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## **ERF Policy Conference on The Role of MSMEs in Fostering Inclusive and Equitable Economic Growth in the Context of the Clean Energy Transition in Egypt and Sudan**

**Date:** September 25, 2024 – **Time:** 10:00 am – 14:45 (Cairo Local Time)

**Venue:** Safir Hotel, Cairo-Egypt

### **Context**

Access to energy is becoming increasingly challenging, especially for energy-importing countries in the MENA region. This makes the transition to clean energy not just crucial, but urgent. Fortunately, the region holds significant comparative advantages, thanks to its natural endowments: abundant solar radiation throughout much of the year and powerful wind nodes. Additionally, renewable energy has emerged as the most cost-effective power option today, particularly in MENA. With the rapid decline in renewable energy technology prices—highlighted by an 85 percent drop in the cost of electricity from solar power between 2010 and 2020—the region is uniquely positioned to lead in clean energy adoption. Furthermore, affordable electricity from renewable sources could decarbonize up to 90 percent of the power sector by 2050, dramatically reducing carbon emissions and playing a pivotal role in climate change mitigation.

The significance of this energy transition in MENA lies in its potential to meet the region's growing energy demands at affordable prices, drive inclusive and sustainable development, create new job opportunities, and support climate change resilience—all while adhering to crucial climate change mitigation and adaptation policies. In this regional context, where medium, small, and micro enterprises (MSMEs) are economic cornerstones, understanding their potential, challenges, and opportunities in the clean energy transition—as well as their capacity for job creation, climate resilience, and the empowerment of women and youth—is essential.

Recognizing this, the Economic Research Forum (ERF) has launched an IDRC-funded project titled "The Role of MSMEs in Fostering Inclusive and Equitable Sustainable Economic Growth in the Context of the Clean Energy Transition in MENA." This project, in collaboration with The Middle East Institute and the Lebanese Centre for Policy Studies, aims to enhance understanding of MSMEs' role in the energy transition across six MENA countries: Egypt, Tunisia, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, and Sudan. Through this research, new microdata, insights on cross-cutting issues, and an assessment of renewable energy adoption by MSMEs will be generated, alongside analysis of the institutional, financial, technical, and regulatory barriers they face. The project also explores the demand for skills and the potential impact of the energy transition on sustainable employment opportunities for youth, women, and marginalized groups.

### **Objective & Format**

The goal of this event is to present the final key findings and policy recommendations derived from the case studies on Egypt and Sudan. The conference will provide an overview of the research outcomes, discuss the implications for policy and practice, and explore how these insights can inform future actions. This conference aims to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of the findings and foster constructive dialogue on their application to relevant contexts.

The hybrid conference offers the flexibility of both online and in-person participation. To join us remotely, please register using the link below:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_MStdBNloTgyCghCaAtN\\_Cw#/registration](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_MStdBNloTgyCghCaAtN_Cw#/registration)

Upon registering, you will receive a confirmation email with details on how to join the meeting.



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Time	Sessions and Speakers
09:30-10:00	<b>Registration</b>
10:00-10:15	<b>Opening Remarks</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ibrahim Elbadawi, Managing Director, <i>ERF</i>.</li> <li>● Wessam El Beih, <i>IDRC</i>. (Online)</li> </ul>
10:15-11:00	<b>MSMEs and the Transition to Clean Energy - New Microdata &amp; Insights</b> <b>Moderator: Yasmeen Oraby, <i>ERF</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>New Firms' Level Survey on Egypt:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ May Gadalla, <i>Cairo University and ERF</i>. (10 mins)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>In-Depth Insights from Qualitative Research in Egypt and Sudan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rasha Hassan, <i>Research Consultant</i>. (10 mins)</li> <li>○ Muez Ali, <i>Earthna, Qatar Foundation</i>. (10 mins)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Open Discussion (15 minutes)</b></li> </ul>
11:10- 11:55	<b>MSMEs as Drivers of Inclusive Growth in Egypt</b> <b>Moderator: Magued Osman, <i>Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera)</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Egypt Case Study Key findings and policy implications (15 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Abeer El Shennawy, <i>AUC and ERF</i>.</li> <li>○ Mohammed Bouaddi, <i>AUC</i>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Round table discussion &amp; roadmap for the future of green transition and MSMEs</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Alia El Mahdi, <i>Cairo University</i>. (10 minutes)</li> <li>○ Ehab Ismail, <i>New and Renewable Energy Authority (NREA)</i>. (10 minutes)</li> <li>○ Walid Darwish, <i>MSMEDA</i>. (10 minutes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Open discussion (10 min)</b></li> </ul>
11:55-12:19	<b>Coffee Break</b>
12:10-13:05	<b>Resilient Growth in Sudan: MSMEs and the Future of Clean Energy</b> <b>Moderator: Ibrahim Elbadawi, <i>ERF</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Sudan Case Study Key findings and policy implications (15 minutes)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Muez Ali, <i>Earthna, Qatar Foundation</i>. (Online)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Round table discussion</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tarig Ahmed, <i>International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)</i>. (Online) (10 minutes)</li> <li>○ Mohamed Elsayed Abdelmomen, <i>UNIDO</i>. (Online) (10 minutes)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <b>Open discussion (10 min)</b></li> </ul>



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<b>13:05-13:50</b>	<b>Panel on “Leveraging International Support for MSMEs in Egypt and Sudan: The Role of Funding Institutions and IGOs in the Green Energy Transition”</b> <b>Moderator: Yasmine Fahim, <i>ERF</i>.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stephen Gitonga, <i>UNDP</i>. (Online)</li><li>• Ghada Darwish, <i>Globeleq</i>.</li><li>• Alia Hassan, <i>The World Bank</i>. (Online)</li></ul>
<b>13:50-14:00</b>	<b>Closing Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ibrahim Elbadawi, Managing Director, <i>ERF</i>.</li></ul>
<b>14:00-14:45</b>	<b>Networking and Lunch</b>