



Communiqué de Presse

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Improving Reading in Morocco's Middle Schools: Official Launch of a U.S.-Morocco Partnership

On Wednesday, April 22 at 9:30 am, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Ministry of National Education and Vocational Training (MOE) will launch the Reading for Academic Skills and Individual Development in Middle Schools (RASID) project. The ceremony will take place at the Rabat Regional Education Office (AREF), Avenue Kamal Zebdi, Hay Riad, Rabat. Officials from the Ministry and from USAID will deliver remarks.

The goal of the RASID project is to ensure that strong systems are in place so that, eventually, all middle school teachers are able to improve reading instruction across subjects such as Arabic, French, math and science. The RASID project will, therefore, help the Ministry scale up a reading enhancement program for middle schools that was successfully tested in 100 schools. To allow a greater number of schools to benefit from the program, USAID and the Ministry are developing a nationwide corps of teacher trainers, and developing a first-ever teacher coaching system supported with trainer kits and coaching protocols. These trainers will work with over 27,000 middle school teachers over the coming years to improve reading instruction techniques across subjects taught in Moroccan public schools. The project will also provide the skills and materials to assess student reading skills and evaluate quality teacher reading instruction practices.

USAID and the Ministry of Education started this partnership on reading in 2012 through the Improving Training for Quality Advancement in National Education (ITQANE) project, which improved pre-service and in service training of middle school teachers. During the implementation of this project, it became clear that middle school students' weak readings skills impeded learning. USAID developed an experimental program to improve the reading skills of middle school students. Consisting of more than 100 sample activities to strengthen students' reading skills such as comprehension, inferencing, and summarizing, the program supported "reading across the curriculum" interventions that emphasize disciplinary understanding. This innovative reading program improved students' reading performance, as well as their scores in other subjects such as math and science.

As part of a long tradition of educational cooperation between the Kingdom of Morocco and the United States, the RASID project will make a significant step towards increasing learning achievement in middle schools. The project is implemented by Creative Associates International, Inc.

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