

A Path for Reducing Learning Poverty in the Middle East and North Africa



Set literacy goals

Set quantifiable national goals and standards for Arabic language learning outcomes with highest-level commitment



Build bridge from colloquial to modern standard Arabic (MSA)

Harness common features/vocabulary of MSA and colloquial Arabic to help learn MSA



Expand early MSA exposure

Expand children's early exposure to MSA in engaging ways



Align instructional resources to follow a systematic phonetic approach with a focus on reading comprehension in a literature-rich environment

Align Arabic instruction, resources, and assessments to focus on a systematic phonetic approach, emphasizing reading comprehension across the curriculum — with sufficient time in the school year — and make extensive use of children's literature to build vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension



Revisit Arabic language teacher education programs

Align preservice and in-service teacher training programs to focus on effective methods of teaching Arabic with extensive practical experience opportunities



Reduce achievement gaps

Recognize literacy achievement gaps — gender, regional, socioeconomic — and provide targeted support to schools with underperforming students



Intervene early with struggling readers

Assess, diagnose, support with early interventions, and monitor struggling readers



Promote family and community awareness

Encourage families, community groups, and the private sector to understand and prioritize children's Arabic literacy development



Balance purposeful use of technology

Ensure technology investments are based on evidence of effectiveness and that they encourage more MSA listening, speaking, reading, and writing and/or streamline the work of teachers, balanced with proven paper-pencil methods

