# **Speakers & Presenters**

# Andrew Epstein

Dr. Andrew Epstein is a Technical Director in the Strategy, Performance, and Learning division of Social Impact, Inc. He specializes in qualitative research on education and youth in conflict- and crisis-affected communities, early grade reading and numeracy, and government capacity building. He is the Program Director for the Middle East Education, Research, Training, and Support (MEERS) project, a four-year initiative that supports the USAID Middle East Bureau and Middle East and North Africa Missions with research, data analysis, trainings, and capacity building. Over the last 15 years, Dr. Epstein has evaluated projects for USAID, USDA, DFID, AusAid, UNICEF, Save the Children, CARE International, and the Open Society Foundation. He has worked in Sudan, South Sudan, Libya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, West Bank/Palestine, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Vanuatu. Prior to his international evaluation work, Dr. Epstein worked in public education in the United States for 15 years as a high school English teacher and principal in New York, Seattle, and Iowa. Dr. Epstein has a Master of Education from the University of Washington in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies and a Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in international and comparative education and cultural anthropology.

# Anjuli Shivshanker

Anjuli Shivshanker is the Senior Research Advisor for the Education in Conflict and Crisis team at USAID. Prior to joining USAID, she supported or designed rigorous impact evaluations in fragile contexts across a wide variety of sectors, including education and social and emotional learning, and designed and conducted real-time evaluations of emergency responses to natural disasters and conflicts. She has also served in senior management roles of health and violence prevention programming for children and women. In the Middle East, she has worked in Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon.

# Benjamin Piper

Benjamin Piper is the Senior Director of Africa Education for RTI International, based in Nairobi, Kenya. He supports large-scale education projects across sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. He has led multi-country studies on the impact of scripted lesson plans on teacher instruction and the effectiveness of large-scale teacher professional development modalities, and is currently leading a multi-country study examining best practices in instructional coaching. Dr. Piper was previously the Chief of Party of the Kenyan national literacy program, Tusom; a set of randomized control trials in Kenya called PRIMR; and the National Tablets Programme. He is currently leading a multi-country study of highly effective large-scale education programs in collaboration with the Center for Global Development with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. He holds a Doctor of Education from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and Master of Education degrees from Harvard and Furman University.

# Brooke Isham

Ms. Brooke Isham has served as the Mission Director for USAID/Morocco since 2018. She was previously the Mission Director for USAID/Iraq and USAID/Azerbaijan. Before Azerbaijan, Ms. Isham was posted in Afghanistan as Deputy USAID Mission Director, where her responsibilities included the USAID economic growth and infrastructure portfolios, as well as USAID field operations in Northern and Western Afghanistan. Ms. Isham also worked in Washington, DC, as the Director of USAID’s Office of Food for Peace. Additionally, Ms. Isham served as Deputy USAID Mission Director in Sudan. Further, she has worked in Jordan, Russia, Central Asia, and Mali for USAID, focusing on program management and program analysis. Ms. Isham received a Ph.D. in commodity economics from Stanford University. She also holds a master’s degree in applied economics and a bachelor’s degree in economics, both from Stanford University.

# Carol da Silva

Dr. Carol DeShano da Silva is a Senior Advisor for Basic Education at Save the Children, providing thought leadership and technical guidance to basic education programming in literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional learning in development and humanitarian environments. She co-authored Save the Children’s award-winning literacy approach, Literacy Boost. She has worked on education projects for USAID, the World Bank, and FHI 360, among other international organizations. She has taught courses on international education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, the College of the Holy Cross, and American University, where she co-developed a new master’s degree program in bilingual education. Dr. da Silva has provided technical assistance to projects or conducted research in Brazil, Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, India, Mexico, Mozambique, Peru, the Philippines, Rwanda and Uganda. She speaks Portuguese and Spanish and has studied Italian and French. She holds a Master of Education and a Doctor of Education from Harvard University.

# Christine Capacci-Carneal

Christine Capacci-Carneal is an Education Development Officer in USAID’s Middle East Bureau. She has been with USAID since 2004. Prior to USAID, Chris worked for many years with non-governmental organizations such as Catholic Relief Services and Save the Children in their Sahel Field Office. Chris’s career in international development education began as a Peace Corps volunteer in the Central African Republic and at the Africa-America Institute in the early 1990s. She has a Ph.D. in International Development Education from Florida State University and a master’s in international development from American University.

# David Greene

David Greene is a career member of the U.S. Senior Foreign Service and assumed responsibilities as Charge d’Affaires at the U.S. Mission to Morocco in August 2019. He was previously Director of the Office of Egyptian Affairs. In his 23 years with the United States State Department, he has served overseas as Deputy Political Counselor in Islamabad, Pakistan; Political Counselor in Rabat, Morocco; as well as tours in Amman, Jordan; Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; and Cairo, Egypt. His assignments in Washington, DC include Director of the Office of Multilateral Affairs in the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Deputy Director of the Office of Israel and Palestinian Affairs, and liaison for Middle East issues in the State Department’s Bureau of Legislative Affairs. Mr. Greene holds a bachelor’s in government from Harvard University, a master’s in international law and diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and a master’s in national security strategy from the National War College, where he was a distinguished graduate.

# Deepa Srikantaiah

Deepa Srikantaiah, Ph.D., is a Senior Education and Research Specialist at World Learning, where she provides support for mathematics and literacy in basic education programs in the Global Development division. Dr. Srikantaiah has over 15 years of experience working on mathematics, science, and literacy education programs in the United States, East Africa, and South and East Asia. With this experience, she supports the design and development of new programs and provides technical support for World Learning’s STEM programming and USAID-funded Quality Instruction Toward Access and Basic Education Improvement (QITABI) project in Lebanon. Dr. Srikantaiah was a Senior Researcher for the USAID-funded Reading within Reach Project/Global Reading Network, where she contributed to building the research and evidence base in early grade reading and mathematics. In the 2015-2016 academic year, she was a Fulbright-Nehru U.S. Scholar in India, where she conducted research to improve mathematics and science education for poor, marginalized, and vulnerable youth and primary school students. Dr. Srikantaiah was also an Education Specialist at the Global Partnership for Education Secretariat, a partnership hosted by the World Bank, where she initiated and headed the work on early grade mathematics education. Dr. Srikantaiah started her career teaching chemistry and working on after-school STEM programs for students from poor, marginalized, and vulnerable backgrounds in the U.S. She holds a master’s and doctorate in international education policy from the University of Maryland, College Park.

# Eva Kozma

Eva Kozma is a literacy expert and an award-winning author of Arabic children’s books currently serving as a Reading Expert on the Lebanon QITABI project. She has a Ph.D. in education from Saint Joseph University in Beirut, Lebanon. Her areas of research include the Balanced Literacy Approach in the Arabic classroom and reading attitudes of elementary school children toward Arabic as a mother tongue. Dr. Kozma also holds a master’s in educational psychology from the American University of Beirut, with a focus on school guidance and counseling, and special education. Over the past 15 years, her research has focused on literacy best practices in pre-schools and elementary schools. She has built the capacities of hundreds of teachers and several non-governmental organizations in the MENA region. She has published several books for children and co-authored educational books for teachers. In 2014, Dr. Kozma launched Moubadara for Children and Youth Arabic Literature with a group of prominent authors to promote reading in Arabic as a mother tongue. She is an affiliate member of the American Psychological Association and the vice president of the Lebanese non-governmental organization Kibarouna, which focuses on elderly care and protection.

# Fathi El-ashry

Fathi El-Ashry, Ph.D., is a Senior Literacy Specialist with Creative Associates International, with specialization in early grade reading instruction and has wide experience in the MENA region. He is currently supporting the Morocco Ministry of Education’s Arabic language reform initiative through the USAID-funded National Reading Program (NPR). He leads NPR’s technical assistance to the Ministry of Education for reading, writing, and language skills development in Grades 1-6 across Morocco. He provided technical support to the Early Grade Reading Programs in Egypt, Yemen, and Jordan, as well as reading programs in Nigeria and Pakistan. Dr. El-Ashry also served as a lecturer of curriculum and instruction at Kafrelsheikh University in Egypt, focusing on Arabic language instruction and learning difficulties, and as a lecturer in Arabic Language at United Arab Emirates University. Dr. El-Ashry holds a Ph.D. in special education from the University of Florida.

# Fatima Ouahmi

Ms. Ouahmi is the Director of Communications for the Morocco Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, & Scientific Research. She has expertise in Arabic and English literacy, Arabic as a Second Language, teacher supervision and coaching, standard-based curriculum, differentiated instruction, formative assessment, understanding by backward design, educational resources, project-based learning, the Reggio Emilia approach, special education, character education, and anger management in schools.

# Fouad Chafiqi

Mr. Chafiqi has served as the Director of Curricula for the Morocco Ministry of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education, and Scientific Research since June 2010. Before that time, he was a Professor of Higher Education in Educational Science, a Lecturer in Education Sciences at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Marrakech, and a Professor of Secondary Education Physics. Mr. Chafiqi has served on numerous committees and educational working groups, including the Arab Reading Challenge committee, the International Bureau of Education through UNESCO, Monitoring Committee of the Consortium for International Researchers and Specialists in Education and Evaluation, World Association of Educational Sciences, and the Didactic Group of Marrakech Sciences of the Cadi Ayyad University. He was a Visiting Professor and the UNESCO Chair in Education Sciences at Cheikh Anta Diop University and Dakar Ecole Normale Supérieure. He is also a member of the reading committee for several scientific journals, including Carrefours de l’éducation (France), International Review of Education for Higher Education, (Canada), The Palimpsest (Morocco), and the Canadian Journal of Education. He holds a Ph.D. in education sciences from Victor Segalen Bordeaux University in France and a postgraduate doctor in science education from the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Morocco.

# Hafs Mahmoud Abu Mallouh

Mr. Hafs is the Director of Professional Development Policies within the Educational Supervision and Training Department at the Jordan Ministry of Education. In 2017 and 2018, Mr. Hafs was the Director of Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality Control within the Ministry. Previously, he was the Head of School Development Department and Directorate of Educational Supervision and Training (2013-2016), an Education Supervisor (2006-2013) and a teacher for over ten years. He also advises several Arab countries in the design of teacher licensing programs/tests. Mr. Hafs has taken a leading role in the design and implementation of the USAID/UKAID Reading and Math Program (RAMP) initiative, which aims to improve the reading and mathematics skills of early grades students in Jordan, particularly on issues related to Teacher Training programs, Teacher Supervision and Coaching and Students Evaluation. Mr. Hafs also currently leads 1) the design of a new Career Path for teachers in Jordan, 2) the development of Teachers National Standards and Competencies and 3) the national curriculum for Continuo us Professional Development. In the Middle East Region, Mr. Hafs participated in the development and implementation of several programs, including the Educational Measurement and Evaluation program, the Educational Leadership program, Stimulating Learning Environments, Psychosocial Support, Educational Policies, Educated School, School of the Future, and Teaching Values.

# Hanada Taha Thomure

Professor Hanada Taha Thomure is the Endowed Professor of Arabic Language and Director of the Arabic Language Center for Research and Development at Zayed University in the United Arab Emirates. Previously, she served as Acting Dean of Bahrain Teachers College, University of Bahrain where she joined as Associate Dean in 2010. She has nearly 30 years of experience in teacher pre-service preparation and in-service training, Arabic Language curriculum design, national literacy strategy design, and literacy coaching. She designed the first system for leveling Arabic texts, currently used by regional and international publishers to level children’s books. More than 7,000 books have been leveled free of charge with a grant from Arab Thought Foundation. She also designed and published the first Arabic Language Arts standards, currently used by thousands of students across the region. Professor Taha Thomure also helped secure funding and technical support to design the first early reading standardized test in the Arab world (Mubakkir), which has been used by more than 5,000 students within a year of its release. She holds a Ph.D. in education from the University of New Orleans, a master’s in educational psychology and counseling, and a bachelor’s in social and behavioral sciences with a minor in Arabic from the American University of Beirut, Lebanon.

# Helen Boyle

Dr. Helen N. Boyle is Vice President and Director of Program Strategy at Education Development Center, Inc. (EDC). She re-joined EDC in 2019 after six years as an Associate Professor at Florida State University (FSU). She originally joined EDC in 1991 following her Peace Corps service in Morocco and served in numerous roles, including Project Director and Chief of Party, in countries including Nigeria and Lebanon. She directed EDC’s Middle East and North Africa Center, and subsequently led its Basic Education and Literacy Team. At FSU, Helen designed and taught graduate-level courses in Education Leadership and Policy, including Education in Muslim Societies, Design and Management of International Development Education Projects, International Development Education and served as the Principal Investigator on several USAID- and UNICEF-funded projects awarded to the Learning Systems Institute. Dr. Boyle has over 20 years of experience as a senior technical advisor on international education and development projects focused on teacher training, early grade reading and literacy, program monitoring and evaluation, and Islamic education. She has provided technical assistance to and/or managed education projects in Yemen, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Haiti, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, Uganda, Ethiopia, South Sudan and the West Bank. Dr. Boyle has a bachelor’s degree from Boston College, a Master of Education from Harvard University, and a Ph.D. in comparative and social analysis in education from the University of Pittsburgh, with a focus on international development education and a minor in anthropology.

# Hilda El Khoury

Ms. Hilda El Khoury is currently serving as Director of Counseling and Guidance (DOPS) at the Lebanon Ministry of Education and Higher Education, where she oversees pedagogical counselors and is responsible for the guidance and counseling of teachers and sometimes students in all Lebanese public schools. DOPS takes part in educational strategy and policymaking at the MEHE. Hilda was also the Head of the Official Exams Department for three years. During this period, and along with her team, she was able to computerize all the steps of the official exams and reduced the chances of error - whether in the correction process or the announcement of results - to null. Another achievement was the adaptation of the official exams depending on the need of students with disabilities, learning difficulties and special needs as well as the exemption from the official exams in severe cases. That way, all the students were given the chance to sit for the official exams. Hilda is a trained mathematics teacher and holds master’s degrees in mathematics, informatics, and education. She is currently finalizing her Ph.D. in the Science of Education – Mathematics Education. Prior to joining the Ministry, she held a range of positions: advisor to the Lebanese official examinations mathematics committee; teacher trainer; mathematics coordinator in a variety of schools, education consultant; and teacher of mathematics. Hilda has applied the insights she gained from working in schools and with teachers to ensure the reforms she is currently shepherding–to support teachers and make the exams system in Lebanon more rigorous and transparent—are workable throughout the system.

# Iman Elhaddouzi

Iman Elhaddouzi is a psychopedagogist and holds bachelor’s degrees in languages didactics and primary education from the Granada University in Spain. She is currently preparing a Ph.D. in teachers’ attitudes, behaviors, and performance. Since 2011, Iman has been a practitioner in the Moroccan education sector, contributing to literacy and education programming, the development of instructional resources and materials, supporting teacher training, and mobilizing families and communities. She has served as an Education and Reading Specialist within Creative Associate’s Reading for Success program for the past four years, contributing to the development of early grade reading material, leading the design of reading enrichment methods and techniques, and supporting the implementation of reading enrichment programs to counter summer learning loss.

# Joshua Josa

Joshua Josa leads the Disability Portfolio at USAID’s Office of Education. In his current role, he focuses on ensuring programming is truly “Education for All” by promoting the inclusion of children and persons with disabilities throughout the education system. Mr. Josa has worked for USAID since 2014 and is also a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, serving in Kenya from 2010-2012.

# Julie Cram

Julie Cram is a Deputy Assistant Administrator in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment. Her portfolio includes the Offices of Education and Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. Ms. Cram concurrently serves as Senior Coordinator of United States International Basic Education Assistance. She is responsible for the oversight and coordination of all resources and activities relating to the promotion of international basic education, including the development and implementation of a comprehensive U.S. strategy for international basic education across ten U.S. government agencies and departments. Ms. Cram also serves as the Agency’s Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. In this position, she oversees programs focused on women’s economic empowerment, reducing gender disparities and gender-based violence, and on increasing the capacity of women and girls to realize their rights, determine their life outcomes, and influence decision-making. Prior to joining USAID in January 2018, Ms. Cram was an advocacy and public affairs expert with more than 18 years of experience in issue advocacy, communications, and government affairs in both government and the private sector.

# Juma Al Saud

Mr. Juma Al Saud is the Director of Supervision and Education Training Department at the Jordan Ministry of Education (MoE). Previously, he has been the head of the MoE School and Directorate Development Program (2016-2017), the Head of the Supervision Department in Na’our Field Directorate, an Education Supervisor for Sciences and Physics, and a teacher for fifteen years before that. Mr. Juma plays a key role in the USAID/UKAID Early Grade Reading and Mathematics (RAMP) initiative. He leads the Supervision and Coaching program of the initiative and implements a new model where teacher and student performance data inform the development of Field Directorates Teacher Coaching plans and Field Directorates and School Improvement Plans. Mr. Juma has a master’s in education administration and a bachelor’s in physics from the University of Jordan and a diploma in school administration.

# Luis Crouch

Luis Crouch is a Senior Economist at RTI’s International Development Group. He is on the board of Room to Read and the Central Square Foundation. He specializes in education policy, decentralized finance, political economy of reform, education statistics, planning, and projections. He has experience in all key areas of policy analysis, from the generation of primary data, to statistical and econometric analysis, to Cabinet-level policy dialogue. He has previously worked at the World Bank and at the Global Partnership for Education. In the last few years, he has become interested in early grade reading and targeted early childhood development, as the key entry-points to improve education systems’ response to the quality imperative. He has authored many reports, technical papers, including papers in refereed journals, and contributed to various technical books.

# Magdy Rizk

Mr. Rizk has worked in the education and development fields since 1987, with solid understanding of the Egyptian education system through his experience as an education program implementer and as a schoolteacher, deputy, and headmaster for almost ten years. Throughout these years of experience, he built strong technical expertise in the areas of adult and basic education, life skills, early childhood programs, community schools. Mr. Rizk worked for International non-governmental organizations like CARE, KFW Development Bank, and Save the Children to implement the education components of USAID-funded programs such as New School Program in the capacity of technical advisor, professional development trainer, and team leader. He designed and delivered professional development training programs targeting Ministry of Education teachers and supervisors in various governorates of Egypt. In addition, he developed technical tools and guides to assist the field staff teams to implement the program activities and participated in the implementation of field assessments and studies.

# Melissa Chiappetta

Melissa Chiappetta is a monitoring and evaluation expert with 13 years of experience conducting evaluations and 17 years of experience managing projects in approximately 25 countries. Ms. Chiappetta currently serves as a Senior Research and Learning Advisor for USAID’s Reading and Literacy Team. In this role, Ms. Chiappetta has led the Agency’s efforts to develop a methodology for linking early grade reading and math results to USAID’s Foreign Assistance Indicators and the Sustainable Development Goals. She also created a research design and secured more than $3 million in funds for a multi-country study on inclusive education, led the development of a learning agenda for USAID’s Reading Team, led the development and piloting of an expressive language module for the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA), and led the development of a new system diagnostic tool for the literacy. Prior to joining USAID, Ms. Chiappetta led Abt Associates' Center for International Evaluation. In this role, she grew Abt’s international research and evaluation portfolio by more than 200 percent, including by leading a bid to win Abt’s first international education evaluation contract (worth more than $14 million). Ms. Chiappetta has served as a technical team member or manager for more than 40 performance and impact evaluations in her career. In 2015, she served as lead trainer for three regional education monitoring and evaluation workshops for USAID education officers. Ms. Chiappetta was also one of the authors of the USAID EGRA Toolkit 2.0. She has a master’s degree from Georgetown University.

# Michael Childress

Michael Childress is a Technical Officer in FHI 360’s Education in Emergencies (EiE) practice area, providing technical assistance to a USAID-funded project in Northeast Nigeria, as well as thought leadership, project support, and business development in EiE contexts. From 2017 to 2019, Michael worked with the International Rescue Committee in crisis-affected areas of Iraq, where he oversaw implementation of a $6 million/year education portfolio, which included a large-scale teacher professional development program that reached 3,000 primary school teachers. Prior to that, Michael was the Director of Programs at The School Fund, a Research Fellow at Save the Children, a Fulbright Scholar, and an analyst at Survey Monkey. Michael is particularly interested in teacher professional development, social-emotional learning, non-formal and accelerated learning, and cash transfer programs. He holds a master’s in international education policy from Harvard. Outside of work, Michael enjoys cycling, backpacking, and rock climbing.

# Mohammed Sassi

Mohammed Sassi is the Director of Evaluation for the Morocco National Center for Evaluation and Examinations. Mr. Sassi has a master’s degree in measurement and evaluation from Laval University in Quebec, Canada. His thesis was titled: “The Evaluation of Complex Productions: Study of Reliability of Descriptive Scales.” Mr. Sassi also holds a diploma from the Faculty of Education Sciences from Mohammed V University in Rabat, Morocco and a bachelor’s in philosophy. He has held numerous roles in Morocco educational institutions, including the Director General in Charge of Pedagogic Action and Director of the Center of National Examinations He has served as the Morocco National Coordinator of TIMSS and PIRLS since 2003 and has represented Morocco on the PISA Governing Board. Mr. Sassi also has authored and co-authored several evaluation reports and articles at the national and international level.

# Nada Oweijane

Dr. Nada Oweijane is the Acting President of the Center for Educational Research and Development since 2015. She is the holder of a bi-institutional Ph.D. in Social Sciences from Sorbonne-Paris University and the Lebanese University Institute of Social Sciences. Dr. Oweijane also undertakes responsibilities as a University Professor, teaching multiple courses at the Faculty of Education at the Lebanese University. Dr. Oweijane has experience conducting academic and applied research and studies, teaching at the university-level, training school principals and teachers, publishing university textbooks, overseeing the development of Lebanon’s national curriculum, and publishing of the national textbooks for Lebanese schools.

# Nawal Shalaby

Professor Nawal Shalaby is the Director of the Egyptian Center for Curriculum and Instructional Materials Development and the head of the Curriculum Development Research division at the Egyptian National Center for Educational Research and Development. She has a Ph.D. in curriculum development and has written many publications pertaining to the fields of education and curriculum development. She also has more than 30 years of experience in planning, developing, and implementing educational programs, curricula, and initiatives.

# Nelly El Zayat

For the past 20 years, Ms. El Zayat has been working in international education, specifically in student advising, scholarship management, admissions, curriculum design, e-learning, learner-centered teaching, and on bridging the gap between education and the job market. She has held positions in several educational organizations including AMIDEAST, the Institute of International Education, Georgetown University, and The American University in Cairo. She has been part of the core team working on Education 2.0, Egypt’s new education system, since 2017. Ms. El Zayat is the Co-Founder and Director of Newton Education Services and is the Advisor to the Minister of Education on Early Childhood Education and Education Policy. She holds a master’s degree in International Education Policy from Harvard University, a master’s of Middle East Studies, and a bachelor’s degree in economics, both from The American University in Cairo.

# Raffoul Saadeh

Originally from Palestine, Mr. Saadeh has eight years of experience working in the field of international education as a practitioner and advisor. He has supported education programs in Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Yemen, Palestine, and the United States. Currently, he is the Education Technical Advisor for the Middle East with the International Rescue Committee. He brings with him a strong track record in building relationships with ministries of education and navigating difficult political contexts, capacity building of local partners, and motivating national teams to take on innovative ideas; as well as a breadth of knowledge in education in emergencies and supporting children’s well-being. He also has experience as an assistant professor, student advisor, and previously mathematics high school teachers in Suitland, Maryland. He has a master’s in public policy, and a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service from Georgetown University.

# Rebeca Martinez

Rebeca Martinez is the Reading and Instructional Program Advisor for the USAID Reading and Literacy Team. During her time at USAID, she has provided technical support to national literacy programs in the areas of curriculum development, teacher training, and activity design. Prior to joining USAID, she spent five years in the Dominican Republic working on literacy intervention programs and designing pre-service teacher training. Her experience in the field of education includes serving as an Instructional Supervisor for after-school programs in New York City, and teaching third grade in Denver Public Schools. She got her start in the field of international development as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ukraine. Ms. Martinez has a master’s in international educational development from Teachers College, Columbia University and a bachelor’s in English from DePauw University.

# Rebecca Rhodes

Rebecca Rhodes serves as USAID’s team lead for reading & literacy, guiding the development and implementation of USAID’s 40+ programs with a literacy focus. With an undergraduate degree in language and literature from Harvard University, a master's in education policy and planning from Stanford, and a certification in elementary reading instruction from the State of New Jersey, she is an accomplished educator with 25 years of experience in education programming in both domestic and international contexts. Ms. Rhodes has worked extensively in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, and has consulted in Latin America and the Caribbean and South East Asia to improve teacher preparation and learning outcomes, including for the most marginalized.

# Rula Al-Jundi

Ms. Rula Al-Jundi brings 18 years of experience working in leadership positions in the education sector in Jordan and has collaborated closely with Ministry of Education personnel under multiple projects. Her expertise includes teacher training, capacity development, student assessment, continuous professional development, early grade literacy and numeracy, technology, instructional leadership, pedagogy, monitoring, and evaluation, change management, and the use of ICT in Jordan. Since 2016, she has served as a Senior Education Program Specialist on the USAID-funded RAMP program. RAMP is a $47 million national effort designed to improve the reading and mathematics skills of students in Jordan from Kindergarten 2 through Grade 3 (K2–G3). Ms. Al-Jundi has focused on two improving the integration of early grade reading and mathematics learning materials into every K2–G3 classroom in Jordan and better equipping teachers and administrators to provide effective reading and mathematics instruction. For over 11 years at Change Agent for Arab Development and Education Reform, she served as Senior Education Program Specialist, and in other roles, where she designed and implemented a broad-range of training and professional development programs. These included, among others: Jordan’s Higher Education Diploma, Training of Trainers, Change Management, Accelerated Learning, Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Systems, Modern Pedagogy, Leadership in 21st Century, Appreciative Inquiry, Use e-Portfolios and ICT, and Situational Leadership. At the University of Jordan, she was an Instructional Designer in the e-learning office and also Lecturer at the King Abdullah II School for Information Technology.

# Said Amzazi, Morocco Minister of National Education

Mr. Said Amzazi was appointed by King Mohammed VI as the Minister of National Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education and Scientific Research on January 22, 2018. Minister Amzazi received his doctorate in biology from Pierre-et-Marie-Curie University in Paris. Before he became Minister of National Education, Minister Amzazi was the President of University Mohammed V in Rabat since 2015. From 2011-2014, he served as the Vice-Dean for Academic Affairs at the Faculty of Sciences of the University Mohammed V in Rabat, before becoming the Dean of the same faculty. He was also a member of the National Commission on Accreditation and Coordination of Higher Education, and a member of Preparatory Committee of the National Council of Languages and Moroccan Culture. Between 2012 and 2014, he was a member of the Higher Commission for equivalence of foreign diplomas within the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. He chaired the evaluation commission for the award of doctoral scholarships since 2015 and the Merit Scholarship Selection Committee of Mohammed VI Foundation since 2017. He also served as a member of the pedagogical and on-going training commission at the Conference of University Presidents since 2015. In 2016, he was the program coordinator of the Conference of University Presidents during the COP22 event, and coordinator of the Network of Deans of Faculties of Sciences of Moroccan public universities. He has supervised several Ph.D. candidates and written many publications on sciences at the national and international level.

# Sana Tibi

Dr. Sana Tibi is an Assistant Professor in the School of Communication Science and Disorders (CSD) at Florida State University. She holds two doctoral degrees, one in CSD and another in Education-Cognitive Studies of reading. She has over twenty years of international clinical, research, and teaching experience in early-grade reading assessments and reading disorders. Throughout her career, she has published numerous articles in both Arabic and English in top tier journals, provided workshops to teachers on best practices in literacy, and trained hundreds of trainers, trainees, and university students in a diverse range of literacy assessment tools. Dr. Tibi regularly serves as a consultant on projects related to literacy worldwide. She serves as a key member on the Language, Literacy, and Learning (LLL) cluster of the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition, which is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada ($2.5 million). Dr. Tibi has also served as a literacy expert for the World Bank and the USAID-RTI partnership since 2007. Moreover, Dr. Tibi presents regularly at national and international conferences and serves as a keynote speaker at the Society for the Scientific Study of Reading annual conference. Her research aims to better understand the cognitive and linguistic processes that underlie successful reading development in Arabic-speaking children. In her research efforts, she validates Arabic reading assessment tools using novel statistical techniques. Her research findings contribute to the scientific body of knowledge on literacy and serve an important role in our cross-linguistic understanding of Arabic literacy.

# Shirin Lutfeali

Ms. Shirin Lutfeali is an Advisor for Basic Literacy and Numeracy at Save the Children, where she has worked for the past eight years. In this role, she provides general technical support to country offices on projects that focus on an improved learning environment and tangible impact for students, teachers, and the community. Currently, she is managing two USAID-funded early grade reading projects in Myanmar and Egypt. Ms. Lutfeali is also leading the implementation of Numeracy Boost, Save the Children’s numeracy intervention for early primary grades teachers which was piloted in Malawi and Bangladesh in 2012 and has since been implemented in Pakistan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Mali, Thailand, Jordan and El Salvador. Ms. Lutfeali began her career in education as a primary school teacher in Los Angeles and New York City public schools. She has taught across the elementary grades, but fourth grade is her favorite. Since then, she has worked in numerous post-conflict and emerging democracies such as Tajikistan, Egypt, and Afghanistan, where she has led projects involving increasing teacher quality and improving student learning outcomes. Ms. Lutfeali holds a master’s in elementary education from Teachers College, Columbia University and is fluent in Urdu and conversant in French.

# Stefanie Kendall

Dr. Stefanie Kendall is the Team Lead for Education and Health in USAID’s Middle East Bureau Office for Technical Support. She was the Education Officer for the Middle East Regional Platform based in Frankfurt, Germany, where she supported the Middle East North Africa Region on program design, procurement and strategy. Primary among her responsibilities over the last five years is her leadership of USAID's contribution to education in Yemen, designing programs for the education sector and school feeding, and representing USAID on the Donor and Local Education Groups. Dr. Kendall came to USAID in 2011, after 17 years of teaching elementary special needs children, high school English and Social Studies, and consulting with Save the Children in Haiti after the earthquake in 2010. She has a master’s in curriculum and assessment from the University of Southern Maine, and a Ph.D. in teaching and learning in conflict and post-conflict from Michigan State University.

# Wafa Kotob

Dr. Wafa Kotob has been working in the education field since 1987. She began her education career as a schoolteacher, then worked as a school counselor, a teacher trainer, and an education researcher. In 2007, she was granted a Ph.D. from the University of Manchester in the United Kingdom for her research on theories of change and education reform. In 2009, Dr. Kotob joined the development sector as the Policy and Planning Specialist in the World Bank unit in the Ministry of Education in Lebanon, and later moved to UNICEF Lebanon as a Senior Education Specialist. Between 2013 and 2016, Dr. Kotob was the Chief of Party for the Developing Rehabilitation Assistance to Schools and Teacher Improvement program (D-RASATI) 2, a USAID-funded, nationally focused project with an overarching goal to support the Ministry of Education to improve the performance of the Lebanese public school system. Currently, Dr. Kotob is Chief of Party for the USAID-funded Quality Instruction toward Access to Basic Education Improvement 2 (QITABI-2) project, a five-year program seeking to improve learning outcomes for all students in primary schools in Lebanon. QITABI-2 targets an estimated 300,000 students, including those registered in second-shift classrooms in public schools.

# Youssef Belqasami

Professor Youssef Belqasmi is the Secretary General of National Education in Morocco. Dr. Belqasmi has been a been a strong supporter of USAID-funded education projects in Morocco for the past 15 years. He is an active advocate for educational innovation, especially through the use of technology. Prior to assuming the office of Secretary General in April 2009, Dr. Belqasmi was the Director of the Office of Planning, Statistics, and Strategy at the Ministry of Education from 2007 to 2009. He served as a professor and trainer in Computer Technology at the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Mohammedia and other national and international universities. He started his career as an advisor to international organizations, including UNESCO. Dr. Belqasmi holds a Ph.D. in science and technology and computer science from the Mohammedia School of Engineering of the Mohammed V University. He also holds the degree of Senior Engineer in Information Technology from the Institut National Polytechnique in Toulouse, France.

# Youssef El Azhari

Dr. El Azhari is the Director of the National Unit for Teacher Professional Development and the Center for Pedagogical Innovation and Experimentation. Dr. Youssef El Azhari holds a Ph.D. in physics from Cadi Ayyad University. His is presently the Director of the National Center for Pedagogical Innovation and Experimentation. He is also the Head of Central Unit for Teacher training at the primary and secondary level at the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training, Higher Education, and Scientific Research. Dr. El Azhari was a professor of Physics from 1996 to 2007 at Ecole Normale Superieure in Marrakesh. He also taught at the School of Sciences from 2000 to 2016 and supervised and co-supervised numerous theses. He is an author of a series of scientific publications and research articles published in Morocco and internationally and has been a keynote speaker at conferences in Morocco and abroad. Dr. El Azhrari is a Chairman and member of national and international committees in the area of teacher training and certification.