that relate to the everyday experience of learners are frequently a means of motivating learners, not only to read, but also to write about their own lives. Beyond the learning group, learners also need materials to read in the wider environment, including in their own homes.

Children, adolescents and adults learn in different ways and bring different perspectives to literacy instruction. Programs need to take account of this and adapt pedagogical approaches to the particular group. Creating a stimulating learning environment and assessing learners’ progress in appropriate ways are also keys to good programs.

None of this is possible without well-trained facilitators, but training is often brief and shallow. The profile of literacy facilitators is important and will be enhanced through good initial training and regular in-service reinforcement. Support from experienced supervisors and exchange among facilitators also improve program delivery.

The roundtable will examine four key areas:
• Approaches to curriculum development
• Teaching/learning material development
• Pedagogical approaches (teaching/learning process)
• Training of literacy personnel

PRESENTATIONS

I. Dr Laila Iskander:
Community and Institutional Development, (CID)

The presentation traces trends in the Arab States Region and undertakes an exploratory survey of innovations within national and regional contexts of learners, program design and implementation modalities, program delivery organizations, and national development plans. It demonstrates that the region has translated its commitment to adult education into concrete steps but also the continued burden of about 60 million illiterate adults, (34% of all adults in the region) most from the impoverished segments of the region, and heavily concentrated among rural women. Adult learning is no longer an issue of ‘learning’ per se, but one of economic and social development. It has thus become imperative to search for, document, and mobilize knowledge resources and mainstream best practice towards concerted national action.

It uncovers innovations and non-conventional approaches to literacy, including:
• Tailoring programs (language of instruction, design of programs, etc.) to take into consideration learners’ needs
• Decentralizing the management of literacy and adult education programs and community participation
• Placing reading and writing on the holistic multiple-literacies map
• Enabling learners by letting them become directly involved in developing their own literacy materials and strengthening the learning environment
• Equipping learners with a wide range of complex social forms of communication which develop within communities, particularly in period of social, economic and political change

It concludes with recommendations on the importance of alternatives to centrally designed programs: ones which encourage diversity of meanings which adults create from texts and situations in a post-literacy environment.
2. Dr Madiha Al-Shaibani: A Glance at Literacy Programs in Oman from the Perspective of Adult Learners

This presentation is based on a qualitative study that aims to obtain a better understanding of literacy programs in Oman through the perspective of learners, teachers and supervisors.

Adult literacy programs were given priority in the early 1970s with the emergence of the Omani modern renaissance, which made a commitment to spread education to all sectors of society. Since then adult education programs have expanded, resulting in an increase in the literacy rate from 34% in 1973 to 78% in 2003. For women aged 15-29, the illiteracy rate dropped from 21% in 1993 to 4.2% in the 2003. In the 1990's Oman embarked on a comprehensive educational reform program, signifying the shift in educational development from quantitative expansion to an emphasis on quality. While some aspects of these reforms transcended to adult education programs, effective and comprehensive reforms in these programs have yet to materialize.

As Oman proceeds on the path of fulfilling its commitment to the EFA initiative of increasing the literacy rate by 50 per cent, many alternative community based programs have been introduced to the field of adult education with the purpose of reaching the target goal. This presentation is based on a study that analyzed the curriculum and conducted informal semi-structured interviews with subjects with the purpose of obtaining a perspective of their views about the capability of the current adult education curriculum to meet their needs. The goal is to assess the current programs and suggest a direction for the way ahead.

3. Ms Sabah Al Heydous: The Supreme Education Council Experience

As part of the education reform initiative in Qatar, Education for a New Era, Independent Schools were established with the objective of equipping the new Qatar generation with the skills and knowledge required to compete internationally, whilst protecting the cultural and national identity. Teachers are adapting to the curriculum standards and are making good progress. However, the change to English as the language of instruction has caused huge challenges for both students and teachers alike.

This presentation will explore how learning science or mathematics and a language are cognitive processes that support each other. The science and math process skills — including observing, predicting, communicating, classifying, and analyzing — are almost the same as English literacy learning skills — paraphrasing, summarizing, and seeking information, scanning, comparing, ordering, synthesizing, evaluating and note-taking.

In addition improved and enhanced ICT capabilities are integral to improved learning outcomes that enable young people to engage effectively with, and work in, an increasingly complex world. Innovative and effective use of ICT has the potential to transform pedagogies, empowering teachers and support staff to focus on learner-centred active and interactive learning.

4. Dr Emad Tharwat Khalil: Training of Literacy Personnel

The quality of the training of literacy facilitators/educators is a key factor in the quality of program delivery throughout the world. Literacy facilitators/educators need to be given sufficient and relevant pre-service and in-service training to be effective. In many countries, however, this is not the case.

This presentation will provide an overview of training methodologies, based on experiences made in various projects and programs in the Arab States Region and main challenges faced. It will discuss what type of training is required to deliver a quality literacy program, given the context and needs of the learners. Finally, suggestions concerning the foundations necessary for any training program in the literacy field, with a detailed proposal of a model training program will be made. The presentation will address the following questions:

- How are literacy personnel trained?
- How are facilitators selected for training?
- What prior qualifications are required to facilitate adult literacy?
- What pedagogical approaches are they trained in?
- What does the initial training consist of? Is it sufficient?
- How far is training specifically adapted to non-formal learning?
- How far is training adapted to teaching adults?
- What kind of ongoing support is available?
- What kind of in-service training is available? How frequent is it? Who provides it?
- What kind of ongoing system of supervision and quality improvement is there?
- What opportunities exist for facilitators to share their experience with each other and visit other learning situations?

Moderator: Ms Aicha Barki, President, NGO IQRAA, Algeria
BIOGRAPHIES

Educated in Egypt (Cairo University) and the USA (UC Berkeley and Teachers’ College, Columbia University), Dr Laila Iskandar’s 25 years’ experience is reflected in her research, conference contributions and publications. She has designed and implemented numerous development and education projects at the national and international levels. Her experience in training, institutional building, network creation, institution of public-private partnerships and technology transfer encompasses the field of non-formal education, primary health care, working children, community environmental issues, crafts, literacy and gender. She has served on UNESCO’s International Literacy Prize jury, as the UNILD’s Regional Resource person from the Arab Region, and as Canadian CIDA’s Education Advisor. Dr Iskandar was consultant to the Minister of Environment on solid waste management issues in Egypt and received the Goldman Environmental Prize for Africa in 1994. Her firm, Community and Institutional Development (CID), was awarded the Schwab Social Entrepreneurship Prize at the World Economic Forum for the Arab Region in 2006.

Dr Madiha Al-Shaibani holds a BA and MA in Special Education from St. Louis University (USA) and a doctorate from the University of California, Santa Barbara (USA). Since 1989, she has worked for the Omani Ministry of Education, first as a special education teacher and principal and later as the Deputy Director of Technical Office for Early Learners (1999-2000) and the Director of Private Education (2000-2001). Since 2005, she has served as the Deputy Director General of Education for the Ministry of Education. Her research interests include Constructivism, Inquiry learning, Integrated Curriculum, Student Questioning Behaviour, Elementary Science Education, Globalization and Science Education and Qualitative Research. She is a member of the American Educational Research Association.

Dr Emad Tharwat Khalil served as a teacher and educational animator at the Jesuit Fathers School in El Minya (Egypt) for a number of years in the late 1970’s. His involvement with a number of local and regional groups working in literacy and adult education led him to join the Association of Upper Egypt for Education and Development, where he founded its renowned Parallel Schools as well as a number of field offices that he also directed. In 1996 he co-founded the Salama Moussa Foundation for Education and Development and later Ro’a for Consultation and Training. He is also on the advisory committee of the Arab Education Forum at Harvard University’s Contemporary Arab Studies Center. Dr Khalil has trained teachers, administrators, facilitators and other education and development staff in Egypt, Yemen and the Sudan, and he has produced a number of training manuals for programs around literacy, life-skills development, community participation, children’s rights and environmental education.

Ms Sabah Al Haidous holds a B.Sc. degree in Mathematics and Physics from Qatar University and a number of diplomas. She has worked as a Mathematics teacher at secondary level for 14 years. Ms Al Haidous has made many contributions to Qatar, most notably as Principle of Al-Bayan Educational Complex. Ms Haidous has been Director of the Education Institute at the Supreme Education Council since 2004.

Moderator: Dr Aicha Barki is Founder and President of IQRAA, an Algerian Literacy NGO, the President of the Arab Network of Literacy NGOs and the Vice President of ICAE, the International Council of Adult Education. She began her career as a teacher and then worked as a school director until 1997, when she decided to dedicate herself exclusively to humanitarian work. Moreover, since 1965, Dr Barki joined the Algerian Women’s Union and was elected the National Secretary of this organization in 1986. Dr Barki was elected to the National Observatory of Human Rights in 1993 and has served as its Vice President since 1997. She is a laureate of the J. Roby KYDD prize granted by the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) and the National Liberty Prize (Valencia) in 1998. Under her leadership, IQRAA has obtained several distinctions.
ROUNDTABLE 3

Literacy Interventions for Crisis, Post-Conflict, Post-Disaster and Emergency Situations

Situations of crisis develop for a variety of reasons, largely related either to the presence of conflict or the occurrence of a natural disaster. Access to literacy acquisition is interrupted and, depending on how long the situation persists, can result in whole generations of children and whole sections of the population having no possibility of education or even of acquiring the basic learning tool of literacy.

The Roundtable will examine how literacy interventions may be structured in such circumstances, both for unschooled or deschooled children and for young people and adults. There may be a particular need to focus on those who are beyond normal school age and have hitherto had intermittent or truncated educational opportunities, or simply none at all.

With regard to situations of post-conflict and post-disaster in the Arab States Region, creating literacy opportunities in a situation of crisis means examining four key aspects. First, an assessment of literacy needs will determine the groups who need literacy and what they need it for. Second, the programming of literacy needs careful attention—who can deliver it, and how does it link with other educational opportunities? Third, specially designed resources and materials may be necessary to address the unusual circumstances of post-conflict or post-disaster situations. Lastly, it will be very important to understand how the social process of literacy can be a means of understanding experiences, building bridges and restoring normal life and relationships.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Mr Rashid Al Naimi
Reach Out to Asia (ROTA)

ROTA is an NGO operating under the auspices of the Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, with a mission to provide and facilitate quality primary and secondary education in Asia, thereby furthering some of the global Education-For-All (EFA) goals by 2015.

This presentation will provide an assessment of ROTA’s experience in emergency and post-conflict situations, including Pakistan, Indonesia, Cambodia and Lebanon. ROTA encountered numerous barriers which allowed the organization to acquire critical know-how and expertise in order to overcome existing and future challenges. In its field work, the most significant obstacles faced were volatile regulatory frameworks in the targeted areas and a lack of coordination among the development partners. Further, inadequate human resources led to the possibility of reduced impact of projects, and subsequently lower levels of participation and satisfaction by aid recipients. In pursuing ROTA’s missions, political instability and inherent risks were taken into account in the selection of participants on every mission trip. In addition, ROTA faced logistical challenges due to the remote and rough geographic locations. Finally, the cultural context in which aid teams operated was equally relevant; particular cultural traits, resistance to change, deep-seated local conflicts, and psychological vulnerabilities of the people affected by disaster substantially affected the course of its missions.

2. Dr Munir Fasheh:
Literacy in Times of Crisis…
Lessons from Palestine

The Palestinian situation is very special, because people lived through crises at different levels over many years. In order to deal effectively with crises, people had to call upon their own resources and the resilience of their communities and culture. Necessity was a stimulus to innovation, self-help and personal engagement.

The presentation will focus mainly on what was done as a result of the closure of schools for almost 4 years, when the situation deteriorated drastically. The approach that was followed and the projects undertaken are still flourishing and still inspire people around the world. Literacy in different ways and with different meanings played a crucial role throughout the various crises that Palestine has experienced since the early 1970s.

The situation in the Palestinian Territories made it necessary to keep rethinking the conceptions of literacy that dominate imaginations, minds, and perceptions in the world today. These new concepts will be part of the presentation.
3. Dr Mohamed Ali Bile:
The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) in Iraq

This presentation describes the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP), first implemented by the Ministry of Education (MoE) of the Government of Iraq in 2004 in collaboration with UNICEF. Its aim is to provide learning opportunities to out-of-school children and adolescents, particularly girls.

The education system of Iraq has been substantially damaged due to a series of events affecting the country since 1980. Since 2004, the political leadership, policy-makers and international agencies have focused their efforts on the formidable challenge posed by the need to reconstruct the educational structure. While the education system of Iraq was considered one of the best in the Middle East till the early 1980s, today Iraq has a literacy rate of just over 74%, with a female literacy rate of around 64%.

Given the situation that has prevailed over the last few years in Iraq, a large number of children have had their schooling interrupted. As a result, many older children lack the basic academic competencies that they would otherwise have acquired in lower classes. In addition, several children continue to remain out of school for one reason or another, and it is necessary to specifically address their needs.

The primary objective of ALP is to provide opportunities to older out-of-school children to finish the primary stage of education - usually a six-year cycle - within a compressed period of three years. About 16,000 out-of-school children are currently enrolled in the Accelerated Learning Schools. While some of these children will not continue beyond this stage, it is envisaged that upon completion of the program, many of these children will be able, if they so choose, to opt for one of the following alternatives:

• Joining the formal education stream by enrolling in the secondary education cycle.
• Enrolling in suitable vocational education courses, or
• Acquiring higher levels of education through the distance education or alternative education modes.

As concerns literacy, examples of the critical challenges include:
- the weak political commitment to literacy,
- the absence of coordinated government leadership,
- the lack of capacity in responding to the priorities of learners,
- the absence of a language policy, and
- the lack of printed reading materials.

The presentation reviews some modalities to be explored in order to meet the literacy challenge in Iraq. This includes the strengthening of personnel and institutional capacities at all levels in policy design, the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of literacy and NFE programs, the establishment of a National Literacy Resource Centre and supporting innovative projects and programs (with particular attention to women). As far as ‘what can be done’ and shall be done, five sets of actions are proposed by UNESCO, namely:
• strengthening basic education provision
• reducing the financial burden of schooling with compensatory strategies
• halting the inter-generational spiral focusing on out-of-school youth and adolescents
• tackling practices that obstruct participation thereby facing the problem of child labor
• attacking the roots of exclusion through social empowerment strategies.

The presentation details these proposals as a necessary means to translate commitments into concrete action.

Moderator: Dr Kabir Shaikh, Director, UNWRA

4. Dr Qutub Khan:
Literacy in Iraq: Meeting the Challenges

Iraq is one of the 35 LIFE (Literacy Initiative for Empowerment) countries. Therefore UNESCO gives special attention to it, with a view to respond to its very specific needs and priorities.

The presentation briefly outlines the numerous challenges faced by Iraq, notably the two decades of armed conflict resulting in the devastation of its socio-economic infra-structure, the increasing number of out-of-school children and adult illiterates (notably in rural areas, amongst women and socially marginalized groups) as well as the delicate post-war situation, which makes learning to live together, reconciliation and peace the greatest challenges.
BIOGRAPHIES

Mr Rashid Al-Naimi is the Vice President (Administration) of Qatar Foundation for Education Science and Community Development and sits on the board of Reach Out to Asia (ROTA).

Mr Naimi has over 19 years of diversified experience in Oil and Gas Industry including ten years at Senior Management levels of Key departments. Prior to joining the Qatar Foundation, he was the Human Resources Manager at RasGas Company Limited, a leading producer of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) in the world. He has extensive experience in developing policy guidelines, strategies and budgeting, HR, procurement, Materials & Contracts, warehouse operations and logistics.

A strong believer of teamwork and continuous improvement philosophy, he has an outstanding record of performance in all the institutions he has served.

Mr Rashid Al-Naimi has a BSc in Economics from the Indiana State University, USA.

Born in Jerusalem, Dr Mounir Fasheh has lived most of his life in the Palestinian Territories. He earned a Doctor of Education from Harvard. In 1997, he was a visiting scholar at the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at Harvard University, where in 1998, he founded the Arab Education Forum. He has taught mathematics, physics and education in the Palestinian Territories and USA, and was Dean of Students at Birzeit University. In the 1980s, Dr Fasheh served as Chairman of the Economic Development Group, a Palestinian NGO based in Jerusalem. Between 1991 and 2000, he was member of the Steering Committee of the Arab Resource Collective, an inter-Arab group based in Beirut and Cyprus and involved in networking, communication, education, health, literacy and community development. In 1989, he founded and directed the Tamer Institute for Community Education, Ramallah. His publications in Arabic and English are on education, learning, mathematics, youth, language, science, religion and social issues.

With over 20 years experience in education program management, Dr Mohamed Ali Bile is currently the Education Officer for the UNICEF Iraq Support Center (ISCA) in Amman responsible for a number of projects aimed at reconstruction and revitalization of the Iraq education system. He also manages the Basic Education Project which aims to improve access and quality of education, with particular emphasis on the reduction of gender and geographic disparity. At the United Nations Education and Culture Cluster (ECC), Dr Bile has led the initiative to establish a strong coordination mechanism in Baghdad, Amman, Kuwait and Basra. Prior to working in Iraq, Dr Bile was a leading member of a UNICEF Somalia team that planned and implemented the first Comprehensive Primary Education Reform (1996 – 2000). Dr Bile has taught at the Somali National University and has degrees in Education and an MBA. He has also taken advanced courses on education from the University of London and Harvard University.

Dr Qutub Khan is currently a Program Specialist in Educational Planning and Management at UNESCO’s Iraq Office; prior to this, he worked for the International Institute for Educational Planning as well as UNESCO Offices in Uganda, Thailand and India. He holds degrees in Econometrics, Regional Planning and Educational Finance and has published several research papers in international journals.

Moderator: Born and educated in India, Dr Kabir Shaikh is Director of Education for UNRWA/UNESCO (United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees), which provides education for 500,000 Palestinian children based in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank. Until 2002 he was Director of Education for Bournemouth Local Education Authority (England). For over 35 years he worked in education in England holding various posts including the Chief Inspector for Education in London and Chair of the Association for Science Education’s National Working Party on Science for a Multicultural Society. He was the Chair of the Partnership Board for Leicester City Education and a Member of the Advisory Forum to the Royal Naval School of Educational Training and Technology. He has worked with the Commonwealth Secretariat, UNESCO, Development Education and the British Council. In 2003, Dr Shaikh was awarded a CBE for services to education in England.
ROUNDTABLE 4

Benchmarking, Monitoring and Evaluation of Literacy

The absence of reliable and timely data on the levels of literacy of populations as well as the lack of information on the availability, types and quality of literacy programs at national level constitute a major difficulty for the efficient planning and implementation of literacy programs.

Thus, the need to strengthen national and international efforts towards achieving literacy for all is closely linked with the need for improving literacy monitoring, evaluation and assessment. Reliable data on literacy is needed in order to monitor and assess the current literacy situation in given countries and develop appropriate interventions in both policy-making and program design.

What is required is reliable and meaningful information on the status of literacy among populations, on the uses and impact of literacy and on the availability, performance and effectiveness of literacy programs. Benchmarks for literacy are needed to enable policy-makers to develop appropriate policy frameworks.

This Roundtable will examine the challenges in this area and report on national and international experiences in the development and use of monitoring, evaluation and literacy assessment methodologies for populations in a wide range of different circumstances.

Literacy assessment should be linked to the fundamental issues and principles concerning the improvement of literacy. This has to start with a process of reflection on literacy and its definition. New measures of literacy focus on different levels of competence and the applied use of skills in everyday life, rather than only counting those who have attended school or literacy programs. The simple distinction between literate and illiterate is not sufficient to address problems as diverse as reading simple signs and newspapers or writing a letter.

The Roundtable will focus on four elements:
1) improved methods for assessing literacy.
2) a practical approach to literacy monitoring and evaluation that would generate meaningful and reliable information for use by policy-makers and planners.
3) flexible methods and tools for managing information on literacy activities that respond to the needs of educational administrators, program managers and learners at the national, sub-national and local levels.
4) benchmarks for literacy in order to develop conducive policy frameworks for adult literacy and to design effective programs.

PRESENTATIONS

I. Dr Hashem Abu Zeid:
Monitoring Literacy and Adult Education in Sudan

Sudan, one of the 35 countries participating in LIFE, has started to make progress on improving literacy rates in order to reach Dakar Goal 4 by 2015. This presentation argues that it is more important than ever to carefully monitor progress in Sudan now. Unfortunately, the current national capacities for monitoring and evaluating literacy and adult education programs are weak. However, non-governmental organizations have generally more experience in that respect and the national system could benefit from practices that have proven to work well at local level.

This presentation will show that the International Benchmarks for Adult Literacy proposed within the Global Campaign for Education provide a useful framework to monitor progress made in adult literacy in the Sudanese context. Some of the issues addressed in the benchmarks have been taken up already in Sudan such as the broadening of the notion of literacy and the introduction of participatory methods, mainly through literacy programs provided by national NGOs. Other issues still need to be put on the national literacy agenda with more emphasis such as the need to perceive literacy within a continuum of lifelong learning, the need to redefine the roles of different stakeholders, a policy framework, the enhancement of literate environments, the strengthening of ongoing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, a framework for the professional development of the adult literacy sector, a culturally and linguistically sensitive approach to learning within multilingual contexts, and the need to make available sufficient financial resources for literacy and adult education.
**2. Dr Nadir El Habib:**
Non-Formal Education Management Information System: the Moroccan Experience

This presentation gives an overview of the first focus of the literacy and non-formal education strategy adopted by Morocco in 2004: the setting up of a Non-Formal Education Management Information System (NFE-MIS). This system responds to the demand for a practical approach to NFE monitoring and evaluation which is adaptable to local contexts and information needs and which generates meaningful and reliable information and statistics on literacy and NFE programs, their implementation and outcomes.

The support provided by UNESCO and the efforts undertaken at national level made it possible to set up and to implement a system which provides information on providers, programs and courses undertaken, educators and learners. The outputs of the information system are intended for use by policy-makers and planners at all levels for informed decision making, better planning and delivery of NFE. Thus the system constitutes a tool which contributes to the improvement of the quality of literacy and non-formal education programs and provides necessary data for better planning and monitoring at the macro level.

**3. Mr Adel Al Said**
Evaluation Institute, Qatar

Nowadays, the concept of literacy has evolved and expanded into realms other than those of traditionally understood languages. The issue is now not only about “reading literacy”, but about being literate in other “languages” or “codes”, such as mathematics, science and of course IT. Recent literacy studies demonstrate that literacy no longer resides solely in formal or informal education. It can be said that today being able to read is critical to a full living experience, for example to gain access to the labor market, keep a job, improve wages, and get a better quality of life. In summary, it has become “a powerful determinant of an individual’s life chance and quality of life” (OECD, 1997).

This presentation will consider how Qatar, given its commitment to building a world-class education system, can assess other types of literacy beyond reading literacy. Important skills, like information and communication technology (ICT) skills do not at present lend themselves to direct assessment. At the same time, one has to be aware that not all important skills, for example social skills, can be expected to be measured in a standardized way.

**4. Dr Mohammed Bougroum:**
Abstract of the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program (LAMP)

In recognition of the needs for better literacy data worldwide the UNESCO Institute for Statistics has developed the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program (LAMP) in collaboration with other international, regional and national agencies and organisations.

The overall aim of LAMP is: ‘to improve the quality of literacy data, especially at national level but also for international policy development and monitoring, and for the design of improved literacy programs’.

LAMP seeks to achieve this aim through three main objectives:
- Develop a methodology for assessing literacy which is applicable to developing country situations
- Collect literacy data through a literacy assessment survey, to inform the participating countries’ policy-making and literacy program design, and to help international monitoring and policy-making
- Build statistical capacity of the participating countries in the areas of surveys and of literacy assessment.

It is expected that LAMP will provide estimates about the distribution of literacy skills in the country by age group, gender, level of education which is also comparable across countries. With modification in the basic design of LAMP it can also provide literacy data by other variables according to the interests of the participating countries. Finally, the methodology is such that the survey can be repeated to provide results that are comparable across time.

The presentation will focus on the experiences made with the LAMP methodology in the pilot country Morocco.

Moderator: **Dr Simon Ellis, UNESCO Institute for Statistics**
Dr Hashim Abuzeid Elsafi is a graduate in sociology of Cairo University (Sudan branch) and has studied community development at the UNESCO centre in Egypt and adult education in Germany. In 1970, Dr Elsafi worked as a trainer in the “Shendi” community development centre and joined the UNESCO functional literacy experimental project in Khartoum. In 1975, he established the “Cultural Literacy Approach” in Yemen, supported by the Arab Regional Literacy and Adult Education Organization (ARLO). Soon after, he joined ARLO as Director of Self-Help and Popular Organizations and became Executive Secretary of the Arab Literacy Fund in Iraq in 1977. In 1990, Dr Elsafi joined UNESCO in Amman, Jordan, to work on Education for All and basic education. Since 1999, Dr Elsafi has been a consultant in Sudan for literacy and adult education working on new literacy approaches such as REFLECT and ALQUIRAEA with NGOs in the Sudan specifically focused on the needs of the poor.

Dr Nadir El Habib is Director for the Fight Against Illiteracy at the State Secretariat for Literacy and Non-Formal Education (Secrétariat d’Etat chargé de l’Alphabétisation et de l’Éducation Non Formelle). He holds an engineering degree from the Institut National Polytechnique de Grenoble (France); his doctorate is from the same institution, based on research that he did at the French Atomic Energy Commission. He also holds a Masters in engineering from the Collège de Polytechnique, Paris. He has worked as an advisor in managements and an internal auditor at the Moroccan Ministry of Infrastructure and as the Chief of the Central Communication Unit at the State Secretariat for Water Director of the Evaluation Institute, Adel Al-Sayed was appointed by the Supreme Education Council in early 2003. Prior to his current position, he was the Director of the Arab Educational Training Center for Gulf States. He also worked with the Qatar Ministry of Education in the areas of policy, evaluation and testing strategy, diversification of secondary schools, teacher awards, training program design, human resources development, and curriculum development for Gulf States. In addition, he has organized and managed several other educational projects, including the Education Development Bureau and the School Performance Evaluation Project.

Mr Al-Sayed is a member of the Qatar Academy Board of Governors, the Qatar Sports Academy, and the Board of Directors for the Arab Bureau of Education for Gulf States. He authored part of a physics textbook for the tenth grade in the Gulf States, in addition to studies on educational systems, school performance evaluation, selection interview methodology, and human resources development strategy.

Adel Al-Sayed holds a MEd in Measurement, Evaluation and Assessment from the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Qatar.

Dr Mohammed Bougroum is Director of the Social Economics and Solidarity research team at Cadi Ayyad University, Marrakech, Morocco, and National Coordinator of the Literacy Assessment and Monitoring Program (LAMP) in Morocco. Mohammed Bougroum conducted several research studies on issues relating to the functioning of the Moroccan labour market. He has conducted a pilot project where students participated in literacy actions within their households. Besides his involvement in LAMP, Dr Bougroum is managing a pilot project on education for special needs students, focusing especially on visual impaired students. He contributed to the establishment of the first Braille literacy program in Morocco, within the University of Marrakech.

Dr Bougroum is also involved as president of a local NGO in a state-schools rehabilitation program in remote areas in Morocco and co-supervising a field study on the quality determinants of literacy programs in Morocco.

Moderator: Dr Simon Ellis is Head of Special Projects at the UNESCO Institute for Statistics in Montreal, Canada. He leads teams working on literacy, adult and vocational education. He is also responsible for statistics in science and technology, culture and communications. Before working at UNESCO, he used to run the London Skills Forecasting Unit, which specialised in determining the range of vocational skills required by London’s businesses. He holds a doctorate from the University of Oxford, and has published books on Roman Housing, Geographic Information Systems, and the London labour market.
PANEL 1

Mother-child literacy and intergenerational learning

Mothers have a huge impact on their children’s learning. In literacy, this works in two ways. First, according to research, a literate mother is more likely to send her child to school, to keep her/him there and to support her/his progress through school. Second, a mother who encourages her children’s literacy by reading with them lays a strong foundation for independent reading later. Where mothers (and fathers) have not had the opportunity to learn literacy, an intergenerational approach involving parents and their children can bear much fruit.

Sometimes known as family literacy, an intergenerational approach will take account of the different learning styles and needs of adult and child learners. At the same time, activities designed for parents and children together stimulate and motivate learning and the child receives valuable support. Family literacy also enables parents to engage much more with their children’s experience at school and makes the links between school and community stronger. Designing such programs requires deep knowledge of the local context and sensitivity to language and culture issues. Special care is also needed to ensure that materials are suitable for children or for parents or for both together. Facilitators may include schoolteachers as well as other community animators, and the overall strategy must fully integrate the contexts and literacy practices of home and school.
**Mother-Child Education Program (MOCEP)**

Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV), Turkey

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Turkey
- **Starting year:** 1993
- **Outreach:** approximately 200,000 women and children to date
- **Target Population:** illiterate women over the age of 15 and their children

**Website:** www.acev.org

**Brief Description**

Since 1993, the Mother-Child Education Foundation (AÇEV) has been working towards providing equal opportunities in Education for All, upholding the view that learning is a lifelong process that must begin in early childhood and supporting the child as well as his/her immediate caregivers and environment. In order to do this, AÇEV conducts research and develops and implements programs in its two main areas of expertise: early childhood and adult education. All of AÇEV’s programs are designed to increase either functional or family literacy or to stimulate the development of the necessary cognitive building blocks for literacy in the early years.

The Mother-Child Education Program (MOCEP) is AÇEV’s first and most widely implemented program. It is a culturally-sensitive, scientifically-proven, home-based, low cost, pre-school and parent education program, targeting socio-economically disadvantaged mothers of 6 year-olds. It was developed to empower the mothers’ educator role by supporting them in their parenting roles and by equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary for fostering solid pre-numeracy and pre-literacy skills in their children.

The aims and structure of the program create a literacy-friendly environment in which the mother and the child are able to ‘get into the habit’ of relating, learning and sharing through books and literacy materials. Over 200,000 mothers and children have been reached to date and the program is implemented throughout Turkey as well as in Bahrain, Jordan, France, Germany and Belgium. The program and all of its materials are also available in Arabic and Flemish.

The Foundation was awarded one of the UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prizes in 2006.

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**UNILIT**

The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Balamand, Lebanon

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Lebanon
- **Starting year:** 2001
- **Outreach:** approximately 250 per year
- **Target Population:** illiterate youth and adults

**Brief Description**

Adult literacy in Lebanon is a major challenge, especially in the rural areas. As is often the case, these illiterate men and women suffer from poverty and live in an underserved and underdeveloped environment. Frequently, a clear link can be made between illiteracy, poverty, and poor health.

Higher Education Institutions can contribute to tackling the literacy challenge by developing adequate programs and projects to serve local communities and participate in their development. University involvement in community life is a pre-requisite to fulfilling its commitment to education and cultural advancement.

UNILIT is a bridge between the University and the Community, between privileged and fortunate young adults and the rest of the community - young and old, urban and rural, men and women - who lack access to the world of knowledge.

UNILIT aims at providing mothers and young men in need with the opportunity to acquire reading and writing skills through health literacy initiatives.

It is offered as a course at the University of Balamand, where students receive training in adult learning skills and illiteracy eradication by the National Committee for Illiteracy Eradication in the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Adult Learning Program. Under the slogan “from a student to a citizen”, the program aims at teaching the youth enrolled in university to become responsible citizens, actively participating in the development of their community.
**The Mother Child Home Education Program (MOCEP)**

**MOCEP, Bahrain**

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Bahrain
- **Starting year:** 2000
- **Outreach:** approximately 200 per year
- **Target Population:** Poor families whose children are not attending pre-school
- **Website:** www.mocep-bahrain.com

**Brief Description**
The Mother Child Home Education Program (MOCEP), adapted from a Turkish program, was founded in the Kingdom of Bahrain in 1999. It is an educational empowerment program for mothers and pre-school children living in poverty and provides training to mothers so that they can improve their reading skills and teach their own children pre-readiness skills in their homes before they enter primary school. It also provides education to mothers in child-rearing and development.

MOCEP has been operating in Bahrain since 2000 and has served nearly 1,000 families successfully. Private business mainly supports MOCEP and the government helps by providing a few community social centres for mothers to meet weekly for training. It is also operating in Saudi Arabia with the support of Princess Noora bint Mohammed Al Saud at the King Abdulaziz Women’s Society.

Research results show that the program had a positive impact on children’s IQ measures as well as on their social and emotional behaviour. MOCEP also improves family life and helps mothers practice reading and empowerment skills. Mothers gain a wealth of confidence and become increasingly aware of how to educate their children. They become not only more educated but they also appreciate education more.

MOCEP is run under the Bahrain Red Crescent Society in Bahrain. A MOCEP Foundation will be formed and the program will be expanded.

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**The Mother-to-Mother Program**

**The Trust of Programs for Early Childhood, Family and Community, Palestinian Territories**

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Palestinian Territories
- **Starting year:** 1984
- **Outreach:** approximately 10,000 (direct and indirect beneficiaries)
- **Target Population:** Families, mainly mothers and their children, teachers
- **Website:** www.trust-programs.org

**Brief Description**
The Mother-to-Mother Program was originally launched as a health and nutrition education framework in East Jerusalem in which mothers with paraprofessional training assist their peers and provide support in parenting skills. The Palestinian communities in general suffer from a lack of services in the field of pre-school education and a dramatic shortage of qualified personnel. But it is also the parents who lack important information regarding the upbringing of children. The Mother-to-Mother Program supports them in fulfilling their role adequately.

This program enables mothers to become familiar with the essentials of early childhood development processes. After the training the mothers pass on their newly acquired knowledge to other women in their neighbourhood with the guidance of the Trust’s staff members. The program also strengthens mothers within their social context and encourages them to commit themselves to community work.

Starting from the program’s vision that every child deserves to live in a healthy atmosphere and to be raised by a functional family, the program enables mothers to act as social change agents in their families, hence giving them the opportunity to contribute to decision-making in their child’s education.

Holistic, integrative and modular in nature, the program is implemented in full partnership with the community stakeholders, schools, children and families. The program operates in rural areas and in poverty-stricken cities and neighbourhoods as well as in the Bedouin areas in various sites (Jerusalem, Ramallah, Ramleh and the Negev). Recently, the program was successfully implemented in the German Arab community in Essen.
**BIOGRAPHIES**

**Dr Nadim Karam** is Professor of Health Sciences and Family Medicine at the Faculties of Health Sciences and Medicine at the University of Balamand, Lebanon. He is also Vice President of the University for Health Affairs and Community Development and the Dean of its Faculty of Health Sciences. Dr Karam holds an MD from the American University of Beirut and an MPH from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health (USA). He completed his residency in Family Medicine at Baylor College of Medicine (USA). He has worked in Lebanon, the Arab States Region and internationally in the policy, academic, research and service dimensions of the fields of public health, medicine, education, and development.

After completing her education in Canada and graduating with a BA Honours degree in sociology from York University, **Ms Derya Akalin** began her career in the private sector in Toronto and then in Istanbul, Turkey. Since 2000 she has been actively working in the non-profit sector in Turkey and directing two large foundations that work towards eliminating inequalities in education in Turkey and beyond. As General Manager of ACEV-The Mother Child Education Foundation, she is leading a rapidly growing organization, working extensively in the area of early childhood education, parent training, literacy and women’s empowerment.

Born and still living in Abu-Ghosh, a village in the Jerusalem corridor, **Mr Farid Abu Khtesh** holds a MSW degree in management of social agencies, a Diploma in Social Work, an MSc in Social Work and a BA from the Hebrew University (Israel). Mr Abu Khtesh is the founder and Chairperson of the Trust of Programs for Early Childhood, Family and Community Education, an indigenous, non-profit, developmental agency created in 1984 to improve the quality of life of parents, children and educators through community empowerment programs within Palestinian society in the Palestinian Territories and Israel.

**Dr Julie Hadeed** has been an Early Years Educator/Researcher for over 35 years and is currently the Founder/Director of the Mother Child Home Education Program, MOCEP and the Bahrain Montessori Centre, Institute for Teacher Training and Research in the Kingdom of Bahrain. She also founded the first Montessori pre-school in Kuwait 30 years ago. She has researched and published extensively (in both English and Arabic) on the effects of early childhood education and home intervention in the Middle East. She has been awarded several professional scholarships throughout her career, including at the Harvard Graduate School of Education; Stanford University; the Institute of Poverty at the University of Wisconsin and a Visiting Fellowship at the Institute of Education, and the University of London.

**Moderator: Dr Richard Wilkins**, is the Managing Director of the Doha International Institute for Family Studies and Development. Dr Wilkins served as Chair of the NGO Working Committee of the Doha International Conference for the Family, organizing a series of interdisciplinary meetings on questions of family policy in major cities around the world. Richard G. Wilkins is a Professor of Law and Managing Director of the World Family Policy Center at the J. Reuben Clark Law School at Brigham Young University, Utah. He is also a former Assistant to the Solicitor General, United States Department of Justice.
PANEL 2

Literacy for Health

A visit to any clinic demonstrates how much written communication is used in health care and prevention. Whether it is filling in or reading health records, understanding prescriptions and names of drugs, following the instructions on medicine bottles or writing a note for an employer – literacy is part of working for better health. It is not only the users of health services who need literacy, but also health workers and caregivers. Where literacy levels are low, for instance among women health workers, special programs for them may be advisable.

Some of the most effective literacy learning programs combine the business of learning to read, write and calculate with instruction in health matters. Since the need for literacy in pursuing better health and using clinics is clear, such programs prove more motivating and, above all, more relevant and useful than merely learning literacy skills on their own. Once again, it is important to consider the local context. The choice of language(s) for literacy will be especially significant, as learners may need to learn literacy in their own language before learning in the language of the instructions on medicine packages. Health and literacy learning for women and men may need different approaches and content.
Basic Education Program for Adults

Caritas Egypt

Program Highlights:
Country: Egypt
Starting year: 1972
Outreach: approximately 20,000 per year
Target Population: mainly illiterate women

Brief Description
The program is implemented in deprived areas of the Cairo and Giza governorates and caters for 20,000 participants per year, out of whom 85% are women. It focuses on teaching adults to analyze and resolve their problems of daily life through literacy, dialogue and problem-solving.

Cultural and social activities are an integral part of the program as they are the tools used to involve the students in their community problems, especially during the post-literacy phase of the program and their involvement in community-based activities through village libraries.

The program uses a student-centred approach so that the beneficiaries are not only active participants during the class sessions but also trained emissaries to their communities. The program's motto is 'Learning for Action' and its activities extend beyond the scope of the class.

The program includes strong environment and health awareness components in its literacy sessions. The health program has been developed to respond systematically to the needs of the participants and their communities. It has four principal components:
1) general hygiene
2) nutrition
3) reproductive health
4) health and the environment.

Each year, more than eighteen thousand people benefit from Caritas Egypt's literacy program which covers more than two hundred villages in the most remote areas of the country. Approximately ninety percent of the students are literate at the end of the training cycle. Moreover, on average two thousand youth graduates, who successfully pass the government's literacy exam, are permitted to enrol each year in the formal education system.

Reach Out and Read

Reach Out and Read National Centre, USA

Program Highlights:
Country: USA
Starting year: 1989
Outreach: approximately 2.6 million children per year
Target Population: Low-income children from 6 months to 5 years old, and their families
Website: www.reachoutandread.org

Brief Description
Children in poverty are at high risk of school failure and reading failure, in part because they have not grown up with books or exposure to basic literacy. By the time children arrive at school entry, marked discrepancies already exist, since the early years of life are critical in terms of brain development, stimulation, language, and literacy. However, many of the children most at risk are not enrolled in literacy programs during those crucial early years.

The Reach Out and Read Program (ROR) is a successful and evidence-based model for promoting early literacy in the setting in which primary health care is delivered to infants and young children, especially children in poverty. ROR works through clinics, hospitals, medical practice – any setting that provides basic health care, immunizations, and guidance to young children and their mothers by training paediatricians, nurses, and other health care workers. By this method, ROR offers literacy guidance to mothers of young children, and provides children's books so that the mothers can follow the guidance. As children are brought to health care visits many times during the first years of life, this allows ROR to reach almost all young children at risk, and their mothers well before schools or even most early childhood programs can reach this population.

The child is given a developmentally appropriate book at every check-up from 6 months through 5 years of age, thus integrating literacy promotion and books into the visits when most immunizations are given. A special focus is placed on children growing up in poverty, who are at high risk for reading problems and school failure.

There is accumulated evidence that this model is effective; studies show that with ROR, parents read to their children more frequently, that both parents and young children have more positive attitudes toward books and reading, and most importantly, starting at the age of 18 months, children participating in ROR have significantly improved expressive and receptive language skills.

In the United States, the program has been replicated successfully. It has grown from a single program in a single clinic to 3,105 sites and now serves 2.6 million children every year.
Sahjani Shiksha Kendra

NIRANTAR- A Centre for Gender and Education, India

Program Highlights:
Country: India
Starting year: 2002
Outreach: approximately 500 per year
Target Population: women and girls

Brief Description
Sahjani Shiksha Kendra (sahjani in the local language means one who helps women) is an innovative program that aims at empowering women and adolescent girls through literacy and education. The literacy and educational process is holistic, rooted in the lived realities of the women participants, and enables them to develop analytical and leadership skills. Awareness and action on gender, development and health are key components of the program.

The literacy teaching-learning process focuses on health and gender issues, for which a primer has been developed as well as a curriculum for structured learning health education sessions. Different dimensions of health and gender issues are integral to all the projects activities which include residential literacy camps, village level education centres, village level camps, production of a newsletter involving neo-literate women.

The program is operational in 30 villages in Lalitpur district in the North Indian state of Uttar Pradesh. Lalitpur District is classified as one of the 200 poorest districts in India. The program reaches out to the poorest women, and focuses on the dalit community (the community at the lowest end of the caste hierarchy) and presently reaches nearly 500 women per year through its different activities. The learning which emerges from the program and other educational material is disseminated at a wider level.

BIOGRAPHIES

Mr Salah Sabri Sebeh received a degree in linguistics from the Faculty of Arts at Cairo University in 1967. Since then, he has been an active volunteer in literacy activities in Egypt. He was employed as a librarian at the Egyptian National Library from 1968 until 1991. He collaborated in the development of the Egyptian literacy curriculum known as “Learn to be Free” which was inspired by Paolo Freire’s methodology. For the past 14 years, he has been the Director of the Basic Education Program for Adults at Caritas Egypt.

Ms Malini Ghose is one of the founder-members and trustees of Nirantar, a resource centre for gender and education in New Delhi (India). She has worked in the field of education and women’s rights for over 15 years in various capacities – as a grassroots practitioner, trainer, material and curriculum developer, researcher and activist. She has helped design and implemented various innovative education programs for women with other grassroots organizations and government programs. She has reviewed and provided technical inputs to several women’s education, empowerment and mainstream education programs. Her work has involved advocacy on education and women’s rights issues in both national and international forums. She is actively involved in the women’s movement in India. Ms Ghose has an M.A. in Political Science from the New School for Social Research, New York and a B.A.

President and Medical Director of the Reach Out and Read National Center (USA), Dr Perri Klass is Professor of Journalism and Pediatrics at New York University. She has practiced primary care pediatrics in Boston and in New York City for more than 12 years, working mostly with poor urban families; her subspecialty is pediatric infectious diseases and international medicine. Through her role at Reach Out and Read, Dr Klass has helped to replicate a model for literacy promotion in clinics, health centers and hospitals. She has participated in research on the effects of literacy promotion in health care, and has worked to develop and maintain high quality standards for Reach Out and Read programs, and she has herself trained pediatricians, nurses, and clinic workers around the United States in how to integrate books and literacy into routine pediatric care.

Moderator: Dr Ramadan Hamed Mohamed, is Professor of Statistics at the Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University, Egypt. In addition, he is a research professor at the Social Research Center, American University in Cairo.

Dr Ramadan holds a PhD Degree from Cairo University in Statistics. He has experience in the design, supervision and analysis of large scale surveys. Dimensions of these surveys include population, literacy, health, environment, investment and others.
PANEL 3

Creating a Literate Environment

What reading material for neo-literates?

Research shows that literacy rates improve when learners have access to reading materials. In many developing countries, however, there is a dearth of reading materials resulting in a lack of a reading culture. Newspapers, books, and even posters are rare, and one of the few places where individuals come into contact with words in written form is textbooks found in the classroom, thus excluding out-of-school youth and adults from any sort of literate environment in such communities. The panel aims at exploring the various aspects related to reading promotion in the Arab States region.

Despite the efforts deployed in the provision of training in literacy, frequently there are no books available either in official and indigenous languages, since publishing capacity even in the dominant languages is lacking. The availability of such reading material presupposes not only publishing facilities and the existence of a book chain, but it also implies publishing strategies and public policies promoting reading for all.

Materials written within literacy programs over many years remain unpublished and undistributed. Often, the publishing industry and the book chain do not consider neo-literates as part of their public; although they do publish for newly literate children in school, they tend to neglect neo-literate youth and adults coming from disadvantaged milieus. As regards content, research points out that successful materials are often those which reflect local culture-especially when published in local languages. The links between reading in school, at home and in the wider community are a further factor in promoting reading.
Literacy through Poetry Project, Yemen

Social Fund for Development, Sanaa (SFD)
World Bank Culture and Poverty Unit

Program Highlights
Country: Yemen
Pilot Dates: August 2002 - December 2003
Outreach: 154 learners in 9 classes completed the course
Target Population: Adult women interested in acquiring literacy skills
Website: www.ahjur.org/adra.html

Brief Description
Literacy through Poetry was designed for rural women in Yemen who want to learn to read and write but are not interested in a basic education curriculum. It explores potential links between traditional arts and effective learning strategies by utilizing learners’ own oral poetic traditions to teach literacy skills. Including poetry not only affirms intangible heritage; it develops critical thinking skills. The pilot addresses the questions:
1. will a focus on oral traditions encourage women to attend literacy classes?
2. will affirming their traditional voice empower women?

Adapting a Freirean and community literature approach, texts were created from classroom discussion and poetry and proverbs generated in class. Texts, written on large pieces of paper, were pasted on the wall and reproduced in large type. At the end of the course, each learner received a bound collection of the texts generated in her class, a “book” that she helped compose. Outcomes surpassed expectations. Drop-out rates were low, at 19% and 26%; 72% of learners in the first 5 classes could read and write new material, 37% fluently and 35% by sounding out words; 63% of learners in the second phase, which met for only 6 months, could read and write new material.

Empowerment indicators included greater respect shown to learners by their family members and increased community interest in the education of adult women. Learners developed a new interest in their children’s education and actively participated in national elections. In two communities, they initiated health interventions. A positive indicator in regard to the feasibility of the pilot is its participatory component: the training of new teachers for Phase 2 of the pilot was conducted entirely by local trainers.

This project was listed as an example of best practice in the World Bank’s Beijing +10 report and chosen by The Centre of Arab Women for Training and Research as one of 15 model development projects that promote women’s empowerment.

Encouraging Youth to Read, Write, and Dialogue

Tamer Institute for Community Education, Palestinian Territories

Program Highlights:
Country: Palestinian Territories
Starting year: 1989
Outreach: approximately 700,000 children and families to date
Target Population: Children and young adults
Website: www.tamerinst.org

Brief Description
The Tamer Institute for Community Education is an educational non-governmental non-profit organization established in 1989 as a response to urgent needs in the Palestinian community. Its strategy is based on the conviction that the process of building civil society in the Palestinian Territories requires the active participation of the community in creating its welfare at each and every level. This may occur in experimental and innovative ways according to the means available. However, community education cannot take place without community action which stems from people’s efforts to find solutions or change a given situation.

Tamer’s strategy translates the basic philosophy of the Institute, which states that learning environments can only be created amongst youth who are encouraged to read, write, and dialogue while working in small groups united by a common dream and joint aspirations.

The Institute’s mission is achieved through encouraging reading, writing, dialogue and voluntary work amongst youth working within small groups involved in community action held together by a common objective with a tangible end product. The Institute develops the specific objective and end product through its various projects and activities, in which youth are invited to participate, each according to his/her interests and needs. The youth groups formed around the projects are then the main target group who are offered guidance and training in various issues that contribute to building their personality on the social, emotional, and intellectual levels.
Dr Najwa Adra, is a cultural anthropologist specializing in Yemen and the Middle East. Between 1999 and 2004, Dr Adra initiated and piloted the “Literacy through Poetry” project (Yemen) through which adult women learned literacy skills using their own oral poetry and proverbs as text. Currently administered by the Social Fund for Development, this project has been chosen as an example of best practice in the World Bank’s Beijing +10 Report and by CAWTAR, Tunis. Dr Adra has served as development consultant on projects for rural women, agricultural extension, migration and informal legal systems. She has a long-standing interest in intangible heritage, especially in the dances of the Arabian Peninsula.


Ms Renad Qubbaj served as the Program Officer for the Palestinian NGOs Network (PNGO) between 1998-2006. She is General Director of Tamer Institute for Community Education, Ramallah, Palestinian Territories. Ms Qubbaj obtained her BA and MA in physics from Western Michigan University in the United States. She is an active member and volunteer in a number of community organizations. She serves in the Board of Trustees for Watan TV – The largest Palestinian community television. She presented a number of papers in the various fields of education, youth and civil society in local and international conferences.

Moderator: Clinton Robinson, from the UK, joined UNESCO in 2005 as a Senior Program Specialist with the Division for the Coordination of UN Priorities in Education, with a focus on Education for All and literacy. His previous work with an NGO (SIL International) and as an independent consultant focused on non-formal education, adult learning and literacy, as well as on questions of multilingualism and rural development. With degrees from Oxford (UK), the Sorbonne (Paris) and Reading (UK), he has published on education, language issues and rural development. His career has taken him to many countries of Africa and Asia, including ten years in Cameroon where he engaged in community work and directed NGO projects nationally. His current duties include strategic planning in the EFA movement and technical support to the UN Literacy Decade.
Literacy for Economic Self-Sufficiency

Literacy is not the only condition for productive work and becoming economically self-sufficient – but it is a tool in many kinds of work and frequently a path to better work or formal employment. Since literacy is the key to further learning, any job training or vocational program will require adequate levels of literacy. However, literacy is an essential tool not only for formal jobs, but also for cooperative schemes among farmers, fishermen or small traders. Women in self-help groups and savings clubs need to keep records and detailed accounts of receipts and payments.

In the wider economy, computers are used today in many jobs where previously literacy demands were minimal. Familiarity with spreadsheets, databases and invoicing programs is now often part of what literacy means for workers in stores, offices or warehouses. This means training not only in basic reading and writing, but also in manipulating text on the screen, in handling charts and sets of data. Such training may also require some knowledge of another language, possibly with a quite different script. Economic self-sufficiency often requires multiple literacies – not only in society at large, but from the individual.
Building Literacy in Sudan with SOLO Press (BLSP)

Sudan Open Learning Organisation, Sudan

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Sudan
- **Starting year:** 2000
- **Outreach:** approximately 8,100 directly and 32,400 indirectly
- **Target Population:** Neo-literates, school drop-outs, illiterates, disadvantaged women in war-affected and rural areas

**Brief Description**
The Sudan Open Learning Organisation (SOLO) became a fully independent NGO in 1997 and remains the only NGO in Sudan focusing on delivering training using distance, open and non-formal education methods.

SOLO’s Building Literacy Program (Bina Algiraea) is a post-literacy program based on open participatory learning methodologies. It aims at keeping neo-literates from relapsing into illiteracy by providing them with an opportunity to sustain their writing skills. The program is based on the Discuss, Write and Do (DWD) methodology, which encourages learners to write about issues that concern them directly. With the support of facilitators, learners write about subjects that are related to their community. These range from traditional songs and proverbs, to issues on health, sanitation and water. The writings then become material for reading and discussion within the learning circles. BLSP takes it even further by encouraging the learners to edit their work which is then published, thanks to SOLO Printing Press, in the form of booklets and magazines distributed both at the local and national level.

The Bina Algiraea has integrated income-generation as a part of the methodology; it is part of the Bina Algiraea training manual and hence is an integral part of the community liaison worker’s training. Income-generation training, which includes business planning and management, is thus passed onto the circle’s participants and SOLO often provides small grants for income-generation.

Today, SOLO supervises 110 Bina Algiraea circles in four states (Khartoum State, South Kordofan State, Gezira State and Kassala State) which are run by a trained community liaison worker.

Non-formal Education – Educating Drop-Outs

Questscope for Social Development in the Middle East, Jordan

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Jordan
- **Starting year:** 2005
- **Outreach:** approximately 280 children per year
- **Target Population:** Drop-out children (age 13-18 for males, 13-20 for females)
- **Website:** www.questscope.net

**Brief Description**
There are about 150,000 marginalised children aged 13-18 in Jordan. Their daily lives are characterised by the need to earn an income, exposure to dysfunctional families, violence and neglect, or repeated absences from school. The failure of institutions and individuals, whose role is to protect these children and provide them with solutions, to take action has led to even greater vulnerability.

The Non-Formal Education (NFE) program uses dialogue as the guide to expand children’s opportunities and reintegrate them back into mainstream society. The Participatory Education approach, built on Paolo Freire’s Street Education methodology, helps to create a friendly classroom environment which attracts drop-outs. Specialized activities and sessions aim to rebuild children’s knowledge and attitudes, which open them up to new opportunities. The skills they learn are vocationally oriented and help marginalized children and youth to reach new levels of social and economic responsibility. One of the main features of the NFE program is a directed effort to enable children and youth to change their attitudes and their ethics. As children learn to constructively communicate with others, the people surrounding them are positively influenced as well; facilitators are more patient with children, the family is more accepting, and the community is more open.

The program aims to develop highly participatory environments that emphasize the educational rights of marginalised children in the Department of Non-Formal Education in the Ministry of Education (MoED), in schools and neighbourhood catchments areas, and in a national governmental organization for vocational training.

Upon completion of the program, the graduate receives a certificate which enables him/her to participate in further specialized educational programs of their choice in Jordan’s Vocational Training Corporation, and then apply for credit to start their own small business.
**Douars (villages) Integrated Development**

**Zakoura Education Foundation, Morocco**

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Morocco
- **Starting Year:** 2001
- **Outreach:** approximately 1000 women, children and youth per year
- **Target Population:** children aged 8-16 years (drop-outs or children who have never attended school), women and young girls (16 and above), youth 16-25 years
- **Website:** www.zakoura-education.org

**Brief Description**
The Douars Integrated Development (DID) is the most comprehensive program of the Zakoura Education Foundation. Running over 39 months, it strives to raise the educational levels of the different population categories of the douar (village) through:
1) non-formal education for children aged 8-16, who have dropped out or have never attended school
2) adult literacy classes
3) awareness-raising on issues of health and hygiene for the women and young girls
4) vocational workshops for youth (above 16)

Its long-term objective is to render the community more autonomous by providing them with the means to lead their own development through educational, professional and economic programs that correspond to their needs.

The DID also aims at meeting the needs of the community for economic self-sufficiency. To this end, a micro-credit scheme is available for adults who have skills but not the access to loans from banks, or other traditional finance channels, to develop it. This component of the program is run by Zakoura Microcredit Foundation, a financially independent sister organization.

The literacy classes of the Foundation are designed on the basis of the contents of the official textbooks published by the State Secretariat for literacy and non-formal education.

The DID program is currently implemented in 12 sites in the provinces of Larache and Tétouan of Morocco. Six new sites are foreseen for 2007 in the provinces of Mohammedia and Sidi Kacem.

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**Literacy and Vocational Training**

**Qatari-Mauritanian Institution for Social Development, Mauritania**

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Mauritania
- **Starting Year:** 2006
- **Outreach:** approximately 3,500 per year
- **Target Population:** Poor and illiterate populations of South and South-East Mauritania

**Brief Description**
Inaugurated by Her Her Highness Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Misned, the Consort of the Emir of the State of Qatar and UNESCO Special Envoy for Basic and Higher Education, the Qatari-Mauritanian Institute was established in order to provide an infrastructure to efficiently combat illiteracy and reduce poverty. The program targets the most remote areas, where poverty levels can sometimes be as high as 70%. It is also within poorer areas that illiteracy levels are at their highest.

A first component of the program aims at developing the reading and writing skills of the beneficiaries through basic learning which is then followed by vocational training. The second component, which strives to answer the economic needs of the learners, is a micro-credit scheme. Small loans are offered to the beneficiaries in order to help them start their own business.

The reading materials used follow both the adult learning curriculum of Mauritania as well as materials which has been specifically developed in order to meet the needs of the beneficiaries.

The program operates in the most remote towns and villages of Mauritania, delivering up to 180 literacy classes.
Ms Rashida Abdel Mutalib, Director, Sudan Open Learning Organization, is a graduate of the University of Khartoum, Faculty of Arts. She also completed a diploma in Community Development (Egypt), a diploma in Distance Education (UK) and a higher diploma in Management (Japan). Before joining the Sudan Open Learning Organization (SOLO) as the Deputy Director and then Director, she worked at the Ministry of Social Welfare where she held the position of Director-General.

Mrs Mutalib contributed to several conferences, seminars and workshops at national and international levels. She participated and supervised several researches in the different fields of Social Development such as «Street Children» and the «Impact of Rahad Scheme on the Life of the People in the Area». She has published several works in the field of Women Studies, Social Development, Adult Education and Distance Education She greatly contributed to the development of the Building Literacy with SOLO Press methodology.

Curtis N. Rhodes, Jr., PhD, was born and raised in the United States of America. He completed a BS at Michigan State University (1971), an MPH at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1976), and MS (1978) and PhD (1980) degrees at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. He has resided in the Middle East (Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Cyprus and Jordan) since 1981. Dr Rhodes is the founder and President/International Director of Questscope, an international non-governmental organization for social development based in Amman (Jordan). He has conducted programs in the Middle East for disadvantaged women and youth for almost twenty years. He is an advisor to HM Queen Rania Al Abdullah on the Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee of the National Council for Family Affairs.

Ms Mounia Benchekroun holds a post-graduate diploma in 'Financial Markets, Raw Materials, and Market and Business Management’. She began her career in Paris at the Banque Française du Commerce Extérieur and then worked at the French Futures Exchange. Returning to Morocco in 1995, she helped found and manage the Dépositaire Central des titres au Maroc (MAROCLEAR). From 2001-2004, she was the program manager for Société Générale Marocaine de Banques, a subsidiary of Société Générale. In September 2005, Ms Benchekroun decided to shift gears to the world of development by becoming Director-General of the Zakoura Education Foundation and an advisor to the president of the Zakoura Microcredit Foundation.

Dr Rabia Kerbazi was born in Tlemcen in Algeria. She studied law at the University of Oran and has various education diplomas. As well as being a professor, Dr Rabia was Editor-in-Chief of El-Djazaira magazine and is an advocate of women’s rights; from 1986-1993 she was National Secretary of the Algerian Women’s Society. Dr Rabia entered into politics, first being a Member of Parliament and then the Minister of Solidarity and Family from 1996-2000. From 2000 to the present, Dr Rabia has been an advisor to the Office of Her Highness Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser al Missned.

His Excellency, Ali Zainal, was born in Doha, Qatar. He holds a BA in Literature. Ali Zainal started his career in 1988 as a French teacher for the Education Ministry, following which he was promoted to French Inspector and then a member of the Board of Directors of the Language Institute of Qatar. In 1995, he joined the Ministry of Education Selection Committee for French teachers before moving to the University of Qatar in 1997 to teach French. From 1997 to 2001 he served as a member of the Qatar Examinations Board and in 1998 was made a Knight in the Order of Academic Palms by the French Government.

HE Ali Zainal is the current Permanent Delegate of the State of Qatar to UNESCO.

Moderator: Dr Adama Ouane is Director of the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). In 1976, he received his Ph.D in applied linguistics from the Institute of Linguistics at the Moscow Academy of Sciences. From 1977 to 1982 he was the Deputy National Director-General for Literacy and applied Linguistics in Mali, Professor at the École Normale Supérieure (ENS) in Bamako and Consultant to UNICEF, UNDR, the Agence de la Francophonie and the World Bank. He served as a Senior Research Specialist from 1982 to 1995 with UNESCO Institute for Education, working in the area of literacy, post-literacy, curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation.

Dr Ouane has published many books and papers in the fields of literacy, education, learning, mother tongue and multilingual education. He was the Director of the UNESCO Institute for Education (UIE) from 2000 until its transformation into the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning (UIL). From 1995 to 1999 he was a Senior Program Specialist at UNESCO Headquarters. He was the main author of the major UNESCO education reports and a key organizer of the Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (CONFINTEA V).
Computers, internet, TV, video and DVD, mobile phones – these are some of the information and communication technologies (ICTs) which have become widespread in our daily lives. More and more people have access to ICTs, either as passive viewers or as active users. These technologies have changed what we mean by literacy. No longer is it just about the printed page or the handwritten note, but about vast amounts of information, of e-mail and text messaging, and of instant images from around the world. It is becoming increasingly urgent that literacy programs give instruction in using ICTs as well as maintaining a focus on basic reading and writing. As these technologies give access to jobs and new knowledge, without literacy it is impossible to benefit from them or to use them for personal advantage.

Computers and the internet give a chance not only to read and look at what others have produced, but enable everyone to produce their own messages and images – to let the world know about their culture and to express their ideas in their own or other languages. How far does literacy training emphasise active use of these media? What kind of training would best enable people to use these media for their own purposes? ICTs offer huge opportunities to those who can access them – but they also challenge the accepted way of learning and teaching literacy.
Project in Support of the National Initiative to Combat Illiteracy

Ministry of Literacy, Islamic Affairs, & Original Education, Mauritania

Program Highlights:
Country: Mauritania
Starting year: 2002-2005 (first phase) /2005-2008 (second phase)
Outreach: approximately 6,200 per year
Target Population: Adult illiterates (over 16 years), mostly women

Brief Description
The distance education by radio project in Mauritania is a clear example of successful replication. The program was initially developed by the Spanish NGO Fondation Radio Ecca to combat illiteracy in the Canary Islands (Spain). It has been implemented by the Mauritanian Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Original Education and Literacy, having been adapted to the needs of the country, and has now been fully integrated into the national plan to eradicate illiteracy.

The majority of the learners are women. The main advantage of the radio distance program is that it makes participation easier since learners are not required to leave their homes other than once a week. The weekly encounter with the other learners and facilitators allows them to discuss with fellow learners, ask questions and apply new knowledge.

The lessons are based on the interests and needs of the learners, drawing from their daily lives and cultural background to help them develop their reading and writing skills. These interests are also the focus of the weekly discussions, leading to greater awareness of their surroundings and helping each one to gain greater independence and autonomy. Finally, it develops their analytical and critical thinking and their desire to evolve and bring about change.

Close and careful monitoring of the learners is another key component of the program and a strong element of its success, as it offers a better insight on the reality of the everyday lives of the learners. It also makes it easier to identify their personal objectives and to find ways to motivate them to stay in the classes.

From Illiteracy to Computer Literacy (Teaching and Learning Using Information Technology)

Electrical and Computer Engineering Department, Faculty of Engineering and Architecture, American University of Beirut, Lebanon

Program Highlights:
Country: Lebanon
Started: 2006
Target Population: Adult illiterates

Brief Description
One of the challenges faced when combating illiteracy is finding a sufficient number of qualified teachers and facilitators to deliver the literacy programs. The use of ICT-based programs offers a means to overcome this lack in human resources. It also provides a means to speed up the learning process and to increase its effectiveness while at the same time bridging the “digital divide” by moving the learner from illiteracy directly to computer literacy.

The educational model is based on the initiative of the National Committee for Literacy (NCL) of the Lebanese Ministry of Social Affairs. This is composed of two programs for educating adults, one targeting the working class who cannot pursue daily tutoring. The second is a program divided into three levels, each conveyed in 160 hours of instruction over 9 months, roughly averaging 5 hours per week.

These programs all have accompanying textbooks, workbooks and instructor’s manuals.

ECE’s ICT-based program aims at teaching illiterate users how to read, write and compute in an interactive way through the use of images, sounds and text. The user learns by seeing images, hearing sounds, speaking words into a microphone, writing letters and words on a writing pad, a touch screen, or a tablet PC.

The novelty of the approach is to use information technologies to provide an educational model that not only reaches more people and moves them faster towards literacy, but also familiarizes them with technology. Thus, by becoming literate, learners also become computer literate and have access to a large array of information.
ICT Literacy for Women Empowerment

The Supreme Council for ICT in partnership with the Supreme Council for Family Affairs, Qatar

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Qatar
- **Outreach:** approx. 2,000 per year
- **Target Population:** Unemployed women over 18 years old

**Brief Description**
A significant number of Qatari women (especially those residing outside of Doha) are staying at home, either by choice or by lack of work opportunities. There is a need to reach out to this important section of the population in order to empower them socially (becoming resourceful and knowledgeable citizens) as well as to provide them with the means to improve their socio-economic status.

The program aims to equip women with essential ICT skills, knowledge and certificates. It strives to empower women in Qatar by providing them with tools for socio-economic development, while at the same time disseminating ICT literacy among the Qatari population.

The curriculum is developed in partnership with the ICDL-GCC Foundation, the certifying agency. Recruitment and logistics are carried out by the Supreme Council for Family Affairs.

ICDL certification is an internationally recognised standard that will increase the workplace eligibility of the women. They will also receive e-Citizen training, which will allow them to access social and health consultation services, communicate with relevant communities and take part in societal development.

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ICT4 Illiteracy Eradication

Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT), Supreme Council for Women, Adult Education Agency (AEA), Egypt

**Program Highlights:**
- **Country:** Egypt
- **Starting year:** 2004
- **Outreach:** approximately 20,000 per year
- **Target Population:** Younger illiterates in urban areas, with a focus on women

**Brief Description**
The lack of motivation amongst younger illiterates to join traditional literacy programs constitutes a major challenge for literacy programs in Egypt, where the number of illiterates aged 15-25 years living in urban areas is about 2.5 million. Although most hold jobs and earn a decent living, they do not have the tools to advance in a world that is increasingly dominated by technology.

ICT4 Illiteracy Eradication strives to attract this population of younger illiterates. It constitutes a major tool for narrowing the digital divide and for empowering the new literates of the digital age by providing them with the computer skills needed to access better jobs in the growing sector of ICTs.

The program relies on the national curriculum for literacy, which it uses as a basis for the creation of a computer-based program presenting a higher degree of interactivity. Initially, the program offers computer games that are more attractive to the learners and which make it easier to tackle the technology barrier. Another component of the program is the computer moderator which facilitates the educational processes by minimising interventions. Finally, the ICT4 Illiteracy Eradication takes advantage of existing technology clubs, such as the public KIOSKS, established by the Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (MCIT). Each club has a computer lab equipped with approximately 10 computers, with a 1:2 computer-to-learner ratio.

The program has a duration of 7 months, with the first four months focusing on reading and numeracy skills and the last three months concentrating on writing skills.
Ms Khadijetou Cheikh Mohamed El Mamy is the Director of Planning and Statistics and Cooperation since 2003 in the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Basic Education and the Fight against Illiteracy (Ministère des Affaires islamiques et de l'enseignement originsel, et de la lutte contre l'analphabétisme) of Mauritania. She has over 20 years of experience in personnel and program management. Ms El Mamy has spent three years adapting a radio literacy program developed by Radio Ecca, an NGO from the Canary Islands, to local needs in Mauritania.

Dr Mohamad Adnan Al-Alaoui, Chair, IEEE Lebanon Section, is Professor of the ECE Department, American University of Beirut, Lebanon. Dr Mohamad Adnan Al-Alaoui received a BS degree in mathematics from Eastern Michigan University of Ypsilanti, Michigan in 1963, a BSEE degree from Wayne State University of Detroit, Michigan in 1965, a MSEE and PhD degrees in Electrical Engineering from the Georgia Institute of Technology of Atlanta, Georgia, in 1968 and 1974 respectively. Since 1977, Dr Al-Alaoui served as an Assistant Professor and Associate Professor in various universities. Since 1988, he has been Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) at the American University of Beirut (AUB). He served as the Chair of the ECE Department at AUB from 2001-2003. His research interests are in Neural Networks and their applications and in Analogue and Digital Signal and Image Processing and their applications in Instrumentation, Communications and Controls. He was awarded the First Research Award in Engineering for 1989-1990 by the American University of Beirut. He is currently a Visiting Scholar at UCLA.

Dr Raafat Radwan is currently the Managing Director of Adult Education Agency in Egypt (AEA). He is a member of the Shura Council (Upper House of Representatives) and a member of the Supreme Council for policies in the ruling party (The National Democratic Party). He is also the Co-Chair of the G-8 BMENA Task Force as well as the Co-Chair of the Literacy Working Group. Dr Radwan gained his PhD in Management of Information Systems from Claremont Graduate School USA. He is one of the founders of the ICT program in Egypt.

Dr Mohamed Al-Ansari is the Manager of the e-Education department at the Supreme Council of Information and Communication Technology (ictQATAR). He is specialized in information and communication technology (ICT) in learning and training, planning and designing initiatives, as well as ICT for organizational learning and development.

He has a PhD degree in Education and ICT, a Masters degree in Instructional Design, and a Bachelor of Science and Education.

Dr Al Ansari was previously the Director of the Office of Curriculum Standards at the Education Institute of the Supreme Education Council. Prior to joining the Supreme Education Council, Dr. Al-Ansari was the Office Director of the Minister of Education where he played a key role in policy development and program direction.

Moderator: Dr Raj Reddy is the Mozah Bint Nasser University Professor of Computer Science and Robotics in the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University. He served as the founding Director of the Robotics Institute from 1979 to 1991 and the Dean of School of Computer Science from 1991 to 1999. He began his academic career as an Assistant Professor at Stanford in 1966. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was president of the American Association for Artificial Intelligence from 1987 to 1989. Dr Reddy served as co-chair of the President's Information Technology Advisory Committee (PITAC) from 1999 to 2001 under Presidents Clinton and Bush.

Dr Reddy’s research interests include the study of human-computer interaction and artificial intelligence. His current research interests include Million Book Digital Library Project; a Multifunction Information Appliance that can be used by the uneducated; Fiber To The Village Project; Mobile Autonomous Robots; and Learning by Doing.
MEDIA LITERACY

Multiple kinds of media impact our lives every day, both individually and as a society. There are two major reasons for this. First, computers play a big role, with their capacity for creating and transmitting text and image, and for displaying and manipulating information. Second, mass media have a large impact, particularly television, but also video/DVD, the internet, video games and print. Understanding, using and evaluating these media are what media literacy is about.

This panel will explore the dimensions of media literacy in the Arab States Region, focusing on six key aspects:
• Role and use of media in society: media can enable people to participate more in society by being better informed, but much depends on who produces the content and the means of transmission.
• Promoting media literacy in society: different social groups have varied attitudes to media and different ways of critiquing and analysing them.
• Teaching media literacy: what do teachers and educators need to know to help young people understand and evaluate the media?
• Promotion of print literacy and communication skills through media literacy: how does media literacy promote literacy and communication skills?
• Influence of global media on the identity of youth in the region: access to global media is easy, whether through television or the internet, but what is the effect on the identity of youth in the Arab States Region?
• Arab contributions to global media literacy: new images and messages are transmitted from the region to the rest of the world, using mass media. The impact may be felt far away or close to home.
1. Richard Gizbert Al Jazeera

Programs like Listening Post depend on media literacy. The arrival of Al Jazeera in 1996 made people in the region much more media savvy. In the west, particularly in the US, 9/11 and the reporting that followed have made news consumers much better informed, much more wary, of where their news is coming from and which corporate affiliations come into play in the reporting. Broadcasters rely more and more on feedback from viewers, who can contact organizations like Al Jazeera through webcams or web-delivered video, to tell programs what they think of how news is reported to them.

The relatively low levels of internet connectivity in the Arab world impact on broadcasting in the region. Soliciting opinion from the Middle East or North Africa can be akin to fishing in a relatively shallow pool as a result of the lack of connectivity. So a disproportionate amount of the feedback coming into the shows like Listening Post comes from English speakers for whom seeing things on the net or television, and feeding back through the net is easier. But that is changing slowly.

The presentation will consider how the growth of media literacy will impact upon the Arab region. As media literacy grows, as levels of connectivity rise, the implications for a region where governments have traditionally kept a tight lid on expression are enormous. Once access becomes easier, the ability of people in the Arab world to produce and communicate through various kinds of media will almost certainly grow sharply. It will be much harder for governments to control expression.

2. Dr Magda Abu Fadil: Media Literacy: A Tool to Combat Stereotypes and to Promote Intercultural Understanding

Media literacy and awareness have long been neglected in the Arab world, often leading to unfavourable consequences and exacerbating a volatile situation spawned by political, economic and social unrest. Media literacy as a subject is rarely taught in schools in any organized way and is often couched in vague terminology within university courses that fail to address the raison d’être of mass communication tools, their financial support systems and the various influences that could transform them into weapons of mass deception. The very concept of critical thinking that underpins media literacy seems alien to young people weaned on a steady diet of rote learning.

The presentation attempts to examine how traditional and new media in the Arab world help shape young people’s ideas and beliefs and what actions may result from them. It will further analyze the influence of news reporting, the adoption/adaptation of popular cultural trends, access to/interaction with mass/personalized media forms, and the assertion or rejection of Arab identity in an increasingly confusing globalized and cacophonous world. It also examines how media professionals (journalists and others) are educated and trained and whether university and post-graduate programs are producing media literate operatives.

In conclusion, it provides recommendations on how to rectify the situation by offering practical guidelines for overcoming media illiteracy by setting up programs in educational institutions, and, hopefully, bridging the so-called cultural divide frequently sparked by the dissemination of negative, stereotypical and misinformed messages in various print, broadcast, online, graphic and interactive forms.
3. Professor Renee Hobbs:

Approaches To Instruction And Teacher Education In Media Literacy

As adolescents all over the world now spend more and more time consuming television, using the Internet, listening to popular music, and playing videogames, there have been a number of educational interventions designed to promote critical thinking about media consumption. This presentation will introduce the concept of media literacy, the process of critically analyzing mass media and popular culture and learning to use tools of digital technology for self-expression, communication and advocacy.

Media literacy occurs in both formal and informal settings, and the presentation will outline how educators conceptualize this topic and review various professional development approaches used to develop educators’ knowledge and skills. It will review some of the most typical instructional approaches used to teach media literacy and review the growing body of literature that points to the benefits of incorporating media literacy within a balanced literacy program for adolescents.

The presentation will also consider how media literacy may support the critical thinking skills that are increasingly essential in an era where user-generated content is beginning to rise in prominence.

Internet users are beginning to reflect on the mechanisms of representation of the world implicit in Internet technology and content.

and the subtle ways in which these mechanisms both amplify and reduce personal control. This new work will be important in both developed and developing nations where the Internet is rapidly becoming a dominant communications medium. By helping all forms of technology usage and media consumption experiences to be more active, reflective and thoughtful, media literacy may contribute to global literacy in the 21st century.

Moderator: Wadah Khanfar, General Manager Al Jazeera Network.

BIographies

Richard Gizbert currently works for Al Jazeera English. He has a long and eminent career as a foreign correspondent covering many parts of the globe. He spent 11 years with the American network, ABC, as a London-based foreign correspondent, covering the former Yugoslavia, Chechnya, Somalia and Rwanda. Richard also has extensive experience in the Middle East and Western Europe. Previously he worked as a correspondent-producer for CJOH-TV in Ottawa, where he produced in-depth features for Sunday Edition, the national current affairs program. Prior to that, he was CJOH’s parliamentary correspondent for five years, responsible for national political coverage. For his reporting of a bus hostage situation on Parliament Hill, he received the National Award for Breaking News Coverage.

Dr Magda Abu Fadil is Director of the Institute for Professional Journalists at the Lebanese American University. She has 25 years of experience at international news agencies such as Agence France-Presse, United Press International; newspapers such as Asharq Al-Awsat, Al Riyadh and Defense News; and, magazines such as The Middle East and Events. She taught journalism at the American University in Washington, DC where she obtained a BA and MA in Communication and Multimedia; she was also the coordinator of the Journalism program at the Lebanese American University for six years. Dr Abu Fadil has conducted seminars and workshops for professional journalists at the Washington-based International Center for Journalists and at LAU and has worked closely with the International Press Institute, UNESCO, Open Society Institute, USAID, Heinrich Böll Foundation, International Media Support, Olof Palme Center and Swedish International Development Agency.

Dr Renee Hobbs is a professor at Temple University School of Communications and Theater in Philadelphia (USA), where she directs the Media Education Lab. She is the author of Reading Communicatio...