

## Amira El-Shal

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### Profile

- 2007-
- An economist with 15+ years of blended experience in the government sector, academia, and international financial/development institutions.

### Education

- 2017 PhD Economics; **City, University of London**
- Thesis advisors: Mireia Jofre-Bonet and Patricia Cubi-Molla
- 2010 MSc Economics, **University College London (UCL)**
- Thesis advisor: Wendy Carlin
- 2008 MSc Economics (Coursework); Faculty of Economics and Political Science, **Cairo University** (Distinction)
- Thesis advisor: Manal Metwally
- 2007 BSc (Hons) Economics; Faculty of Economics and Political Science, **Cairo University** (First in Order of Merit)
- Thesis advisors: Mohamed F. Sakr and Baher Atlam

### Current Appointments

- 2021- Senior Policy Manager; **The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL)**, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) (Cambridge)
- Play a lead role in developing partnerships with governments, NGOs, and donors to support the generation and use of evidence across the MENA region:
- Cultivate and manage collaborations with policymakers, including conducting policy outreach and advising to scale effective social programs and policies
  - Fundraise for and launch a J-PAL MENA Research and Policy Initiative
  - Synthesize and present evidence in public forums on critical policy issues in Egypt and MENA, including climate change, education, humanitarian policy, health, gender, employment, and other topics
  - Provide strategic inputs to advance J-PAL MENA's goals
  - Manage and coach junior staff to support their growth and career development
- 2018- Assistant Professor of Economics; Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, **Cairo University** (Giza)
- Contribute to the enhancement of the Department's role as an international leader in the field of Economics:

- Deliver high quality and innovative postgraduate teaching of Advanced Econometrics and Quantitative Methods, and undergraduate teaching of Advanced Microeconomics, History of Economic Thought, Introduction to Macroeconomics, Introduction to Microeconomics, and Macroeconomic Theory
- Carry out sustained research activities and produce peer-reviewed research publications in the field of Microeconomics
- Participate in the departmental activities aimed at sharing research outcomes and building interdisciplinary collaboration both within and outside the Department, especially with policy makers

### **Past Appointments**

2018-2020 Senior Consultant; Microeconomics, Institutional, and Development Impact Division, **African Development Bank (AfDB)** (Abidjan)

Assisted in the planning and delivery of the Division's research activities, including quality control, and provide support requested from the Division to other departments or senior management:

- Developed a dashboard including all research deliverables for the Division, including reports, briefs, flagship publications, analytical work, impact assessments, and joint projects with other Bank departments or external partners; ensured routinely update and reporting to the management of the Department
- Led on drafting terms of references, concept notes, and research and funding proposals to kick start selected research projects
- Contributed to quality control of research deliverables
- Reviewed internal documents such as corporate strategies, thematic analytical work, and working papers/briefs
- Assisted in drafting speeches, talking points, and briefs for senior management
- Assisted in any relevant task requested by the Division Manager or Department Director

2017-2018 Economic Consultant for Southern and Eastern Mediterranean; Economics, Policy, and Governance Department; **European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)** (London)

Supported work and technical cooperation projects related to the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean region within the Country Economics and Policy Pillar in Economics, Policy, and Governance to enhance region-focused economic analysis and economic policy dialogue at the Bank:

- Monitored and undertook economic analysis in support of the Bank Jordan, Morocco, and Tunisia Diagnostics, including work on deep dives in one or more of the main themes of the Diagnostic
- Supported and coordinated with external consultants/technical advisors hired for commissioned analytical work of the Diagnostic, and coordinated between different teams in the Bank
- Supported the new work of the team, specifically in Lebanon and West Bank and Gaza

- Supported the compilation and maintenance of relevant datasets
- Supported the coordination activities and outreach efforts to public and private sector actors
- Prepared presentations, and draft briefings and report materials with the Regional Lead Economist
- Assisted with the organization and management of conferences and seminars

2015-2018 Economic Consultant, **Office of the Economic Affairs Advisor to the President of Egypt** (Cairo)

Contributed to advising the President of Egypt on the formulation of both domestic and international economic policy, basing policy recommendations and analysis on economic research and empirical evidence, most importantly:

- Prepared policy papers on the causes, effects, and policy options of Egypt's dollarization issues
- Developed a methodological framework to identify the poorest households in Egypt, describing their characteristics and introducing complementary policies to target them
- Drafted a guide on the integration of the informal sector in Egypt in light of leading international experiences

2012-2018 Economic Expert; Investment Policy Advocacy, General Authority for Investment and Free Zones, **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** (Cairo)

Provided specialist advice in investment policy advocacy, with a particular focus on Egypt-European Union (EU), Egypt-Russia, and Egypt-Turkey relationships:

- Coordinated with pertinent donor agencies that provide technical assistance to the country, most importantly EBRD, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the ANIMA Investment Network
- Contributed to the integration of the country's economy into the EU single market and the improvement of the conditions for market access to the EU for Egypt, through triggering the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement and launching the EU-Egypt Task Force
- Provided reliable and robust economic research and advice on investment policy issues, applying rigorous econometric models and statistical tools
- Worked on the research design, implementation, and analysis related to investment-associated impact evaluations, supporting evidence-based policy-making on the Ministry side
- Identified the country's priority sectors for investment promotion, potential investors in each sector, competing countries for inward investment, and opportunities for bilateral investment
- Stepped up private sector dialogue to improve the country's investment climate and business environment
- Drafted speeches, discussion points, presentations, and policy briefs for the Authority's Executive Director and Minister

2008-2018 Assistant Lecturer of Economics; Department of Economics, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, **Cairo University** (Giza)

Contributed to the teaching, research, and academic administration within the Department:

- Assisted in developing the syllabi of History of Economic Thought, Introduction to Macroeconomics, Introduction to Microeconomics, and Macroeconomic Theory
- Prepared and delivered tutorial sessions in the three subject areas referred to
- Contributed to developing, both individually and collaboratively, research relevant to the Department's programmes
- Co-supervised and examined undergraduate graduation projects and postgraduate dissertations
- Contributed to the preparation of tutorial quizzes and final exams

2010-2012 Investment Specialist; Technical Office of the Minister, **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** (Cairo)

Provided advice and liaised with business, government, and international stakeholders regarding key investment policy objectives:

- Strengthened cooperation with international organizations, most importantly ANIMA through the EU-funded Invest in Med Programme, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) through the MENA-OECD Investment Programme towards Employment and Growth through Investment, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) through different technical cooperation schemes, and the World Bank (WB) through the "Governance for Jobs" Transition Fund project
- Constructed the first database of net outflows for the country's foreign direct investment
- Conducted four diagnostics to assess the current state of the investment climate for formal and informal firms, the impact of recent reforms, and the factors influencing productivity and investment
- Provided advice on investment policy priorities, impact evaluations of policy initiatives, and political strategy and tactics especially in relation to the EU
- Prepared material to be used for the Minister's domestic and international meetings in cooperation with the Prime Minister's Office and other individual ministries

2007-2009 Economic Analyst; Research Innovation and Development Centre, **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** (Cairo)

Undertook research and analysis to inform the operations of the Ministry:

- Furnished Egypt's Asset Management Program of State-Owned Enterprises strategy papers
- Planned and coordinated several policy initiatives, most importantly Egypt's Voucher Privatization Program
- Managed the construction and maintenance of the Ministry's Web portal
- Co-authorized the official periodical reports (monthly, quarterly, and annual) and focus pieces published by the Ministry

- Collected and analyzed economic datasets, and undertook investment-related research assignments, to advise the Minister on investment policy
- Organized launch events, press releases, and presentations

2006 Economic Researcher, **Mubasher** (Cairo)

Contributed to the provision of an integrated and reliable market infrastructure for financial instruments:

- Assisted in the creation of the company's knowledge base
- Participated in the construction of the profiles of the companies listed in Arab stock exchanges

2006 Research Assistant Intern, **Egyptian Center for Economic Studies (ECES)** (Cairo)

2005 Editor Assistant Intern, **Al-Ahram Al-Iqtisadi** (Cairo)

2005 Assistant Private Banker Intern; Credit Department, **National Bank of Kuwait** (Cairo)

### Publications

Peer-reviewed

- 2022 • "Indirect Impact of Health Disasters on Maternal and Child Mortality." **Economic Analysis and Policy**, 74, 477–493. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eap.2022.03.003>. Co-authored with Mahmoud Mohieldin and Eman Moustafa.
- 2022 • "Discontinuation of Performance-Based Financing in Primary Health Care: Impact on Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health." **International Journal of Health Economics and Management**. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10754-022-09333-w>. Co-authored with Patricia Cubi-Molla and Mireia Jofre-Bonet.
- 2021 • "Are User Fees in Health Care Always Evil? Evidence from Family Planning, Maternal, and Child Health Services." **Economic Analysis and Policy**, 72, 0–23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eap.2021.08.009>. Co-authored with Patricia Cubi-Molla and Mireia Jofre-Bonet.
- 2021 • "Accreditation as a Quality-Improving Policy Tool: Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health in Egypt." **The European Journal of Health Economics**, 22, 115–139. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10198-020-01240-6>. Co-authored with Patricia Cubi-Molla and Mireia Jofre-Bonet.
- 2021- • "Health Disaster Responses, Social Norms, and Behavior Change: A Natural Experiment." Forthcoming, **Journal of Behavioral and Experimental Economics**. Co-authored with Eman Moustafa.
- 2020- • "Innovation and Productivity in Developing Economies: Deal breakers for African Firms." Forthcoming, **World Development**. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy.
- 2019- • "Perceived Glass Ceiling? Women Self-Selection out of the Credit Market in Africa." Forthcoming, **The European Journal of Finance**. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy and Andinet Woldemichael.

- 2020-
- “What Drives In-Firm Training Incidence and Intensity in Developing and Emerging Countries?” Submitted for Publication. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy.
- Non- peer-reviewed
- 2022
- “Social Safety Nets and Household Food Insecurity in the Era of COVID-19: Selected MENA Countries.” **Agence Française de Développement**. AFD Working Paper No. 247. Co-authored with Eman Moustafa, Nada Rostom, and Yasmine Abdel Fattah.
- 2022
- “Precautionary Health Behavior in MENA: Risk Perception, Mental Health, and Neighborhood Effects.” **Economic Research Forum** 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Paper. Co-authored with Eman Moustafa.
- 2021
- “Dances with Wolves: Weather and Health Shocks and Fiscal Sustainability in MENA.” **Economic Research Forum**. ERF Working Paper No. 1520. Co-authored with Eman Moustafa.
- 2021
- “Policy Responses, Social Norms, and Behavior Change in the Time of COVID-19.” **Economic Research Forum** Working Paper No. 1496. Co-authored with Eman Moustafa.
- 2021
- “Can Disaster Preparedness Change the Game? Mitigating the Health Impact of Disease Outbreaks.” **Economic Research Forum** Working Paper No. 1466. Co-authored with Mahmoud Mohieldin and Eman Moustafa.
- 2020
- “Accreditation as a Policy Tool to Improve Quality: Family Planning and Maternal and Child Health in Egypt.” **Economic Research Forum** 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Discussion Paper No. ERF26\_208. Co-authored with Patricia Cubi-Molla and Mireia Jofre-Bonet.
- 2020
- “Explaining Firm-level Gender Productivity Differential in Africa.” **Economic Research Forum** Working Paper No. 1407. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy.
- 2020
- “Innovation and Productivity in Developing Economies.” **African Development Bank** Working Paper Series No. 340. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy.
- 2020
- “African Economic Outlook 2020: Developing Africa’s Workforce for the Future.” **African Development Bank** Report. Joint Annual Publication.
- 2020-
- “What Drives In-Firm Training Incidence and Intensity in Developing and Emerging Countries?” Forthcoming, **African Development Bank** Working Paper Series. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy.
- 2019
- “African Economic Outlook 2019: Integration for Africa’s Economic Prosperity.” **African Development Bank** Report. Joint Annual Publication.
- 2019
- “Women Self-Selection out of the Credit Market in Africa.” **African Development Bank** Working Paper Series No. 317. Co-authored with Hanan Morsy and Andinet Woldemichael.
- 2012
- “The Spillover Effects of the Global Financial Crisis on Economic Activity in Emerging Economies - Investigating the Egyptian Case Using the Financial Stress Index.” **Economic Research Forum** Working Paper No. 737.
- 2009
- “Egypt Vital Statistics and Key Indicators for Investment.” Egypt’s **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** Report. Joint Annual Publication.

- 2008-2009 • “Invest in Egypt.” Egypt’s **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** Report. Joint Annual Publication.
- 2008-2009 • “Egypt Investment Monitor.” Egypt’s **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** Report. Joint Monthly Publication.
- 2008-2009 • “Egypt Investment Observer.” Egypt’s **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** Report. Joint Quarterly Publication.
- 2008-2009 • “Progress Report.” Egypt’s **Ministry of Investment and International Cooperation** Report. Joint Annual Publication.

#### **Editorial Activities**

- 2021- • Peer Reviewer, Middle East Development Journal
- 2019- • Peer Reviewer, Social Science & Medicine
- 2018-2020 • Peer Reviewer, African Development Bank Working Paper Series
- 2019-2020 • Reviewer, African Development Bank African Economic Outlook
- 2019 • Peer Reviewer, African Development Bank African Economic Conference
- 2019 • Reviewer, African Development Bank Regional Economic Outlook

#### **Awards and Grants**

- 2022 • Ibn Khaldun Award; for Best Paper Presented during the ASSA/MEEA 2022 Annual Meeting, Middle East Economic Association
- 2021 • Economic Research Forum Funding under the Call for Proposals on “Fiscal Sustainability in Light of COVID-19 in MENA” for the Project “Dances with Wolves: Weather and Health Disasters and Fiscal Sustainability in MENA”
- 2021 • Agence Française de Développement Funding under the Call for Proposals on “The Impact of COVID-19 on Households and Firms in The MENA Region” for the Project “Social Safety Nets and Household Food Insecurity in the Era of COVID-19: Selected MENA Countries”
- 2019-2020 • Pillar III Fund of the African Development Bank Transition Support Facility; for the Project “Closing the Gender Gaps in Economic Participation”
- 2016 • Grant from the Economic Research Forum; for participation in the training workshop “Applied Microeconometrics and Public Policy Evaluation”
- 2015 • PhD Mobility Grant from Cairo University; for PhD Economics study
- 2015 • British Council Researcher Links grant; for participation in the interactive workshop “Mexico-UK: Towards Comprehensive Evaluation for Health and Development: Promoting the Integration of Evaluation Methods”
- 2009 • Scholarship from El-Masry Foundation for Community Service; for MSc Economics study

- 2007 • Alex Bank Award, Central Bank of Egypt Award, Egyptian Arab Land Bank Award, Misr Iran Development Bank Award, Muhammad Talaat Harb Award, National Bank of Egypt Award, Syndicate of Commerce Award; for graduating first in order of merit in the BSc Economics class of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2007 • Dr Abdel-Majeed Farrag Award, Dr Faiqa El-Refai Award, Dr Youssef Nahhas Award, Dr Zaki Hashem El-Mohamy Award; for graduating first in order of merit in the BSc Economics class of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2006 • Dr Ahmad Rashid Hussein Award; for attaining the highest score in the Public Administration course in the BSc Economics of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2006 • Dr Amr Mohieldin Award; for attaining the highest score in the Economic Development course in the BSc Economics of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2006 • Dr Muhammad Labib Shoqeir Award; for attaining the highest score in the History of Egyptian Economy course in the BSc Economics of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2006 • Dr Refaat El-Mahgoub Award; for attaining the highest score in the Public Finance course in the BSc Economics of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2006 • Faculty of Economics and Political Science Award; for graduating first in order of merit in the BSc Economics class of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science
- 2005 • Dr Fouad Hisham Awad Award, Dr Muhammad Zaki Shafei Award; for attaining the highest score in the Money and Banking course in the BSc Economics of Cairo University's Faculty of Economics and Political Science

#### **Language and Computer Skills**

- Arabic (mother tongue), English (fluent), French (basic)
- Stata, E-Views, Quantum Geographic Information System (QGIS), The Management Scientist Program