

# 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference Online

May

June

2021



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
GOALS AND EXTERNAL SHOCKS  
IN THE MENA REGION:

FROM RESILIENCE  
TO CHANGE  
IN THE WAKE OF  
COVID-19

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منتدى البحوث الاقتصادية  
ECONOMIC RESEARCH FORUM



# ABOUT ERF

## Our Mission

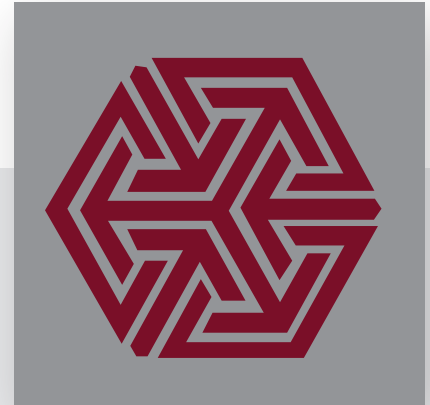
The Economic Research Forum (ERF) is a regional network dedicated to promoting high quality economic research to contribute to sustainable development in the Arab countries, Iran and Turkey.

## Our Activities

To achieve these objectives, ERF carries out a portfolio of activities. These include mobilizing funds for well conceived proposals; managing carefully selected regional research initiatives, collecting and sharing micro data and providing training and mentoring programs to junior researchers. It also includes organizing seminars and conferences based on research outcomes; and publishing research output through multiple channels including working papers, books, policy briefs and perspectives, Middle East Development Journal (MEDJ) and the ERF Policy Portal - The Forum.

## Our Network

The ERF network comprises a distinguished Board of Trustees (BOT), accomplished researchers from the region and highly dedicated head-office staff. A not-for-profit organization, the Forum is supported by multiple donors, both regional and international.



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**ESTABLISHED IN 1993, ERF'S CORE OBJECTIVES ARE TO BUILD STRONG RESEARCH CAPACITY IN THE ERF REGION, TO LEAD AND SUPPORT THE PRODUCTION OF INDEPENDENT, HIGH QUALITY ECONOMIC RESEARCH, AND TO DISSEMINATE RESEARCH OUTPUT TO A WIDE AND DIVERSE AUDIENCE.**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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**CONFERENCE PROGRAM**

**MAY-JUNE,  
2021 | ONLINE**

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**ERF 27<sup>TH</sup>  
ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE**

**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS  
AND EXTERNAL SHOCKS IN THE MENA REGION:  
FROM RESILIENCE TO CHANGE IN THE WAKE OF  
COVID-19**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic represents an unprecedented shock for the world economy. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) described this shock as the "Great Lockdown" that will reduce global GDP by 3% in 2020. In addition to this, oil prices have reached the lowest record in modern history. With the pandemic sweeping across the oil-rich Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, the latter has to face two concomitant shocks. Obviously, the response to these two external shocks cannot be dissociated from the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While several MENA countries were making a relatively good progress in these goals, they will have now to re-organize their priorities and adopt active economic and social policies at both the short and the long-term horizons.

Indeed, given the transformational nature of the current period, the future will chiefly depend on how countries of the region will adjust their policies and strategies, and on how they respond under their respective constraints. Both active stabilization policies (targeting the short term) and structural ones (aiming at changing the structure of economies in the long run) will have to be adopted. Such policies, and consequently research priorities will differ depending on the country characteristics in the MENA region. The latter can be divided into groups of countries with relatively close features: the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, countries with political unrests, countries with internal or external conflicts, and the other middle-income countries. Despite the significant interdependences between their economies, these groups have become more distinct than in the past, and the impact of the shocks is likely to make them diverge even more which requires different policy responses when it comes to SDGs.

More specifically, with the pandemic and lower oil prices, economic growth will be negatively affected, hence poverty rates (SDG1), social protection and inequalities (SDG10), even hunger (SDG2), are likely to increase. This slowdown will also exert a negative impact on demand, production and thus job creation (SDG8 and SDG9). Moreover, with various countries in some kind of lockdown, while many scholars assume that this will be beneficial for the environment at least in the short term (SDG7, SDG13 and SDG14), carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere are still at high levels.

At the human capital level, the COVID-19 raised also several questions in terms of education and health. First, at the education one, schools, public and private universities

moved to e-learning. It is important to analyze to what extent the long-distance learning is efficient (SDG4) and feasible with limited technological infrastructure in MENA countries. Second, the pandemic has made clear many of the problems facing the countries health care system in particular equipment, trained staff and infrastructure (SDG3).

Therefore, regional and multilateral collaboration (SDG17) is clearly required to curb the negative effects of these shocks. This can be justified by the need to accelerate the development to new COVID-19 diagnostics and vaccines and to help countries overcome its negative effects (such as the rapid financing instrument provided by the IMF).

### **Main Questions:**

Against this background, and since every crisis brings opportunities, the conference, through plenary sessions and panels, will feature world-renowned economists, social scientists and policymakers in order to discuss the following questions:

1. For how long and how deep the impact of these unprecedented shocks is going to be? What will be the medium and long run effect, especially with regards to SDGs?
2. For the post-COVID19 period, how national policies have to be adjusted in order to re-prioritize development goals and make the economies more resilient in the short term and more developed in the long term? How to manage the tradeoff between deeper stabilization as a short-term requirement with optimum resource allocation as a long-term goal?
3. At the social level, how will the MENA region combine finance stabilization programs that are often accompanied by targeted short-term relief for a few of the vulnerable people with more systemic long-term solutions?, and, in view of the shrinking fiscal space and looming debt burden, how much support could be expected from the regional and international development communities for MENA and other developing regions?
4. The underlying issue to all of the above is what will be the emerging role of the state in response to the changing technological and regulatory capacities that are likely to shape the economic policy making in the aftermath of Covid-19?

**MONDAY, MAY 17, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME**

# **PLENARY 1:**

**A GLOBAL ECONOMIC SYSTEM IN TURMOIL:  
WHAT IS AT STAKE FOR THE MENA REGION?**

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While the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a severe economic crisis and recession at the world level, there is a higher-than-usual degree of uncertainty related to recovery. This is particularly more pronounced for the Middle-East and North Africa (MENA) economies that are more dependent on oil exports and have a lower fiscal space. Thus, with decreasing oil prices, these two external shocks are likely to have a deep and long-lasting effect on the MENA countries and will put a halt on their progress in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Therefore, this first plenary session will discuss several questions related to these shocks:

1. First, for how long and how deep the impact of these unprecedented shocks is going to be? What will be the medium and long run effect, especially with regards to SDGs?
2. What are the main challenges faced by the MENA region to move forward despite this uncertainty?
3. How the world will look like in the post-COVID-19 era? What will be the role of MENA region?



*Session Chair and Moderator*



**SAMIR MAKDISI**  
*Chairman, ERF Board of Trustees*

*Welcome Remarks & Panelist*



**IBRAHIM ELBADAWI**  
*Managing Director, ERF*

*Keynote Speaker*



**MAHMOUD MOHIELDIN**  
*Executive Director, IMF*



*Panelist*



**H.E. DR. HALA ELSAÏD**  
*Minister of Planning, and Economic Development - Egypt*

*Panelist*



**MOUNIR TABET**  
*Deputy Executive Secretary, UN ESCWA*

*Panelist*



**KAMIAR MOHADDES**  
*University of Cambridge*



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**MONDAY, MAY 24, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME**

# **PLENARY 2:**

**SOCIAL PROTECTION, INCLUSION  
AND INEQUALITY: A PIPELINE OF POLICIES**

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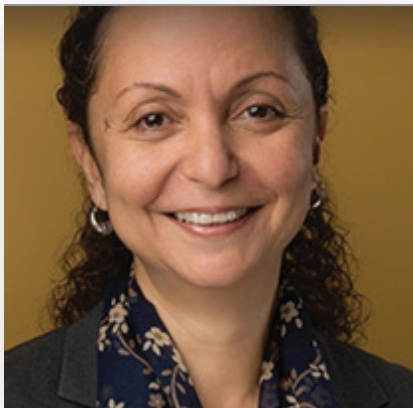


The adverse impact of the current economic shocks on vulnerable categories is particularly acute. These categories include, but not limited to, poor, women, youth, low-paid jobs, informal and irregular workers and working poor. Thus, both the pandemic and oil prices will not only imperil the significant progress made in reducing extreme poverty and achieving SDGs, but will increase inequality levels that are already surpassing Latin America and other regions in the Global South. Moreover, it is worthy to note that the current economic model adopted by MENA countries is characterized by two main features that amplify their weakness. First, they chiefly rely on services, construction and oil, that have a limited value-added and low potential for job creation. Second, with regard to vulnerable people, stabilization programs are often accompanied by targeted short-term safety nets. As a consequence, this economic model failed: on the one hand to generate sufficient and decent jobs and on the other to have a pipeline of social policies with more comprehensive long-term solutions.

1. How Arab governments can change their sectoral specialization to create more decent and less precarious jobs?
2. At the social level, how will the MENA region combine finance stabilization programs that are often accompanied by targeted short-term relief for a few of the vulnerable people with more systemic long-term policies?
3. To what extent universal social protection is feasible in the Arab world? How to sustainably finance this universal social protection while most of these economies register high levels of informality?



*Session Chair and Moderator*



**NOHA EL-MIKAWY**  
*Ford Foundation*

*Keynote Speaker*



**MARTHA CHEN**  
*Harvard Kennedy School*

*Panelist*



**H.E. NIVINE EL KABBAG**  
*Minister of Social Solidarity, Egypt*



*Panelist*



**H.E. MARY KAWAR**  
*Former Minister of Planning, Jordan*

*Panelist*



**SAMI ATALLAH**  
*Lebanese Center for Policy Studies*

*Panelist*



**TOUHAMI ABDEKHALEK**  
*National Institute of Statistics and Applied Economics*



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**MONDAY, MAY 31, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME**

# **PLENARY 3:**

**POLITICAL ECONOMY CHALLENGES  
TO DIVERSIFICATION STRATEGIES**

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Panelists will interrogate the possibilities of reforms that increase productivity, create jobs, and allow for a progressive diversification of the economy, in an environment characterized by fiscal tightness and popular unrest. What is the 2020s version of reforms with a human face for the various parts of the MENA region? Can markets but not the polity be liberalized, as in the 1990s? What formulae can be considered in the various political environments, and should they be of the big bang of gradual type?



*Session Chair and Moderator*



**MASOOD AHMED**

*Center for Global Development*

*Panelist*



**ISHAC DIWAN**

*Paris Sciences et Lettres*

*Panelist*



**MUSTAPHA NABLI**

*North Africa Bureau of Economic Studies*

*Panelist*



**H.E. OMAR RAZZAZ**

*Former Prime Minister, Jordan*

*Panelist*



**NADER KABBANI**

*Brookings Doha Center*



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**THURSDAY, MAY 27, 2021  
@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME**

# **SPECIAL PANEL 1:**

**THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON MIDDLE EASTERN  
AND NORTH AFRICAN LABOR MARKETS**

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The COVID-19 pandemic continues to exact a devastating toll on lives, economies, and labor markets in the MENA region. This panel will discuss the results to date of the ERF COVID-19 MENA Monitor Panel Surveys, focusing on how the labor markets of Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Sudan, and Tunisia have evolved from just prior to the pandemic (in February of 2020) through spring of 2021. Topics will include labor force participation, employment and unemployment, layoffs and loss of wages among wage workers, and the impact on farmers, employers, and the self-employed. Analyses will examine the impact on household welfare and income, as well as the reach and targeting of social protection. The panel will discuss implications and recommendations for supporting economic and labor market resilience and eventual recovery.



*Session Chair and Moderator*



**MAY GADALLA**  
*Economic Research Forum*

*Principal Investigator*



**RAGUI ASSAAD**  
*University of Minnesota*

*Principal Investigator*



**MOHAMED ALI  
MAROUANI**  
*Université Paris1-Panthéon-Sorbonne*

*Principal Investigator*



**CAROLINE KRAFFT**  
*St. Catherine University*



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**THURSDAY, JUNE 10, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME**

# **SPECIAL PANEL 2:**

**CONFLICT AND POST CONFLICT ECONOMIC  
RECONSTRUCTION AGENDA**

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**AFTERSHOCK OF THE ARAB UPRISINGS: RECONSTRUCTION, NATIONAL PEACE AND DEMOCRATIC CHANGE**

The future course of the Arab countries in civil conflicts will be defined by the nature of the settlements of their respective conflicts and the conditions thereof. Whatever form these settlements take a major premise of this project is that in today’s world any transformation leading to lasting national peace in Arab countries would be conditional on laying the foundations for inclusive socio-economic development in the context of a genuinely democratic environment. A second premise is that, whatever form the new social contract takes in each Arab country, it would require a massive transformation of the institutional fabric of society – that is, the set of key institutions— that helped create the conditions for an inevitable conflict. Experience has shown that, parliamentary elections, even if free, are not necessarily sufficient to ensure the needed accountability in governance. Institutional reforms should allow for its regular implementation.

Accordingly, the project adopts a two-tier approach whereby it is divided into two parts. Part I presents a general framework that describes the overall socio-economic agenda for the Arab countries recovering from civil conflicts and domestic violence, complemented by two specific dimensions of the conflict question relevant to the Arab region: (1) the effects of horizontal inequality (associated with the grievances-based approach) and its conditionality on oil resources and government spending (associated with the greed-based approach); and (2) the relationship between power-sharing institutions and post-conflict trajectories in countries that have experienced civil war and their quest to achieve a new, more stable social contract. Part II is devoted to case studies of four countries in conflict (Syria, Iraq, Libya, and Yemen).

The case studies explore the causes of the respective conflicts, trace subsequent politico-economic developments, identify major questions and issues faced in the post-conflict phase and identify the major areas of reform that need to be implemented to achieve the objectives of economic reconstruction and national peace.



*Session Chair and Moderator*



**SAMIR MAKDISI**  
*Chairman, ERF Board of Trustees*

*Speaker*



**RAIMUNDO SOTO**  
*Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile*

*Discussant*

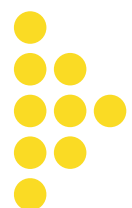


**IBRAHIM ELBADAWI**  
*Managing Director, ERF*

*Discussant*



**NILS-CHRISTIAN BORMANN**  
*Witten/Herdecke University*



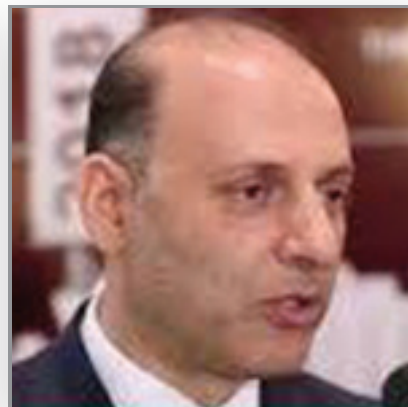
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**SESSION 2 - (5:00-5:30)** FOUNDATIONS FOR POST CONFLICT GROWTH AGENDA IN THE MENA REGION

This session will present and discuss the findings of the ERF research project on "Post Conflict Economic Reconstruction." The Arab Spring substantially affected the political and economic fundamentals of many countries in the region. Some countries have reacted positively by quickly restoring stability and implementing reforms to enhance resilience to shocks, while others have experienced devastating wars and conflict with huge physical & human capital costs, large-scale institutional degradation, multi-dimensional conflict, and state failures. Millions of people have been forced to leave their homes. Intensity of conflict and violence have declined recently; however, conflict has not fully ended yet and risks are still alive. The findings of this project (i) proposes data-driven and evidence-based methods for measuring socio-economic costs of conflict, (ii) establishes new tools to forecast the pace of economic recovery, (iii) discusses the urgent need for establishing new institutions and repatriation issues, and (iv) highlights the critical role of long-term political stability in effectively facilitating post-conflict reconstruction.


*Speaker*


**SEMIH TUMEN**  
TED University

*Discussant*


**KHALID ABU-ISMAIL**  
ESCWA



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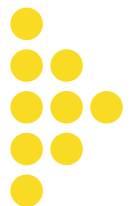


**SESSION 3 - (5:30-6:00)** **IMPACT OF VIOLENT CONFLICT ON LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS IN THE MENA REGION**

Insecurity and violent conflict of various intensity shape societies in several MENA countries directly - or indirectly, via conflicts in neighboring countries. The conflicts differ in cause, nature, duration and intensity and hence have diverse and changing impacts on people and households. More importantly, these impacts may in turn compound the other socio-economic trends by, possibly, affecting population growth, unemployment, gender norm differentiation, political radicalization, weakening state institutions and increased needs for but reduced abilities to fund public services and infrastructures. Despite these fundamental and interlinked societal challenges, the MENA region is comparatively under-researched in terms of applied micro-level analysis, both by economists and other social scientists. In particular, it is not very well understood how some of these security and socio-economic trends shape each other. For a given conflict, there are a multitude of topics that can be addressed, ranging from demography, social issues, health, education, labor markets and migration via agriculture, product markets and trade to social norms, attitudes and political behavior and, of course, to the role and the effectiveness of policies and interventions. This session will outline some key findings emerging from a set of recent studies commissioned by ERF on the implications of conflict, drawing lessons for possible post-conflict economic reconstruction agendas.


*Speaker*

**TILMAN BRUCK**
*International Security and Development  
Center in Berlin*
*Discussant*

**NADA MUSTAFA ALI**
*University of Massachusetts*

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## ECONOMIC INTERDEPENDENCY AND CONFLICT

Economic interdependence among Arab countries has intensified since the mid-1990s. Such date coincided with the establishment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the proliferation of the preferential trade agreements (PTAs) worldwide in a second wave. Arab countries have embarked on joining WTO as well as several PTAs among themselves as well as with other countries. The move towards increased economic interdependence has been part of the globalization move. The academic literature at that time pointed out to the positive spillover effects of such increased economic interdependence and its potential effect in curtailing and preventing regional conflicts. With the Arab Uprising and its aftermath, which we are still experiencing, and with the de-globalization move arising all over the world with populist leaders being elected, it is not clear to what extent can economic interdependence and the subsequent PTAs prevent or lessen regional conflict. The political frictions arising between different Arab countries among each other, or between Arab countries and non-Arab countries, and domestic conflicts raises questions on the ability of such PTAs to prevent or lessen conflicts.

Among such two broad themes of impact of economic interdependence on conflict and impact of conflict on economic interdependence, several specific aspects arise which require paying attention to in the context of the Arab region. Such specific aspects include the existence or lack thereof of conflict management mechanisms whether in specific economic and trade contexts or in general, the nature and types of conflicts, whether they are national, sub, or regional, or with non-regional parties, the engagement in several PTAs and their overlapping and whether this plays a role or not, the extent of deepness versus shallowness of PTAs, the so called regional neighborhood where democratic countries have a positive spillover effect on the neighbors causing both more interdependence and less intra and inter conflicts, the presence or lack thereof of hegemonic power, and the different approaches adopted by such hegemonic power to enhance economic interdependence and lessen conflicts.

This project aims at investigating such matters and has proceeded with a number of papers, yet several issues remain unaddressed including mainly the role of domestic conflicts, rising of de globalization moves, future of Global and Regional Value Chains, difference between regional and non-regional conflicts, etc. An extension including such aspects of the relationship between those issues linking economic interdependence and conflict management is needed to have a better understanding of the relationship, together with the four papers already addressing such issues. Moreover, a synthesis for the existing papers is required to have a broader picture of the topic.



*Speaker*



**AHMED GHONEIM**

*Cairo University*

*Discussant*



**IBRAHIM SAIF**

*Jordan Strategy Forum*

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**THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2021  
@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME**

# **SPECIAL PANEL 3:**

**DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND IMPLICATIONS  
FOR GROWTH, EMPLOYMENT, POVERTY AND INEQUALITY  
IN THE ARAB REGION**

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This session will present and discuss the findings of a new research project undertaken by The Arab Development Portal at the UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States and the Economic Research Forum (ERF) entitled “Digitalization Transformation and Implications for Growth, Employment, Poverty and Inequality in the Arab Region.” The study examines issues through two complementary lenses. First, it explores how digital transformation affects economic growth and structural transformation through its impact on key sectors of the economy, and what are the opportunities and risks that digital transformation can create for supporting inclusive and sustainable growth, employment generation and poverty reduction? Second, it looks at the impact of digital transformation on human development and human capital accumulation, and what is its potential impact on inequality and poverty? These research questions are assessed by a set of thematic papers and 8 country specific policy briefs, which form the basis of the study. There is also an assessment of the potential effects of the COVID-19 pandemic for accelerating digitalization and the opportunities for growth and employment as well as any vulnerabilities (including vulnerabilities in the gig economy) that can exacerbate inequalities, and discuss policy options for addressing the potential challenges.



*Session Chair and Moderator*



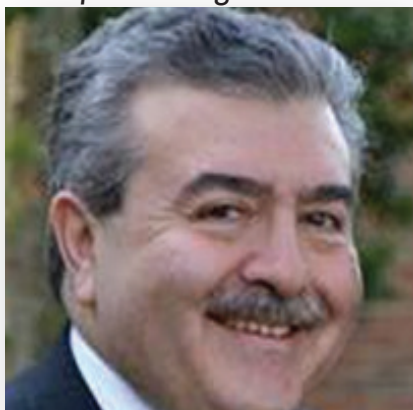
**ISHAC DIWAN**  
*Paris Sciences et Lettres*

*Principal Investigator*



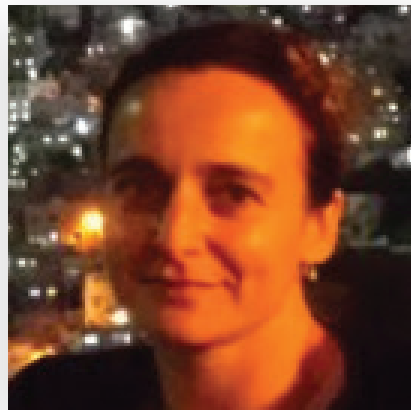
**MUSTAPHA NABLI**  
*North Africa Bureau of Economic Studies*

*Principal Investigator*



**SHAHROKH FARDOUST**  
*College of William and Mary*

*Lead discussant*



**PAOLA PAGLIANI**  
*UNDP*



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ALL SESSIONS START  
@ 4:00 PM | CAIRO LOCAL TIME

# PARALLEL SESSIONS

**TUESDAY- MAY 18, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**ECONOMIC GROWTH**

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*Discussant:*  
**ADEEL MALIK**

■ **Capital Flight and the Real Exchange Rate in Resource Scarce MENA Countries**

*A. Yasemin Yalta and A. Talha Yalta*

■ **Economic Entrenchment and Growth Impediments in Jordan**

*Adel Bino*

■ **The Externality of Public Housing Projects: The Case of Mehr Housing Project in Iran**

*Saeed Tajrishy and Mohammad Vesal*

**WEDNESDAY- MAY 19, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**EXTERNAL SHOCKS AND MACROECONOMIC PERFORMANCE**

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*Discussant:*  
**KABBASHI SULIMAN**

■ **On the Determinants and Outcomes of IMF Loans: A Political Economy Approach**

*Jala Youssef and Chahir Zaki*

■ **Impact of Tax Reforms in Applied Models: Which Functional Forms Should Be Chosen for the Demand System ? Theory and Application for Morocco**

*Touhami Abdelkhalek and Dorothee Boccanfuso*

■ **Banks' Performance Amid Oil Price Shocks: Empirical Evidence from GCC Countries, 2002-2017**

*Assil El Mahmah and Mohamed Trabelsi*



**TUESDAY- MAY 25, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:00 PM**

**WORK OPPORTUNITIES-HOME AND AWAY**

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*Discussant:*  
**MELTEM DAYIOGLU TAYFUR**

■ **Lives versus Livelihoods: Who Can Work from Home in MENA?**

*Shireen AlAzzawi*

■ **Between Hope and Despair: Egypt's Revolution and Migration Intentions**

*Yvonne Giesing and Reem Hassan*

**WEDNESDAY- MAY 26, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 6:00 PM**

**HEALTH SECTORS IN WIDER SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT IN THE MENA REGION**

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*Discussant:*  
**BELGI TURAN**

■ **Dynamic Governance of the First Wave of Covid-19 in Tunisia: An Interoperability Analysis**

*Khaled Nasri, Houda Boubaker and Nacef Dhaouadi*

■ **Policy Responses, Social Norms, and Behavior Change in the Time of COVID-19**

*Amira El-Shal and Eman Moustafa*

*Discussant:*  
**MARWAN KHAWAJA**

■ **High Rate of C-section and Its Consequences for the Timing of Birth**

*Hanifa Pilvar and Kowsar Yousefi*

■ **Does Maternal Education Curb Female Genital Mutilation? Evidence from a Natural Experiment in Egypt**

*Ahmed Shoukry Rashad and Mesbah Fathy Sharaf*

**TUESDAY- JUNE 1, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**CONFLICT AND THE MACROECONOMY**

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*Discussant:*  
**MOUYAD ALSAMARA**

- **Civil Conflicts and Exchange Rate Misalignment: Evidence from MENA and Arab League Members**  
*Thibault Lemaire*
- **Economic Resilience in Developing Countries: The Role of Democracy in the Face of External Shocks**  
*Mohamed Ali Trabelsi and Salah Ahmed*
- **How Does Political Risk Matter for Foreign Direct Investment into Arab Economies?**  
*Riadh Ben Jelili*

**THURSDAY- JUNE 3, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**POLITICAL ECONOMY AND CONFLICT**

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*Discussant:*  
**BELAL FALLAH**

- **Is The Arab Spring A New Dividing Line? Experimental Evidence from Four Arab Countries**  
*Engi Amin, Mazen Hassan, Sarah Mansour and Andreas Nicklisch*
- **Unconditional Cash-based Assistance to the Poor: What Do At-scale Programs Achieve?**  
*Onur Altındag and Stephen D. O'Connell*
- **The Gender Gap in Political Participation: Evidence from the MENA Region**  
*Ali Fakih and Yara Sleiman*

**WEDNESDAY- JUNE 2, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**CONFLICT AND INSTITUTIONS**

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*Discussants:*  
**KHALID ABU-ISMAIL**  
and **VLADIMIR HLASNY**

- **Corruption: A Brutal Enemy of Economic Diversification in MENA Oil Exporters**  
*Siham Matallah*
- **Economic, Social, and Institutional Determinants of Internal Conflict in Fragile States**  
*Syed Muhammad All-e-Raza Rizvi and Marie-Ange Véganzonès-Varoudakis*
- **Testing the External Shock Narrative of the Conflict on Transition Towards Knowledge Economy in Syria**  
*Ibrahim Alnafrh and Sulaiman Mouselli*

**TUESDAY- JUNE 8, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:00 PM**

**EDUCATION AND INEQUALITY**

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*Discussant:*  
**RANA HENDY**

- **The Impact of Twin Shocks on Learning Outcomes and Education Financing in Sudan**  
*Safaa El Tayeb El-Kogali, Tanya June Savrimootoo, Kebede Feda and Dmitry Chugunov*
- **Wage Inequality Dynamics in Turkey**  
*Ozan Bakis and Sezgin Polat*
- **Inequality of Opportunities in Access to Basic Services among Children in Host Communities in Jordan and Lebanon: A Comparative Analysis**  
*Hatem Jemmali*



**WEDNESDAY- JUNE 9, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 6:00 PM**

**THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RESOURCE  
AND FOOD SECURITY IN THE MENA REGION**

**[REGISTER HERE!](#)**

*Discussant:*  
**ATIF KUBURSI**

■ **COVID-19 and Food Security Challenges in the  
MENA Region**

*Dina Atef Mandour*

*Discussant:*  
**IDA A. MIRZAIE**

■ **Long-term Macroeconomic Effects of Climate  
Change: Evidence from the MENA Region**

*Yasmine Abdelfattah, Amal Abdelfattah, Hala Abou-Ali  
and Hany Abdel-Latif*

■ **Rural Electrification and Empowerment of Women in  
Rural Iran**

*Djavad Salehi-Isfahani and Sara Taghvatalab*

■ **Assessing the Impact of Irrigation on Kurdish  
Separatism in Southeastern Turkey**

*Ollie Ballinger*

**MONDAY- JUNE 14, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 6:00 PM**

**REVISITING REGIONAL INTEGRATION AGREE-  
MENTS IN THE ERF REGION**

**[REGISTER HERE!](#)**

*Discussant:*  
**AHMED GHONEIM**

■ **On the Political Economy of Trade Agreements:  
A De Jure and De Facto Analysis of Institutions**

*Asmaa Ezzat and Chahir Zaki*

*Discussant:*  
**NERGIZ DINCER**

■ **Tunisia's Trade with Sub-Saharan Africa: Large Room  
for Growth?**

*Makrem Ben Doudou and Christophe Rault*

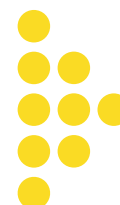
■ **Impact of COVID-19 on Tunisian Imports**

*Amal Medini and Leila Baghdadi*

*Discussant:*  
**BERNARD HOEKMAN**

■ **Potential Effects of the EU's Carbon Border  
Adjustment Mechanism on the Turkish Economy**

*Sevil Acar, Ahmet Atıl Aşıcı and A. Erinç Yeldan*



**TUESDAY- JUNE 15, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**BANKING AND EXCHANGE RATES**

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*Discussant:*  
**MAHMOUD HADDAD**

- **How Economic, Political and Institutional factors Influence the Choice of Exchange Rate regimes? New Evidence from Selected Countries of the MENA Region**

*Najia Maraoui, Thouraya Hadj Amor, Islem Khefacha, and Christophe Rault*

- **Banking Market Power and Its Determinants: New Insights from MENA Countries**

*Mohamed Chaffai and Paolo Coccoresse*

- **Favoring the Small and the Plenty: Islamic Banking for MSMEs**

*Omneya Abdelsalam, Ahmet F. Aysan and Mustafa Disli*

**WEDNESDAY- JUNE 16, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**AGGREGATE CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR**

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*Discussant:*  
**RAIMUNDO SOTO**

- **Indirect Effects of a Large Scale Cash Transfer Program for Refugees**

*Abdurrahman B. Aydemir and Erkan Duman*

- **Monetary-Fiscal Policy Interactions During Uncertainty Shocks: Evidence from Egypt**

*Sarah El-Khishin and Dina Kassab*

- **Hedging the Risks of MENA Stock Markets with Gold: Evidence from the Spectral Approach**

*Awatef Ourir, Elie Bouri and Essahbi Essaadi*

**MONDAY- JUNE 21, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**WAGES, INEQUALITY AND EMPLOYMENT IN EGYPT**

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*Discussant:*  
**MASSOUD KARSHENAS**

- **Do Egyptian Labor Unions Have any Bargaining Power?**

*Bjorn Nilsson*

- **Wage inequality among Vocational Secondary Graduates in Formal and Informal Urban Areas of Egypt**

*May Gadallah and Rania Rosuhdy*

**TUESDAY- JUNE 22, 2021**  
**@ 4:00 – 5:30 PM**

**LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION, UNEMPLOYMENT AND INCENTIVES**

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*Discussant:*  
**MAHDI MAJBOURI**

- **The Effect of Primary School Construction on Later Outcomes**

*Hakan Ercan, Ahmet Ozturk and Semih Tumen*

- **Incentives and Exit Behavior: An Examination of the Unemployment Insurance System in Turkey**

*Insan Tunali and Mustafa Ulus*

- **Impact of Fertility on Female Labor Supply in Algeria**

*Ali Souag and El Mouhoub Mouhoud*

WEDNESDAY- JUNE 23, 2021

@ 4:00 – 6:00 PM

**FINANCIAL MARKETS, CRYPTO CURRENCY EXCHANGES AND DEBT**

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Discussant:

**MINE CINAR**

■ **Survival of the Fittest: A Natural Experiment from Crypto Exchanges**

*Ahmet Faruk Aysan, Asad Ul Islam Khan, Humeyra Topuz and Ahmet Semih Tunali*

■ **Oil, Monarchies, and Bank Concentration: Evidence from the 2008 Global Financial Crisis**

*Sam Houdi and Adeel Malik*

Discussant:

**SAMIR GHAZOUANI**

■ **Financial Integration, Inclusion, and Stability during Crises: Insights from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) Region**

*Samar Abdelmageed*

■ **External Debt and Growth in Highly Leveraged MENA Countries When Interest Rates Are Falling**

*Mahmoud Haddad , Shawkat Hammoudeh, Sam Hakim and Refk Selmi*

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND EXTERNAL SHOCKS IN THE MENA REGION:

FROM RESILIENCE TO CHANGE  
IN THE WAKE OF COVID-19

