MARIA KASPARIAN

Maria Kasparian is the Vice President of Strategic Partnerships at Edesia, a nonprofit organization based in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. Edesia is dedicated to the treatment and prevention of malnutrition for vulnerable people in the developing world through manufacturing a range of fortified peanut-based ready-to-use foods (RUFs). Edesia annually produces and exports over 40,000 metric tons of products, which it has shipped to 60+ countries in partnership with humanitarian players including USAID, USDA, UNICEF, and the World Food Programme. In addition to producing high quality RUFs, the organization also: supports research and development to improve products and their distribution models; supports local producers of RUFs in the developing world; and engages in education and advocacy around global hunger and nutrition. Maria works closely with many international institutions and NGOs involved in nutrition programming and has followed shipments to Guatemala, Haiti, Niger, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Sierra Leone. She has a passion for both the positive effects of social enterprise in the United States, as well as the importance of drawing more attention to the issues of malnutrition and the life-long impact in the first 1,000 days of a child's life.

Ms. Kasparian has been with Edesia since its inception in February 2009. She was previously Director of Operations from 2009-2014 and Executive Director from 2015-2023. Her prior experience includes ecology/conservation work in Madagascar with the School for International Training (SIT); education and public health-focused Peace Corps service in Bangladesh; and capacity-building at a rural development NGO (Street Survivors India) in West Bengal, India, as a William J. Clinton Fellow with the American India Foundation. Ms. Kasparian holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Relations from Brown University and a Master's degree in Public Administration, focused on International Public Service and Development, from Rutgers University.