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Children's Resources International

## BROADER MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA INITIATIVE: *Education Ministers Meet in Amman, Jordan, May 22-23*

*“Education is vital to developing nations and generations... The chance to learn and to read and write should never be only the privilege of a few, royalty or the rich, the first-born or sons. Education is the birthright of every human being — all the world's sons and all the world's daughters.”*

– Laura Bush, U.S. First Lady

The Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) and the G-8 industrialized countries agreed on the importance of expanding literacy and ensuring that all citizens, including women and girls, receive quality education relevant to the needs of modern economies and democratic societies. At the December 2004 Forum for the Future held in Rabat, Morocco, regional leaders pledged to address these critical issues at a BMENA Education Ministerial meeting hosted by Jordan. Many U.S. programs support these goals.

### U.S. Department of State:

#### Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)

- MEPI fosters public-private partnerships, provides model curriculum and teaching tools, and offers “My Arabic Library” – books to enhance literacy and critical thinking skills.
- MEPI’s *Partnership School Program* provides new approaches to education delivery and management. The *Arab Civitas* and *Student Leaders programs* reinforce civic education and responsibility.

#### Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs:

- *The Fulbright Visiting Specialist and Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Programs* provide professional development opportunities through exchanges for educators.
- *The Afghanistan Teacher Education Project* seeks to improve English teaching skills of women teachers.
- *The Teacher Trainer Summer Institutes* provide training for Moroccan and Jordanian teachers of English.

### GOAL OF BMENA EDUCATION MINISTERIAL: QUALITY EDUCATION

- To provide tools for informed citizen participation
- To generate economic growth and development
- To encourage problem-solving and life skills
- To advance knowledge of information technology

### Bureau of South Asian Affairs:

- *The Women’s Economic Education Program* aims to improve education and economic conditions for women in Pakistan, through teacher training and a micro-loan program.
- *Creating Democratic Schools* introduces new teaching methods to Afghan primary school teachers.

- *The Civic Education Program* encourages policy analysis for students in Pakistan.

### U.S. Agency for International Development:

- *Accelerated Learning in Afghanistan and Iraq* improves access to education to out-of-school children.
- *School construction, teacher training and textbooks* reach underserved and remote populations.
- The *Education and Employment Alliance* provides training for youth employment supported by private companies, NGOs and foundations.

### U.S. Department of Education:

- *The Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education* improves Arabic language instruction in the U.S. and pilots a U.S.-Morocco Higher Education Cooperation Initiative.
- *Title VI and Fulbright-Hays* programs support Middle East language and area studies in U.S. colleges and universities and research, training and intensive advanced language training for Americans abroad.
- *Civic education* supports curriculum development and teacher training including a June 2005 Civic Education World Congress in Amman, Jordan.
- *No Child Left Behind Act* guides U.S. education reform and international knowledge-sharing on how accountability and research-based practice can improve student learning.