

Conference Guide



تحويل التعليم
TRANSFORMING EDUCATION

The 4th International Educational Conference
TRANSFORMING EDUCATION
Enhance the Future of Education in the Gulf Countries

5 - 6 November 2024
Kuwait





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Introduction

This international educational conference is one of the ongoing programs of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (ACERG), and part of its activities aimed at keeping up with global developments in educational ideas and practices. The conference seeks to benefit from these developments in enriching educational development projects in member states of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS), as well as enhancing the expertise of educational specialists by exchanging views on common educational issues and learning from distinguished educational experiences both regionally and globally.

To date, GASERC has organized three international conferences. The first was titled «The Role of Teachers in Enhancing Education Efficiency,» held from April 24-26, 2017, in Manama, Bahrain. The second international conference took place during the COVID-19 pandemic, virtually, under the title «Distance Education in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic,» on November 30 and December 1, 2020. The third international conference, titled «Innovative Education in an Era of Changing,» was held on November 29-30, 2022, in Manama, Bahrain. GASERC has published three books containing the outcomes and recommendations of these conferences.

We are pleased to welcome you to GASERC's 4th International Educational Conference, under the theme «Transforming Education: Opportunities and Challenges to Enhance the Future of Education in the Gulf Countries». The conference is held under the patronage and attendance of His Excellency Prof. Nader Abdullah Al-Jallal, Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, and Acting Minister of Education in Kuwait. This conference comes at a critical time, requiring all of us to rethink how we prepare future generations to face the challenges of the new era. We live in a world experiencing rapid technological advancements and profound shifts in the economy and society, which necessitates a reformulation of the education system to meet the demands of the 21st century. Our goal is to equip our children with the capabilities to innovate and adapt to the radical changes happening globally.

This conference is not just a platform for discussion, but an invitation for collaborative action among various educational stakeholders—experts, academics, policymakers, and practitioners. Our primary goal through this

conference is to explore ways to transform education in the Gulf countries, aligned with national priorities and global trends in education, to equip our children with the knowledge, skills, and values that enable them to succeed in life and work, and to achieve the sustainable development goals for their communities. We also aim to discuss innovative solutions for digital transformation in education and offer new insights into how to integrate modern technology, life skills, and human values to build sustainable and advanced societies. We will also explore the necessary shifts in educational policies to support and empower teachers to lead educational development efforts effectively, and review the policies and actions required to improve the efficiency of educational spending to enhance governance and quality indicators within the educational system.

We believe that the role of GASERC is not limited to conducting research but extends to contributing actively to the development of educational policies that enhance the quality of education in the region, in coordination with the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) and its agencies. From this perspective, we hope that the discussions at this conference will serve as a launching point for achieving a significant transformation in education in the Gulf countries and that the ideas and perspectives shared will help map out a roadmap toward a better and more sustainable educational future. With the participation of a distinguished group of experienced speakers at both the regional and international levels, we are confident that the conference will witness fruitful discussions and practical results that will contribute to advancing the educational transformation in our countries.

Dr. Mohammed Al-Sharja

Director of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center

About GASERC

The Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC) is a specialized agency under the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS), headquartered in Kuwait. It was established following a decision made at the second General Conference of the Ministers of Education from the Gulf Arab States, held in Riyadh in May 1977, as one of ABEGS institutions and its specialized research agency. GASERC aims to contribute to the development of education in the member states of ABEGS and to enhance cooperation in the field of educational research. GASERC provides its services to ABEGS member states: the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Yemen, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Qatar.

GASERC's primary responsibilities include conducting educational research and studies, particularly those related to evaluating the current state of educational systems in the member states and supporting efforts to improve them. GASERC also contributes to the formulation of educational policies and forms partnerships with regional and international organizations dedicated to educational research. These initiatives aim to enrich the educational sector in member states by disseminating the latest trends and outstanding educational practices. Additionally, GASERC provides technical advisory services in educational research, measurement, and evaluation, tailored to the specific needs of member states. GASERC also strives to strengthen collaboration between educational institutions in the member states and facilitate the exchange of expertise among educational specialists, thereby supporting joint educational efforts and achieving shared goals.

GASERC implements, during each financial cycle (lasting two years), several programs approved by the General Conference of the Ministers of Education in ABEGS member states. These programs focus on addressing educational issues, challenges, and ways to develop the education sector, linking it with the demands of development and the latest global trends and challenges. Since its establishment, GASERC has completed more than 300 programs. Additionally, as part of its activities, GASERC organizes training courses, workshops, and scientific seminars on various educational and pedagogical topics. GASERC prints and publishes the outcomes of its programs, distributing them to member states and making them available for purchase at book fairs. It also publishes a quarterly journal titled Educational Prospects, which includes summaries of the latest global studies and research in various educational fields.

The 4th International Educational Conference: Transforming Education: Opportunities and Challenges to Enhance the Future of Education in the Gulf Countries

Context

GASERC is holding its 4th International Educational Conference from November 5-6, 2024, under the title «Transforming Education: Opportunities and Challenges to Enhance the Future of Education in the Gulf Countries.» This conference is a response to the outcomes of the Transforming Education Summit held during the United Nations Week in September 2022, and the Summit of the Future held at UN Headquarters in September 2024, which includes a discussion on transforming education, to bring about a fundamental shift in how education is viewed and approached, including the purpose of education, the learning environment, the teaching profession, the digital transformation, investment in education, and multilateral support for quality education for all.

Despite the varied educational, social, and economic contexts across different countries and regions, there are shared global pathways for transforming education, framed by the fourth goal of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This goal seeks to «ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.» The Gulf Arab countries are part of this global movement to develop education and use it as a guide for their educational development plans and national education targets, adapting them to their social and economic context and national development priorities.

While the Gulf countries have made significant strides in several areas, such as improving educational participation rates, achieving gender parity in education, and enhancing school infrastructure, they continue to face major challenges. These challenges include improving the quality of education, developing teacher skills, aligning educational goals and curricula with the demands of the modern era, and preparing learners for life and work in a rapidly changing world.

Thus, this conference serves as a pioneering platform for creative thinking and

purposeful discussions on priority pathways for transforming education in the Gulf countries. We will address how to tackle today's educational challenges and how to leverage the opportunities available to achieve excellence and sustainability in the educational system. We aim to reconsider the purposes of education in a world marked by uncertainty, rapid changes in various fields, and to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to thrive in such an environment. We will also discuss policies to support teachers and ensure they have the capacity to lead and implement educational transformation plans. Additionally, we will explore the role of technology in enhancing the educational process and empowering learners to learn independently, contributing to sustainable and inclusive development in the region. The issue of education funding and ways to improve the efficiency of the educational system's performance and quality will also be discussed. These pathways will form the core themes of the conference discussions, aiming to produce practical recommendations for achieving positive, comprehensive transformation in the educational systems of the Gulf Arab countries by focusing on improving quality and empowering both teachers and learners.

Objectives

GASERC 4th International Educational Conference aims to explore avenues for developing education in the region, grounded in the latest global trends and future visions, with a focus on leveraging the outcomes of the United Nations Transforming Education Summit 2022 and the Summit of the Future 2024. We hope that the conference will contribute to driving and guiding the transformation of education in the Gulf States, providing practical solutions that enhance the capabilities of educational systems to confront future challenges and achieve excellence and sustainability. The core objectives of the conference are as follows:

- 1. Discussing the Future of Education in the Gulf States in Light of Global Trends:** The conference seeks to engage in discussions about the future of education in the Gulf States, informed by the contemporary global trends that emerged following the United Nations Transforming Education Summit 2022. It emphasizes rethinking the purposes of education and examining how educational systems in the region can adapt to current

global transformations, including the shift towards digitization and reliance on artificial intelligence, changes in knowledge production and dissemination, critical environmental and climatic changes, and radical shifts in labor markets.

- 2. Investigating the Impact of the Transforming Education Summit 2022 on the Educational Field in the Gulf States:** The conference aims to study the impact of the outcomes and recommendations of the Transforming Education Summit 2022 on the state of education in the Gulf countries, analyzing how these recommendations are reflected in educational policies, teaching and learning methods, and future educational trends in the region. Additionally, the conference will discuss ways to implement these recommendations in practice to enhance the quality of education and achieve national strategic goals.
- 3. Identifying Key Challenges Facing Education Systems in the Gulf States:** The conference will address the main challenges hindering educational development in the Gulf States, such as educational quality, teacher professional development, innovation in learning environments, and enhancing the efficiency of education systems. It will highlight how these challenges can be confronted through innovative educational policies, the use of technology in education, and the creation of attractive, stimulating, and sustainable learning environments.
- 4. Utilizing Educational Trends for the Future of Education Beyond 2030:** The conference focuses on forecasting educational futures beyond 2030 and utilizing contemporary educational trends to strengthen the education system. Strategies for sustainable education will be reviewed, along with ways to adapt curricula and teaching methods to rapidly changing global conditions, aiming to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary in a fast-changing world and to prepare future generations for a future filled with challenges and opportunities.
- 5. Sharing Educational Experiences and Strengthening Cooperation Among Member States:** The conference aims to enhance the exchange of experiences and knowledge among ABEGS member states, encouraging collaboration in the fields of education and educational research. Additionally, it seeks to build strategic partnerships among educational institutions in the region, promote cooperation with international

organizations and institutions concerned with education, and support joint efforts to improve educational quality and enhance its capacity to meet national needs.

Themes

The 4th International Educational Conference will focus on key issues and current challenges facing educational systems in the Gulf States, drawing insights from leading global educational trends and experiences. The themes aim to address various aspects of the necessary educational transformation to achieve innovative, inclusive, and sustainable education that meets the needs of future generations in the region. Discussions around these themes will explore perspectives on redefining educational goals, empowering teachers, leveraging modern technology, and enhancing educational spending efficiency. The conference seeks to provide an interactive platform to stimulate in-depth discussions, exchange experiences, and explore innovative solutions to shape the future of education in the Gulf States, in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals and national priorities.

The following is a summary of the conference themes:

1. Goals of education: knowledge, skills and values for life, work and sustainable development

In an increasingly complex world, characterized by environmental degradation, climate change, rapid technological advancements, the rise of artificial intelligence, and profound transformations in the labor market, there is an urgent need to rethink the current goals of education. This theme will explore the essential transformations required in educational goals to equip children and youth with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary to successfully navigate the demands of life and work in the future, and to contribute meaningfully to the sustainable development goals of their respective nations.

2. The Teaching Profession: teacher support policies to lead education transformation

The success of educational transformation efforts depends largely on well-qualified and motivated teachers working in favorable conditions.

However, global reports highlight challenges such as teacher shortages, limited professional development opportunities, and low social status for the teaching profession. This theme will focus on the necessary policy shifts in the Gulf States to empower and motivate teachers, enabling them to lead and implement educational reforms effectively.

3. Digital transformation in education: demands, opportunities, and challenges

Educational institutions are under pressure to accelerate their digital transformation efforts to keep pace with other societal institutions. While the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the delayed integration of digital education, it also provided a strong impetus for innovations in this field. This theme will examine the requirements for successful digital transformation in education, particularly the provision of high-quality digital content and the development of teachers' technological competencies.

4. Financing of education and enhancing the efficiency of the educational system

Despite the relatively high spending on education in Gulf States as a percentage of GDP, there is a discrepancy between high expenditure and the efficiency of educational outcomes. This theme will explore policies and measures needed to improve the efficiency of educational spending, enhance governance of the educational system, and improve quality indicators and institutional performance.

Organization

The conference program includes a diverse range of carefully designed activities and events aimed at enriching discussions and fostering the exchange of ideas and expertise among participants. The goal is to create an interactive environment that addresses the issues on the conference agenda while maximizing the benefits of the diverse experiences of the attendees. The program includes the following:

1. Opening Ceremony:

The conference will commence with welcoming remarks from key officials, including the Minister of Education in Kuwait, the Secretary-

General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the Director General of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States, representatives of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), UNESCO, and the Director of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC).

2. Keynotes:

Keynote speeches will be delivered by prominent international experts at the beginning of the first and second days of the conference, highlighting the central issues related to transforming education, and the opportunities and challenges of enhancing the future of education in the Gulf countries. These keynotes represent the intellectual framework that outlines the conference discussions, and motivates participants to think critically about the topics it addresses.

3. Plenary Sessions:

The conference will feature four plenary sessions where papers on the main themes of the conference will be presented by experts and academics at both regional and international levels. These sessions will involve in-depth discussions on topics such as educational goals in light of global transformations, policies for supporting teachers in leading educational reform, the demands and challenges of digital transformation in education, and educational spending and system efficiency.

4. Roundtable Discussion:

A roundtable will be held on the evening of the first day, focusing on the theme: «Challenges in Transforming Education and Enhancing the Future of Education in the Gulf Countries.» This roundtable will involve educational leaders from ABEGS member states, conference speakers, and representatives of regional and international educational organizations. The roundtable aims to discuss the main challenges facing education in the region, and explore opportunities for cooperation between member states and regional and international organizations in areas related to transforming education in the Gulf countries.

5. Training Workshop:

A training workshop will be held on the evening of the first day of the conference on the topic of “Applications of Artificial Intelligence in Education”. The workshop aims to introduce participants to the latest technologies and innovations in the field of AI-based education, and enable them to acquire practical skills and experiences that can be applied in their educational environments.

6. Educational Exhibition:

Alongside the conference, an educational exhibition will be organized, featuring local and regional educational institutions and organizations. The exhibition will showcase the latest publications and projects in the field of educational development, offering participants the opportunity to explore pioneering educational initiatives and innovations. It will also provide a platform for direct interaction with exhibitors and access to the latest tools and educational resources.

Participants

The conference will bring together a distinguished group of experts, academics, and educational professionals from around the world, making it a unique platform for interaction and exchange of ideas and expertise. Approximately 250 participants are expected to attend this event, including prominent **speakers** who specialize in the conference’s themes, representing leading educational and research institutions from various global regions. Their participation offers a valuable opportunity to benefit from advanced international experiences and innovative global trends, contributing new insights into the transformations needed in the field of education.

In addition, the conference will feature **educational leaders from the Gulf States**, including undersecretaries of the Ministries of Education of ABEGS member states, who play a pivotal role in developing educational policies in their respective countries. Members of GASERC’s Board of Trustees will also participate, along with several educational specialists from the Ministries of Education of member states. This will help in enhancing regional cooperation in education and contributing to the formulation of effective strategies to address shared educational challenges, in light of contemporary international trends.

Moreover, **representatives from various regional and international organizations** involved in education and educational research, such as the UNESCO International Bureau of Education (IBE), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the Islamic World Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ICESCO), and the Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), will participate, adding an international dimension to the discussions and increasing opportunities for cross-border collaboration and knowledge sharing. Additionally, several **deans and professors from colleges of education** across the Gulf States, who play a key role in preparing and training teachers and building educational capacities, will be in attendance.

The conference will also host **researchers, academics, and practitioners** working in the field of education, who bring practical insights and field experiences to enhance the understanding of educational issues on the ground. Experts and researchers from the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States and its associated bodies will also be present, furthering the integration of research and practical efforts in the educational field.

This diversity among the participants fosters a rich environment for discussion and learning, enhancing the conference's ability to achieve its goals of supporting and promoting educational transformation in the Gulf States.

Working Languages

The languages used in all conference sessions are Arabic and English, with simultaneous interpretation services available.

Live Broadcast

The conference sessions will be broadcast live on GASERC YouTube channel, allowing interested parties to follow the conference speeches and discussions remotely.



Program



Day 1 (Tuesday| November 2024 ,5)

Opening ceremony	
08:45 - 09:15	Opening of the conference exhibition
09:15 - 10:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ National anthem of the State of Kuwait ◆ The Holy Quran ◆ His Excellency Eng. Jalal Al-Tabtabaei, Minister of Education in Kuwait ◆ His Excellency Mr. Jasem Al-Budaiwi, Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) ◆ Dr. Abdulrahman Al-Asimy, Director General of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) ◆ Mr. Svein Oesttveit, UNESCO-IBE Director a.i. ◆ Dr. Salem Al-Malik, Director General of the Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) ◆ Dr. Mohamed Al-Sharija, Director of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC)
Keynotes	
10:00 - 10:20	<p>Prof. Leonardo Garnier, Former Minister of Education in Costa Rica, and Special Advisor of UN Secretary General for the 2022 Transforming Education Summit</p> <p>Topic: Education challenges in a global, unequal and uncertain world</p>
10:20 - 10:35	<p>Dr. Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)</p> <p>Topic: The future of education: insights from PISA and OECD research evidence (via video)</p>
10:35 - 10:50	Coffee Break

Day 1 (Tuesday) November 5, 2024)

Plenary Session (1)

Goals of education: knowledge, skills and values for life,
work and sustainable development

Moderator: Prof. Ibrahim Al-Humaidan, General Supervisor of the Education
Research Center at Ministry of Education, Saudi Arabia

10:50 - 11:10

Renato Operti, Senior Expert at UNESCO's International Bureau of
Education

Topic: Transformative curriculum and pedagogy to support a
renewed vision of education and society

11:10 - 11:30

Dr. Hessa Al-Thani, Assistant Professor at the Department of Educa-
tional Sciences, and Former Dean of the College of Education, Qatar
University

Topic: Toward a Fulfilling Life for Building Sustainable Educational
Environments

11:30 - 11:50

Prof. Fernando Reimers, Professor of International Education at Har-
vard University

Topic: Educating Students for a better future (via video)

11:50 - 12:10

Prof. Najoua Ghriss, Professor at Higher Institute of Education and
Continuous Training, University of Tunis

Topic: Goals of education: knowledge, skills and values for life, work
and sustainable development

12:10 - 12:20

General Discussion

12:20 - 12:50

Coffee Break

Day 1 (Tuesday) November 2024 ,5)

Plenary Session (2)

Teaching Profession: teacher support policies to lead education transformation

Moderator: Dr. Subeh Al-Mukhizim, Faculty Member at the College of Engineering and Petroleum, Kuwait University

12:50 - 13:10	Dr. Lucy Bailey , Dean of Bahrain Teachers College Topic: The Teaching Career: teacher support policies to lead education transformation
13:10 - 13:30	Dr. Ora Kwo , Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong Topic: Opportunities for teacher development: Bridging the Gap between knowledge and practice
13:30 - 13:50	Carlos Vargas-Tamez , Chief of Section of Teacher Development, UNESCO, and Head of the Secretariat of the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 Topic: UNESCO/TTF Global Report on Teachers: Improving the attractiveness of teaching by reforming teacher career structure
13:50 - 14:10	Prof. Aisha Al-Harhi , Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration at the College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman Topic: Teacher Support Policies to Lead Transforming Education in the Arab Gulf States: Reality and Requirements
14:10 - 14:25	General Discussion
14:25 - 16:30	Lunch Break

Day 1 (Afternoon)

Two parallel activities

Roundtable Discussion on:

Challenges of transforming education and enhancing the future of education in the Gulf countries

Moderator: Prof. Abdul Salam Al-Joufi, Advisor, the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States

16:30 - 18:30

Participants in the roundtable:

- **Conference speakers**
- **Education Officials from Gulf Countries:**

Members of the Executive Council of the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (Deputy Ministers of Education)

Members of the Board of Trustees of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center

- **Representatives of International and Regional Educational Organizations**

Training Workshop on:

Applications of artificial intelligence in education

16:30 - 18:30

Workshop speaker: Dr. Nadia Al-Riyahi, Faculty Member, College of Education, Kuwait University

Day 2 (Wednesday | November 6, 2024)

Keynotes	
09:30 - 09:50	<p>Dr. Moudhi Al-Humoud, Chairman of Abdullah Al-Salem University Administrative Board</p> <p>Topic: Fourth Generation Education (EDU 4.0): From Digital Transformation to Artificial Intelligence</p>
09:50 - 10:10	<p>Prof. Blaženka Divjak, Professor of Mathematics and Information Science, Faculty of Organization and Informatics, University of Zagreb, and former Minister of Science and Education in Republic of Croatia</p> <p>Topic: Reimagining Education: What is the Role of Humans in the Era of AI?</p>
Plenary Session (3)	
Digital transformation in education: demands, opportunities and challenges	
Moderator: Dr. Mona Al-Janahi , Deputy Dean of the College of Education, United Arab Emirates University	
10:10 - 10:30	<p>Prof. Fengchun Miao, Chief of the Unit for Technology and AI in Education, Education Sector, UNESCO</p> <p>Topic: Human-centred AI in education: policies and competencies</p>
10:30 - 10:50	<p>Dr. Joseph South, Chief Innovation Officer at ISTE and ASCD</p> <p>Topic: Transformational Learning Principles: Bridging Technology and Pedagogy in Modern Classrooms</p>
10:50 - 11:10	<p>Dr. David Santandreu Calonge, Head of Educational Program Development, Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence, Abu Dhabi, UAE</p> <p>Topic: GenAI and the Future of Education in the Gulf Region</p>
11:10 - 11:30	<p>Prof. Fayeze Al-Dhafiri, Professor of Educational Technology at Kuwait University</p> <p>Topic: Digital Transformation in Education: Towards a Sustainable Education System</p>
11:30 - 11:45	General Discussion
11:45 - 12:15	Coffee Break

Day 2 (Wednesday | November 6, 2024)

Plenary Session (4)	
Financing of education and enhancing the efficiency of the educational system	
Moderator: Dr. Intisar Al-Banna , Educational Supervision Advisor, Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain	
12:15 - 12:35	Prof. Mark Bray , UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong Topic: Supplementing Schooling: Private Tutoring in the Gulf Countries and Beyond
12:35 - 12:55	Dr. Fadila Cailaud , Practice Manager for the Education Practice in the MENA region at the World Bank Topic: Stronger and Smarter investments in MENA countries
12:55 - 13:15	Dr. Maciej Jakubowski , Associate Professor, Warsaw University, and Director of the Educational Research Institute, Poland Topic: Education, Human capital and Economic growth in GCC countries
13:15 - 13:35	Prof. Nayyaf Al-jabri , CEO, Research Center for Assessment, Measurement, and Accreditation, Saudi Arabia Topic: The Economic Value of Improving the Quality of Education in the Arab Gulf States
13:35 - 13:50	General Discussion
Closing Session	
13:50 - 14:00	Dr. Khalaf Al-Abri , Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration, College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman Topic: The final statement of the conference
14:00 - 14:10	Closing address by Dr. Mohamed Al-Sharija , Director of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center

Speakers

(in order of appearance at the conference)



Prof. Leonardo Garnier

Former Minister of Education in Costa Rica, and Special Advisor of UN Secretary General for the 2022 Transforming Education Summit



Costa Rican, born in San José in 1955. Bachelor and Licentiate of Economics from the University of Costa Rica, with an MA and a Ph.D. degree in Economics and Political Economy from the Graduate Faculty, New School for Social Research, New York.

He recently acted as the UN Secretary General's Special Adviser for the 2022 Transforming Education Summit.

He was Minister of National Planning and Economic Policy in Costa Rica during the Administration of José María Figueres Olsen (1994-1998), and Minister of Public Education during the second Administration of Oscar Arias Sánchez (2006-2010) and the Administration of Laura Chinchilla Miranda (2010-2014).

From 1975 to 2022 he worked at the University of Costa Rica, where he was a Professor at the School of Economics and a researcher at the Research Institute in Economic Sciences. He also worked at the School of Economics and the International Center for Economic Policy for Sustainable Development at the National University in Costa Rica.

He has worked as a consultant on issues of economic policy, social policy, and public management for various international organizations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). He was a member of the Scientific Council of the Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD).

He has published articles in magazines and books on economic and social issues related to economic and social development. Together with Laura Cristina Blanco, he authored the book «Costa Rica: an almost successful underdeveloped country», by Editorial URUK. He has also written several fiction books: "Mono Congo y León Panzón" and "Gracias a Usted", both with Editorial Farben-Norma, and "El Sastrecillo valiente?" published by CIDCLI in Mexico, Argentina and Brazil.

Dr. Andreas Schleicher

Director for Education and Skills at the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)



Andreas Schleicher is Director for Education and Skills at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). He initiated and oversees the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and other international instruments that have created a global platform for policy-makers, researchers and educators across nations and cultures to innovate and transform educational policies and practices.

He has worked for over 20 years with ministers and education leaders around the world to improve quality and equity in education. Former U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan said that Schleicher “understands the global issues and challenges as well as or better than anyone I’ve met, and he tells me the truth” (The Atlantic, July 11). UK Secretary of State Michael Gove called Schleicher “the most important man in English education” – even though he is German and lives in France.

Before joining the OECD, he was Director for Analysis at the International Association for Educational Achievement (IEA). He studied Physics in Germany and received a degree in Mathematics and Statistics in Australia. He is the recipient of numerous honours and awards, including the “Theodor Heuss” prize, awarded in the name of the first president of the Federal Republic of Germany for “exemplary democratic engagement”. He holds an honorary Professorship at the University of Heidelberg.

Renato Operti

Senior Expert, UNESCO International Bureau
for Education (IBE)



Mr. Renato Operti holds a degree in sociology (UDELAR, Uruguay) and a master's degree in educational research (CIEP-Uruguay/IRDC-Canada). Operti is a senior expert at the International Bureau of Education (UNESCO-IBE) where he contributes to IBE knowledge production, capacity development, technical assistance and the implementation of several UNESCO-IBE flagship initiatives such as HELA (Hybrid Education, Learning and Assessment) and green and blue curriculum.

Operti supports the implementation of several UNESCO initiatives, namely: (i) the 2023 "Recommendation on Education for Peace and Human Rights, International Understanding, Cooperation, Fundamental Freedoms, Global Citizenship and Sustainable Development"; (ii) the flagship initiative "General History of Africa" (GHA); and (iii) the Futures of Education.

Operti is the President of the Council of Advisers of the Organization of Iberoamerican States (OEI) which is the highest consulting and advisory board with regard to policies and strategies. Likewise, he coordinates the UNESCO-UCU Chair on Hybrid Education localized at the Catholic University of Uruguay (UCU). He teaches at UCU and other universities on international trends in education.

Operti is a frequent lecturer on issues relating to the transformation of education and the curriculum at international and national events.

Operti is a member of the Latinoamerican Coalition for Teachers Excellence which is a joint initiative of the Varkey Foundation, the Interamerican Dialogue and the OEI.

During the last years, Operti has supported several countries – MOEs, civil society and international organizations – in addressing educational and curricular challenges posed by COVID-19 through capacity development and knowledge production. Recently, Operti has contributed to the implementation of several of the TES (Transforming Education Summit) Calls to Actions led by UNESCO.

Operti has managed the Programme "Innovation and Leadership in Curriculum, Learning and Assessment" at IBE-UNESCO (2006-2019), providing support to countries in different regions. Also, Operti has worked for several intergovernmental organizations such as CAF, ECLA, IDB, UNDP, World Bank and UNICEF.

He has numerous publications in several languages relating to education, curriculum, learning, inclusive education and hybrid modes of education. Among the last ones, we refer to one think piece "Ten clues for rethinking curriculum" (2021, English, French and Spanish), and to four books: "Education in times of planetary rethinking" (2021, Spanish), "Curriculum in transformation mode" (2022, Arabic, English and Spanish), "Connecting ideas and sensibilities in education" (2023, Spanish), and "Educating and learning for better futures" (2024, Spanish).

Dr. Hessa Hamad Al-Thani

Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Sciences, and Former Dean of the College of Education, Qatar University



Dr. Hessa Hamad Khalifa Al-Thani is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Sciences. She was Dean of the College of Education at Qatar University. Al-Thani is passionate about promoting holistic teaching, experiential learning, and incorporating methods related to institutional wellbeing. Her work focuses on learning that is guided by students' interests, motivations, and their diverse background. Al-Thani is dedicated to exploring and adopting diversified approaches in curriculum transformation in teaching and learning and renovating those to become experiential, entrepreneurial, and collaborative. Al-Thani strongly advocates the development and introduction of innovative programs that focus on building generations of responsible and engaged citizens.

As an educator, Al-Thani participates in several projects and work teams for strategic planning to address teaching and learning challenges, such as mentoring students and teachers in the K-12 education system. As a member of the faculty at Qatar University from 2019 until now, Al-Thani participates in university-wide projects to develop new methods of teaching and learning and develop educational program, and empowering community members and enhancing family cohesion.

Al-Thani serves on a multiple steering committees and task forces, at both college and country levels, which address a myriad of learning and institutional challenges and shift the focus from adopting traditional learning methods to embracing key elements of institutional wellbeing for all stakeholder students, educators and programs.

As part of her professional affiliation with international organizations, Al-Thani's expertise includes strategic planning, organizational restructuring, community engagement methods, and policy analysis. During her tenure at RAND Corporation, Al-Thani conducted extensive research in areas related to K-12 and Higher Education reform and stakeholders' management. Al-Thani was the president of the Supreme Council of Family Affairs from 2009-2011. Her role at (QSCFA) focused on initiating policies and programs to promote the wellbeing of families in Qatar, empowering women, motivating children & youth, providing elderly care, and protecting people with special needs.

Prof. Fernando Reimers

Professor of International Education at Harvard University



Fernando M. Reimers is the Ford Foundation Professor of International Education and Director of the Global Education Innovation Initiative at Harvard University. His work focuses on how schools can empower students to participate in civic and economic life, contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As an elected member of the United States National Academy of Education and the International Academy of Education, he has held prominent roles, including serving on UNESCO's Commission on the Futures of Education. His research spans educational innovation, education policy, leadership, and teacher professional development.

Reimers has authored numerous books, such as *One Student at a Time* and *Leading Education Through COVID-19*, which highlight his commitment to global education reform and the role of education during crises. His recent publications, including *Empowering Teachers to Build a Better World* and *Educating Students to Improve the World*, provide frameworks for educational reforms that support the holistic development of students. His work extends across various countries, influencing curricula, teacher training, and education system reforms aimed at enhancing student competencies for the 21st century.

In addition to his research and teaching, Reimers has collaborated with UNESCO and other global organizations to advance educational goals, particularly focusing on global citizenship and sustainable development. He serves on the boards of several educational organizations, advising governments, foundations, and educational bodies on strategic educational initiatives. Reimers holds a Doctorate and Master's degrees from Harvard University and has received numerous awards for his contributions to global education, including the Global Citizenship Award and the International Institute of Education Centennial Medal.

Prof. Najoua Fezzaa Ghriss

Professor at Higher Institute of Education and Continuous Training, University of Tunis



Najoua Fezzaa Ghriss is a Professor at the Higher Institute of Education and Continuous Training at the University of Tunis. Prof. Ghriss holds a PhD in Educational Sciences jointly from the University of Tunisia and the University of Louvain-La-Neuve in Belgium. She was Head of the Assessment in Education project at the Education, Cognition, Technologies and Didactic research unit at ECOTIDI-The Virtual University of Tunis; and a consultant for the International Cooperation Foundation of the German Association for Adult Education (DVV International), North Africa branch. Prof. Ghriss was a co-author of the 2011 and 2014 Arab Knowledge Reports, the main author of the 2015 and 2016 Arab Knowledge Index reports, and a member of core team of the Global Knowledge Index 2017-2021 (within the Knowledge Project of the United Nations Development Programme and the Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum Knowledge Foundation).

Prof. Ghriss is the main researcher of the study «Best Practices in Dealing with Large-Scale International Studies» (Regional Center for Quality and Excellence in Education 2022-2023), a member of the Scientific Committee of the Arab Model for Quality and Excellence in Education Project of the Regional Center for Quality and Excellence in Education (2023-2024), and a part-time consultant and member of the Scientific Committee of the Regional Center for Quality and Excellence in Education. She is also a collaborating expert with ALECSO in the fields of research, training and arbitration.

Prof. Ghriss has many contributions as a part-time educational expert to regional and international organizations, including: the International Center for Pedagogical Studies in France (France Education International- Sèvres), UNESCO, the Arab Council for Childhood and Development in Cairo, and the UNDP Regional Office for Arab States in Amman. Her research interests in published works and participations in scientific conferences include: educational measurement and evaluation, comparative studies, educational innovation, building indicators and evaluation tools, and analyzing the results of national and international student assessments.

Dr. Lucy Bailey

Dean of Bahrain Teachers College



Associate Professor Dr Lucy Bailey is Dean of Bahrain Teachers College (BTC), part of the University of Bahrain. She holds a PhD from the University of Bristol, an MA and a PGCE from London University's Institute of Education, and a BA from the University of Oxford.

Dr Bailey is a highly experienced educational leader, who has developed professional development programmes to upskill teachers across Asia. For example, she was Director of the Master Trainers Strand of the Bangladesh College Education Development Project, a multi-million dollar consortium led by the University of Nottingham and the World Bank to train college teachers across Bangladesh. She also launched Masters in Education programmes in Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Formerly a secondary school teacher, she is expert in communicating practical teaching and educational leadership skills.

Under her leadership, the Bahrain Teachers College has launched Model Teaching Schools in collaboration with the Bahraini Ministry of Education, a new initiative for the Kingdom of Bahrain. It has also revised and improved all its pre-service and in-service initial teacher training. In addition, the BTC Leadership Centre has restarted its activities, and now plays a key role in supporting the Ministry of Education to upskill school leaders.

Dr Bailey is also a skilled researcher, and is considered a global expert on the internationalisation of schooling and higher education. Her other research interests include parental engagement in education, and cultural constructions of gender. She has conducted empirical research studies in many countries, including Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, China, the United Kingdom, and Denmark. She has spoken at research and education conferences worldwide.

Dr. Ora Kwo

Faculty of Education, University of Hong Kong



Ora Kwo served for over three decades in teacher education at the University of Hong Kong (HKU). She was/is driven by her aspiration to seek meanings of educational development in individual and society-wide environments, when she constantly crossed boundaries to extend her learning spaces. The HKU award of University of Teaching Fellowship in 1997 recognized her teaching excellence, and stimulated her inter-disciplinary interest in scholarship of teaching and learning, for which she collaborated with colleagues for cultivation of learning environments.

Her professional life extended beyond HKU when she became an honorary professor in Hangzhou Normal University for a decade (2001-2010). Alongside, she clearly identified with the HKU mission in international collaboration on research and publications. Her work on the power of community discourse of inquiry led to edited volumes entitled *Developing Learning Environments: Creativity, Motivation and Collaboration in Higher Education* (2004), *Uncovering the Inner Power of Teachers' Lives* (2004), and *Teachers as Learners: Critical Discourse on Challenges and Opportunities* (2010).

During 2006-2009, Ora Kwo took sabbatical leave in Paris, where she participated in UNESCO global conferences and undertook consultancy assignments. Following resumption of her duties in HKU, she led a project to involve colleagues in curriculum innovation for student teachers to be prepared for implementation of Hong Kong's senior secondary school education reform. Her ongoing interests focus on educational leadership amidst the gaps between policy and practice, and between forces in mainstream schooling and private supplementary tutoring. Her vision of humanitarian education engages her in empowerment of young academics for full development as educators. A sense of educational purpose is always with her in her collaborative educational inquiries. She believes that there is no ceiling to creativity and problem-solving when inquisitive minds meet compassionate hearts.

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Prof. Aisha Salim Al-Harthi

Professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration at the College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman



Aisha Salim Al-Harthi is a professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration at the College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University. She holds a PhD in Adult Education, specializing in distance education, from the University of Pennsylvania, USA, and a master's degree in vocational and Continuing Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. She served as Head of the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration at Sultan Qaboos University from 2014 to 2018. Prof. Al-Harthi's research interests include: learner self-regulation, especially in online learning environments, micro-credential modules, massive open online courses (MOOCs), as well as teacher preparation programs and international teacher education standards. She is also interested in secondary vocational education, entrepreneurship education, lifelong learning, educational management and leadership and their current trends.

Prof. Aisha Al-Harthi has many publications in international and regional journals in the fields of distance education and educational administration. She has 8 books and book chapters and has presented scholarly papers in 41 international and local conferences, and obtained 15 funded research projects. She has participated in supervising and discussing 72 master's and doctoral theses. One of her most prominent achievements is the establishment of a platform for massive open online courses at Sultan Qaboos University (SQU MOOC). She has received many awards, including The Mildred and Charles Wedemeyer Award for the best researcher in distance education for the year 2011, the National Award for Research in the category of PhD holders from the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation in the Sultanate of Oman for the year 2022, and a national recognition on Omani Women's Day, the category of distinguished female researchers from the Ministry of Social Development, for the year 2022.

Carlos Vargas-Tamez

Chief of Section of Teacher Development, UNESCO, and Head of the Secretariat of the International Taskforce on Teachers for Education 2030



Mr Carlos Vargas is a sociologist of education who specializes on global education policy. His research and publications focus on the relationship between education, human rights and well-being; the orientations and discourses of public policy and their effects on society. He has worked for universities, civil society, international organisations and local governments across the globe implementing lifelong learning policies and analysing their intersection with equity, inclusion, and social justice. Since 2015, he works for UNESCO, where he has coordinated research on the social relevance and cultural pertinence of education in five continents and led the Organization's work on teachers, inclusion and lifelong learning in Latin America and the Caribbean. At present, he leads the Section of Teacher Development at UNESCO's Headquarters and the Secretariat of the International Taskforce on Teachers for Education 2030.

Dr. Moudhi Al-Humoud

Chairman of Abdullah Al-Salem University Administrative Board, and Former Minister of Education, Higher Education and Scientific Research in Kuwait



An academic, writer, political and social activist specialized in management science and strategic planning.

Chairman of Abdullah Al-Salem University Administrative Board since September 2021.

Held several academic and administrative positions at Kuwait University, served as President of the Arab Open University for two terms from 2004 to 2008 and then from 2013 to 2018. She also held a few ministerial positions as Minister for Housing Affairs, Minister for Development Affairs from May 2008 to January 2009, and Minister of Education and Higher Education from 2009 to 2014.

Member of the Supreme Committee for the State Appreciation and Encouragement Awards from 2019 until now. Member of the Board of Trustees of the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research since 2017 until now. Member of the Board of Directors of the Kuwait Fund for Economic Development from 2018 to 2020. Member of the Supreme Council for Planning and Development in the Government of Kuwait from 2004 to 2008, in addition to her membership in the Higher Advisory Board of the Arab Planning Institute from 1999 to 2008. She has also been a member of several advisory boards and committees at the GCC and international levels. She also participates in political and social debates to support the political rights of Kuwaiti women and to consolidate democratic practices.

She holds a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Kuwait University in 1973 with distinction with first class honors, an MBA from the University of North Texas (USA) in 1976, and a PhD in Business Administration from the City University of London in 1979.

She has many researches in the field of management and organizational behavior, and has a weekly newspaper article in the Kuwaiti newspaper Al-Qabas.

Prof. Blaženka Divjak

Professor of Mathematics and Information Science, Faculty of Organization and Informatics, University of Zagreb, and former Minister of Science and Education in Republic of Croatia



Professor Blaženka Divjak, PhD, is a full professor of Mathematics and a scientific advisor in Information Science at the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Organization and Informatics. She also heads the Laboratory for Learning Analytics and Academic Analytics. She holds a PhD in Mathematics from the University of Zagreb, Faculty of Science and Mathematics.

Her areas of interest and expertise include learning analytics, learning design, e-learning, assessment, AI in education, strategic decision-making in higher education, the Bologna process, and the social dimension of higher education.

Professor Divjak has been a coordinator or researcher in over 40 national and international projects. Currently, she coordinates the Innovating Learning Design in Higher Education (iLed) Erasmus+ project and the Trustworthy Learning Analytics and Artificial Intelligence for Meaningful Learning Design (TRUELA) project funded by the Croatian Science Foundation. She recently concluded the Erasmus+ project Relevant Assessment and Pedagogies for Inclusive Digital Education (RAPIDE). She has led the research group that designed the concept and the Balanced Learning Design Planning tool, which is used in more than 30 countries.

She served as Vice-Rector for Students and Study Programs at the University of Zagreb (2010-2014) and was twice elected Vice-Dean for Scientific Work and International Cooperation during 1999-2003 and 2007-2010 at the Faculty of Organization and Informatics.

Professor Divjak was the Croatian Minister of Science and Education (2017-2020). In this role, she led four major national reform processes: curricular reform of general education, reform of vocational education and training, enhancement of the relevance of higher education, and excellence in research. She chaired the EU Council of Ministers for Education and for Research and Space during the Croatian presidency in 2020. During this period, she coordinated the EU response to the COVID-19 crisis in education and research.

She is the Vice-President of the Society for Learning Analytics Research (SOLAR) and a member of the Research Advisory Board of the Global Research Alliance for AI in Learning and Education (GRAILE). Professor Divjak has served as president and member of various university, national, and international committees and councils in education and science. She is the author of 8 books and over 150 scientific and professional papers in the fields of mathematics (differential geometry), strategic planning in higher education and research, mathematical education, project management, higher education reform, curriculum development, learning analytics, e-learning, and science communication.

She has been an invited speaker at more than 30 international conferences.

CV: <https://www.foi.unizg.hr/en/staff/blazenka.divjak>

Prof. Fengchun Miao

Chief of the Unit for Technology and AI in Education, Education Sector, UNESCO



Dr Fengchun Miao is the Chief of the Unit for Technology and Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education at Education Sector, UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, he is also a Professor (on leave) of Beijing Normal University of China. He is leading programmes of the Education Sector of UNESCO on technology and AI in education including the programmes on guidance for generative AI in education, AI competency frameworks for school students and teachers, the report on AI and the Futures of Learning, as well as supporting policies on digital education, AI and education, and Open Educational Resources. He is managing UNESCO Prize for the Use of ICTs in Education. He is the education focal point of UNESCO's inter-sectoral Taskforce for AI, intersectoral programmes on the implementation of the Recommendation for the Ethics of AI, and the inter-UN-agency Working Group for AI.

Highlights of his achievements include leading the organization of 4 editions of international forums on AI and education (2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022) and the development and adoption of the Beijing Consensus on AI and Education; the launch and continuous organization of Mobile Learning Week of UNESCO for 9 years and the launch of the new UNESCO flagship annual event Digital Learning Week in 2023. He is the leading author of more than 20 important publications of UNESCO in various domains of digital education, including: Guidance for generative AI in education and research; Guidelines for ICT in education policies and masterplans; AI and education: guidance for policy-makers; Guidelines on the development of open educational resources policies; Education and Blockchain; K-12 AI curricula: A mapping of government-endorsed AI curricula; Open educational resources: policy, costs, transformation; Innovative use of technology in education: Winning projects of UNESCO's King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize. From 2022 to 2023, five reports he produced were ranked within top 50 in consultation and download among all publications of UNESCO. He has mobilized more than USD 30M of extra-budgetary funds and launched around 20 large-scale projects to build national capacities of Member States. And he has coordinated the support for more than 70 countries in the formation of national digital education policies.

Dr. Joseph South

Chief Innovation Officer at ISTE and ASCD



Dr. Joseph South is the Chief Innovation Officer at ISTE + ASCD. He is an internationally recognized educational technology leader focused on evidence-based learning transformation. Joseph leads cross-sector initiatives that include helping thousands of educators prepare the next generation of AI designers, increasing the quality of ed tech products in classrooms by working with both solution providers and education leaders to make better buying decisions, and certifying educators in the ISTE Standards. He serves on the steering committee of TeachAI.org and the advisory board for AI4K12.org.

He formerly served as director of the Office of Educational Technology at the U.S. Department of Education. In this role he advised the Secretary of Education, developed national educational technology policy, formed public-private partnerships to assist state and local education leaders in transitioning to digital learning, helped school districts expand the use of openly licensed educational resources (OER), and collaborated to nurture a robust ecosystem of edtech entrepreneurs and innovators.

He holds a doctorate in instructional psychology and technology from Brigham Young University.

Dr. David Santandreu Calonge

Head of Educational Program Development, Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence, Abu Dhabi, UAE



Dr. David Santandreu Calonge is Acting Director (Academic Development) and Head of Educational Program Development at Mohamed bin Zayed University of Artificial Intelligence (MBZUAI, United Arab Emirates). He is an award-winning academic and has previously worked in Hong Kong, South Korea, Australia, and Dubai and has written in the areas of education policy, Generative AI in Learning and Teaching, MOOCs, innovative curriculum design, and disruptive technologies in education.

Prof. Fayez Al-Dhafiri

Professor of Educational Technology at Kuwait University



Prof. Fayez Al-Dhafiri is a Professor of Educational Technology at Kuwait University. He has held a number of leadership positions at Kuwait University, including the position of University President and Dean of the College of Education. He also served as a Cultural Attaché at the Embassy of the State of Kuwait in the United Kingdom. Prof. Al-Dhafiri holds a PhD from the University of North Texas, USA, a Master's degree in Education from Ohio University, USA, and a Bachelor's degree in Education from Kuwait University. He specializes in education and educational technology applications, and obtained a Leadership Certificate from Harvard University in 2005.

Prof. Al-Dhafiri previously held several positions at the College of Education at Kuwait University, including Assistant Dean for Academic Affairs, Research and Graduate Studies; Assistant Dean for Research, Consulting and Training; and Head of the Department of Curricula and Teaching Methods. He also served as Director of the Center for Practical Education and Director of the Center for Educational Technology at the university. He was the manager of the Digital Transformation of Education Project in the State of Kuwait (2020-2021), and worked as an educational advisor to the Ministry of Education in 2020. He also was a member of the Board of Directors of the Center for the Gulf and Arabian Peninsula Studies (2020-2023), and an educational expert at the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) (2020-2021).

Prof. Al-Dhafiri has won 6 prestigious scientific awards, including The Kuwait Foundation for the Advancement of Sciences Award in 2017. He is an editorial board member of several scientific journals, has authored 7 scientific books, and has published 40 scientific research papers in local, regional and international peer-reviewed journals, in addition to 14 scientific papers published in peer-reviewed scientific conference publications. Prof. Al-Dhafiri is a member of 8 international professional associations in the field of education. He has contributed to 44 master's theses as a main supervisor and discussant. He has participated in more than 70 local and international academic conferences, and has participated in more than 200 committees in various government sectors, including Kuwait University.

Prof. Mark Bray

UNESCO Chair Professor in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong, and Former Director of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)



Prof. Mark Bray holds the UNESCO Chair in Comparative Education at the University of Hong Kong. He began his career as a teacher in Kenya and Nigeria, and then taught at the Universities of Edinburgh, Papua New Guinea and London before moving to Hong Kong in 1986. Between 2006 and 2010 he was Director in Paris of UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP); and between 2018 and 2023 he was a Distinguished Chair Professor at East China Normal University in Shanghai.

Professor Bray has conducted extensive work for national governments directly and through international agencies including UNESCO, UNICEF, the Asian Development Bank, and the World Bank. He is also a past-president of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies (WCCES) and of the US-based Comparative & International Education Society (CIES).

Since the 1990s, much of Professor Bray's research and policy-oriented work has focused on the so-called shadow education system of private supplementary tutoring. His publications on this theme address patterns in all continents, and in addition to academic impact have been cited in documents for UNESCO, the United Nations General Assembly, the Commonwealth Secretariat, and other bodies.

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Dr. Fadila Caillaud

Practice Manager for the Education Practice in the MENA region at the World Bank



Fadila Caillaud is a Manager in the World Bank's Education Global Practice, responsible for the portfolios of 19 countries across the Middle East and North Africa.

A French national, Fadila has over 20 years of experience leading and managing large-scale Human Development engagements and senior-level client relationships. She has worked in over 20 countries including low and middle income and fragile and conflict affected countries. Prior to joining the Bank, she was a core member of the EFA Global Monitoring Report Team based at UNESCO, and co-authored five editions of the Report, focusing on the financing of education in developing countries. Her published work includes papers and reports on financing and governance reforms for better human capital outcomes; the impact of gender inequality in education on long term economic growth; and decentralization and school-based management.

She holds a Ph.D. in Macroeconomics from the Marseille School of Economics and a master's degree in international education from La Sorbonne University.

Dr. Maciej Jakubowski

Associate Professor, Warsaw University, and Director of the Educational Research Institute, Poland



Maciej Jakubowski is a policymaker and researcher in education and labour market policy. He is director of the Education Research Institute in Poland, which is a national institution under the Ministry of Education responsible for data collection and analysis. He holds a Ph.D. in economics and an MA in sociology from the University of Warsaw, where he works at the Faculty of Economic Sciences. His research focuses on statistical methods for policy impact evaluation and the analysis of international large-scale student assessments. He served as a Deputy Minister at the Polish Ministry of National Education between 2012 and 2014. In 2014, he established Evidence Institute in Poland to promote evidence-based policymaking and teaching practice. Before joining the government, he worked in the OECD PISA team in Paris (between 2008 and 2012). He works as a consultant for governments and international institutions, including the World Bank, OECD, European Commission, UNESCO, and others. Since 2012, he works in Saudi Arabia on projects related to data analysis and survey collection. He worked with PEEC between 2012 and 2016, implementing large-scale national assessment of Saudi students. From 2020, he works with ETEC on statistical analysis of international and national large-scale assessments in Saudi Arabia. In between, he worked on projects analyzing data from labour market, education sector, household surveys, and other sources providing expertise in statistical analysis and survey design.

Prof. Nayyaf Aljabri

CEO, Research Center for Assessment, Measurement, and Accreditation at the Education and Training Evaluation Commission



Professor Nayyaf Aljabri is an accomplished educational leader with extensive experience in education policy, leadership, and research. He currently serves as the Executive Director of the Research Center for Assessment, Measurement, and Accreditation at the Education and Training Evaluation Commission. Prior to this role, he held senior positions within the Ministry of Education, including Deputy Minister for Planning and Development and Deputy Minister for K-12 Education. He also served as Dean of the College of Education at Taibah University, Vice-Dean for Quality, and Chairman of the Department of Educational Management. Professor Aljabri has played a key leadership role in spearheading development projects both nationally and institutionally. He also has led multiple international collaborations with the OECD, the World Bank, Harvard University, and George Washington University.

His expertise has been sought by numerous government agencies, universities, and advisory boards, where he has contributed as a member of their boards of directors, trustees, or advisors. After earning a Ph.D. in education economics from the University of Manchester in the UK, Professor Aljabri has significantly developed his professional and academic experience. Professionally, he has extensively dedicated himself to leading reforms and improvement initiatives at both K-12 and higher education levels.

Academically, he has built his expertise around the economic evaluation of education and the analysis of policy and practice. He applies multivariate statistics, quantitative non-parametric models, and qualitative methods to scrutinize quality, efficiency, and equity in education. His work focuses on the cost-effectiveness of decision options for better resource utilization to improve learning outcomes, student competencies, and the quality of institutions, leaders, and educators. Professor Aljabri has participated in and led numerous national research projects and has published extensively in regional and international journals and conferences. As a dedicated educator, he has taught over 10 courses, primarily at the postgraduate level. He has also provided mentorship and guidance to numerous graduate students, supervising and examining their Master's and Doctoral theses.

Dr. Khalaf Al-Abri

Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration, College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman



Dr. Khalaf Al-Abri is an Associate Professor and Head of the Department of Educational Foundations and Administration at the College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. He is a prominent academic figure in the field of educational policies and education systems in Oman and the Arabian Gulf. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Education, English Language, from Sultan Qaboos University in 2006, and then continued his studies at the University of Queensland, Australia, where he obtained his Master's and PhD in Educational Leadership and Education Systems and Policies.

Dr. Al-Abri has over 18 years of experience in higher education and academic research, with his research focusing on studying the impact of globalization on education systems and policies, especially in the Gulf countries. He is also interested in research on academic accreditation, education for global citizenship, sustainable development goals, and internationalization of education. Through this research, Dr. Al-Abri seeks to provide strategic solutions to address the challenges posed by globalization on education systems in the region.

Al-Abri has held several leadership positions, including Director of the Main Library at Sultan Qaboos University (2020-2022) and Head of the Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation Unit at the College of Education (2016-2020). He also served as a visiting professor at the University of Toronto, Canada (2022-2023), and is a UNESCO expert in the field of education for global citizenship. Dr. Al-Abri currently serves as President of the Gulf Society for Comparative Education, and is an active member of several professional associations, including the Australian Education Association, the International and Comparative Education Association, and the Egyptian Society for Management and Comparative Education.

Dr. Al-Abri has participated in many international conferences, and has a large number of published research papers in peer-reviewed scientific journals and chapters in specialized books. He has received several prestigious awards, including the UNESCO "Global Citizen" Award (2019), and the "Distinguished Researcher" Award from Sultan Qaboos University (2022). Dr. Al-Abri is one of the leading voices in studying the impact of globalization on education in the Gulf countries and its role in enhancing the quality of education and directing it towards achieving sustainable development.

Dr. Nadia Al-Riahi

Assistant Professor at College of Education, Kuwait University



Dr. Nadia Jassim Al-Riahi is an Assistant Professor and Faculty Member at the College of Education, Kuwait University, majoring in Educational Technology. She obtained her BA from Kuwait University, majoring in English Language Teaching, before obtaining her MA in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from the University of Nottingham, UK, in 2010. She then received a scholarship to complete her MA in Educational Technology from the University of Delaware in 2016, and then obtained her PhD from Ohio University in 2020.

Dr. Nadia Al-Riahi began her career as a teacher trainer and lecturer at the College of Education in 2021. Her research interests include studying technology-enabled active learning environments, blended learning, the integrated multi-theoretical approach to learning, artificial intelligence and modern technologies, teacher professional development, technology-based teaching methods, and instructional design. Dr. Nadia Al-Riyahi has held some supervisory positions, including: Head of the Digital Transformation Unit at the College of Education (2022-2023), Director of the Education Development Center (2024 to date), and chaired the first conference on digital transformation at the College of Education, Kuwait University, in 2024.

Session Moderators



Prof. Abdulsalam Al-Joufi

Advisor at the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS)



Prof. Abdulsalam Al-Joufi held the position of Minister of Education in the Republic of Yemen from 2003 to 2011, and is currently working as an advisor at the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS). He holds a PhD in Chemistry from United Kingdom in 1993, and has held several university positions in the Republic of Yemen, including Deanship of the Faculty of Education, Sana'a University, and the Faculty of Education, Ibb University. He also served as Vice President of Ibb University and Sana'a University. Prof. Al-Joufi has thirteen published research papers in international scientific journals, and three books, and has actively participated in organizing many regional and international scientific and educational conferences. He has supervised and discussed a number of master's theses, and has a presence in the press through publishing dozens of articles that address higher education and community issues.

Prof. Al-Joufi has been a member of many scientific and professional committees at the regional and international levels, such as the Steering Committee of the Global Partnership for Education Program, the Steering Committee of the Arab Program for Improving Education at the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the Advisory Board of the Regional Center for Quality and Excellence, the Higher Steering Board for Education 2030 of UNESCO, and the Steering Committee of the UNESCO's International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030. Prof. Al-Joufi has chaired several international conferences, including the General Conference of the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization in its seventeenth session, and the 48th International Conference on Education in Geneva in 2008.

Prof. Ibrahim Al-Humaidan

General Supervisor of the Education Research Center at Ministry of Education, Saudi Arabia



Prof. Ibrahim bin Abdullah Al-Humaidan is a professor of curricula and teaching methods at King Saud University, and currently holds the position of General Supervisor of the Education Research Center at the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. He is also a member of the Board of Trustees of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASEC). Dr. Prof. Al-Humaidan holds a PhD in Education, specializing in Curricula and Teaching Methods, from King Saud University, a Master's degree from the same university, and a Bachelor's degree from the College of Social Sciences at Imam Muhammad bin Saud Islamic University.

On the professional level, Prof. Al-Humaidan has held several positions in the Saudi Ministry of Education, including General Supervisor of the Executive Program for the Development of Academic Curricula, Assistant Director General of Education for Educational Affairs in the Riyadh Region in 2006, Director of the Education Office in 2004, and Assistant Director of the Education Office in East Riyadh in 1999. Prof. Al-Humaidan has made numerous contributions in the fields of education and training, with a special interest in developing curricula and teaching methods. He has presented many courses and meetings on education in the age of knowledge, teaching and thinking.

He is also the author of many books, most notably "Education in the Age of Knowledge", and "Teaching and Thinking", and has many research papers published in educational journals, which address topics such as global education, digital citizenship, reflective thinking, and the use of technology in education. At the academic level, he worked as the head of the team developing the standards for the Education Excellence Award, and participated in preparing the standards for the distinguished school and teacher. He also led several research projects aimed at developing curricula and improving the quality of education in Saudi Arabia. Prof. Al-Humaidan has received many awards and certificates of thanks and appreciation from various sectors, and has participated in many international scientific conferences, making him a prominent figure in the field of education development in Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Subeh Al-Mukhizim

Faculty Member at the College of Engineering
and Petroleum, Kuwait University



Dr. Subeh Al-Mukhaizeem is a prominent Kuwaiti academic and electrical engineer, holding a Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering from Yale University and a Master of Science in Computer Science and Engineering from the University of California, San Diego. He began his academic career as an assistant professor in the Department of Computer Engineering at Kuwait University, where he contributed to the development of curricula and teaching, and rose through the academic ranks until he assumed the position of Dean of Admissions and Registration, where he supervised the development of electronic systems that improved the academic processes of students.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem has held several leadership positions in the higher education sector, including Undersecretary of the Ministry of Higher Education, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Arabian Gulf University, and Chairman of the Ministry of Higher Education Scholarships Committee. He has also led several national and regional committees, such as the Committee for Equivalency of Academic Degrees after High School, and contributed to improving educational policies and ensuring the quality of education in Kuwait.

Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem has participated in prominent academic and regulatory councils and committees, such as the Board of Directors of the National Authority for Academic Accreditation, the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, and the Kuwait Institute for Scientific Research. He was also a member of the Executive Board of the UNESCO International Bureau of Education and a member of the Board of Directors of the UNESCO Institute of Statistics. Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem has received several honorary awards, including the Distinguished Work Center Award from Kuwait University, and has scientific contributions that include more than 90 published research papers and two patents. Thanks to his extensive experience and achievements, Dr. Al-Mukhaizeem is an influential figure in the development of higher education in the State of Kuwait and has a clear imprint on improving the quality of education and academic policies in the country.

Dr. Mona Al-Janahi

Deputy Dean of the College of Education, United Arab Emirates University



Dr. Mona Humaid Al-Janahi is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Curricula and Teaching Methods at the College of Education, United Arab Emirates University. She currently holds the position of Deputy Dean of the College of Education at the university, and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center (GASERC). She holds a PhD in Curricula and Teaching Methods with a focus on Language and Literacy. She has previously held various positions related to teaching English in federal and private educational institutions in the United Arab Emirates. Her research interests include literacy, popular culture, language learning, and language arts. Her research studies have been published in Q1 Scopus indexed journals and she is an active reviewer in international scientific journals in the field of teaching English as a second language. In addition, Dr. Al-Janahi has presented papers at many local and international conferences on various topics in her areas of expertise.

Dr. Intisar Al-Banna

Educational Advisor at the Ministry of Education
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Dr. Intisar Qaed Al-Banna has been an educational advisor at the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain since 2022. She has extensive experience in the fields of literary criticism and education. She holds a PhD in Modern Literary Criticism (2013), a Higher Diploma in Education from the University of Bahrain, in addition to an international license in teaching and learning in higher education from the University of Jordan (2013). She also passed the New Leadership Preparation Program at the Institute of Public Administration in 2019.

Dr. Al-Banna has held several leadership positions, including: Head of the Measurement and Evaluation Center (2017) at the Ministry of Education, and Head of the Arabic Language Department in Educational Supervision (2013). She is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Gulf Arab States Educational Research Center, and a member of the General Secretariat Committee of the Gulf Cooperation Council (2022-2026), where she chairs the current session. She also served as a member of the Board of Directors of the Bahraini Educators Association.

Her other activities include membership in the Board of Directors of the Bahraini Writers and Authors Association (2014-2018), and writing articles in the Bahraini newspaper Al-Ayam and several Gulf newspapers. She has many publications, including: “The Concept of Literature and Criticism in writings of Mahmoud Amin Al-Alem” (2013), “The Generation That Will Lose Its Memory” (2021), “Change Without Alternatives: The Crisis of Transformation in the Arab World” (2021), and a collection of short stories entitled “The First Minute of Lost Time” (2022). She has also presented many studies and research in Arab periodicals, in addition to various lectures and seminars.



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