

ERF 32nd
Annual Conference
June 14-16 | Cairo, Egypt

2026

After the Shock

Reform, Resilience,
and Economic Transformation in MENA

Conference
Agenda

ECONOMIC
RESEARCH
FORUM



منتدى
البحوث
الاقتصادية

After the Shock

Reform, Resilience, and Economic Transformation in MENA

Conference Overview

The MENA region is entering a new economic phase shaped not by isolated shocks, but by sustained geopolitical disruption, heightened uncertainty, and increasingly complex channels of economic transmission. Recent regional conflict and heightened geopolitical tensions have exposed structural vulnerabilities across trade systems, financial channels, labor markets, public finances, firms, and households. This is not simply a crisis to be managed. It is a systemic stress test. It has shown how rapidly disruptions in security, trade routes, energy markets, shipping, insurance, finance, and investor confidence can spread through economies and affect employment, prices, public budgets, investment, and livelihoods. Against this backdrop, the policy challenge extends beyond restoring growth. The region must strengthen resilience, improve the speed and credibility of policy response, protect vulnerable groups, and advance reforms that support more productive, inclusive, and sustainable economic models.

The Economic Research Forum's 32nd Annual Conference will bring together researchers, policymakers, private sector leaders, and development practitioners to examine this changing landscape and identify the evidence, reforms, and strategies required for MENA's next phase of development. Building on ERF's strong regional research network and policy-oriented mandate, the conference will facilitate a dialogue that moves beyond diagnosis toward actionable reform pathways. It will provide a platform for rigorous research, comparative evidence, and policy debate on how MENA economies can navigate ongoing disruption and position themselves for a more resilient and sustainable future.

The three-day program will feature three plenary sessions, two featured policy roundtables, and 85 competitively selected papers across 29 thematic sessions. Together, they will address the region's most pressing economic challenges, advance the discussion from crisis management to longer-term reform and renewal, and strengthen the evidence base for policy action.

Conference Focus

The conference will explore five interrelated dimensions of post-crisis reform and economic transformation in MENA:

- Shock transmission and systemic vulnerability: how disruptions spread across trade, finance, firms, employment, public finances, and households;
- Economic resilience: how fiscal, financial, institutional, and social systems can better absorb and respond to stress;
- Policy and institutional reform: how frameworks can be redesigned to improve coordination, credibility, agility, and effectiveness;
- Private sector adaptation: how firms can continue to operate, invest, and create jobs in a more uncertain environment;
- Inclusive transformation: how growth models must evolve to protect vulnerable groups, expand opportunity, and strengthen social cohesion.

Through these themes, the conference will draw lessons from the current crisis, showcase research findings, and advance the discussion from short-term crisis management toward longer-term reform, resilience, and economic transformation.

ERF gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) for this conference.



Canada



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Agenda at a Glance

DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14

- 8:00 - 9:00
Registration
- 9:00 - 11:00
Opening Ceremony
and Plenary Session 1
- 11:00 - 11:30
Coffee Break
- 11:30 - 13:00
Parallel Sessions: Group (A)
- 13:00 - 14:00
Lunch Break
- 14:00 - 15:30
Parallel Sessions: Group (B)
- 15:30 - 16:00
Coffee Break
- 16:00 - 17:30
Featured Policy Roundtable 1
- 18:00 - 19:00
Research Fellows Meeting
(Closed Meeting)

DAY 2 | Monday, June 15

- 9:00 - 10:30
Plenary Session 2
- 10:30 - 11:00
Coffee Break
- 11:00 - 12:30
Parallel Sessions: Group (C)
- 11:00 -
BOT Meeting (Closed Meeting)
- 12:30 - 14:00
Lunch Break
- 14:00 - 15:30
Parallel Sessions: Group (D)
- 15:30 - 16:00
Coffee Break
- 16:00 - 17:30
Featured Policy Roundtable 2

DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16


- 9:00 - 10:30
Plenary Session 3
- 10:30 - 11:00
Coffee Break
- 11:00 - 12:30
Parallel Sessions: Group (E)
- 12:30 - 14:00
Lunch Break
- 14:00 - 15:30
Parallel Sessions: Group (F)
- 15:30 - 16:00
Coffee Break
- 16:00 - 17:30
Parallel Sessions: Group (G)
- 17:30 - 18:00
Celebrating Excellence
and Closing Session











DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14

At a Glance

- 8:00 - 9:00 Registration | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor
- 9:00 - 11:00 Opening Ceremony and Plenary Session 1 | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor  [Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)
- 11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break | Foyer - 5th floor
- 11:30 - 13:00 Parallel Sessions: Group (A)

Session	Parallel Session 1	Parallel Session 2	Parallel Session 3	Parallel Session 4
Theme	International Economics	Microeconomics	Labor Economics	Political Economy
Location	Regency 3	Regency 2	Sky Meeting Room	Regency 1
Session Format	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session
- 13:00 - 14:00 Lunch Break | Park Restaurant Terrace - 1st floor
- 14:00 - 15:30 Parallel Sessions: Group (B)

Session	Parallel Session 5	Parallel Session 6	Parallel Session 7	Parallel Session 8
Theme	Poverty & Inequality	Macroeconomics	Financial Economics	Environment & Energy
Location	Regency 1	Regency 3	Sky Meeting Room	Regency 2
Session Format	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online
- 15:30 - 16:00 Coffee Break | Foyer - 5th floor
- 16:00 - 17:30 Featured Policy Roundtable 1 | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor  [Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)
- 18:00 - 19:00 Research Fellows Meeting (Closed Meeting) | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor



DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

9:00-9:30 | Opening Ceremony

The Opening Ceremony will set out ERF's forward agenda at a time of profound regional and global change. It will frame the conference theme, reaffirm ERF's role as the region's leading platform for independent and policy-relevant economic research, and outline how the Forum's next chapter will support evidence-based reform, resilience, and sustainable economic transformation.

Opening Remarks:

- **H.E. Dr. Ahmed Galal**, Chair, Board of Trustees, Economic Research Forum; former Minister of Finance, Egypt; ERF Research Fellow
- **H.E. Dr. Hala Elsaid**, Economic Advisor to H.E. President of Egypt; former Minister of Planning, Economic Development, Egypt; Member, ERF Board of Trustees and ERF Policy Affiliate
- **Dr. Raed Safadi**, Managing Director, Economic Research Forum; ERF Research Fellow

9:30-11:00 | Plenary 1:

The War and the Region:
Economic Damage, Policy Choices, and the Risk of Scarring

This opening plenary will take stock of the economic impact of recent regional conflict and related geopolitical disruption on MENA economies. It will examine how the shock has been transmitted through trade routes, energy and food prices, shipping and insurance costs, financial conditions, tourism, investment, public finances, firms, and labor markets.

The purpose of the session is not only to describe the damage, but to assess where the region now stands and what policy responses are required. The discussion will distinguish between short-term disruption and the risk of longer-term economic scarring, including delayed investment, firm closures, fiscal stress, weakened employment creation, and deeper social vulnerability.

The session will also ask which policy instruments have worked, which have been insufficient, and where governments need to act with greater speed, coordination, and credibility. It will consider how countries with different fiscal buffers, external positions, institutional capacities, and exposure to conflict have experienced the shock differently, and what this implies for the design of policy responses across the region.



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DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14

9:30-11:00 | Plenary 1:
The War and the Region:
Economic Damage, Policy Choices, and the Risk of Scarring



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Questions for Discussion

- Through which channels has the war affected MENA economies most severely?
- Which countries, sectors, firms, and workers have proved more resilient, and why?
- Where is the risk of lasting economic scarring greatest?
- What immediate policy responses are needed to protect macroeconomic stability, firms, jobs, and vulnerable households?
- How should governments balance crisis response with the need to preserve reform momentum?
- What lessons should be drawn for future crisis preparedness in the region?

Chairperson and Moderator:

- **H.E. Dr. Ahmed Galal**, Chair, Board of Trustees, Economic Research Forum; former Minister of Finance, Egypt; ERF Research Fellow

Distinguished Speakers:

- **H.E. Dr. Rania Al-Mashat**, UN Under-Secretary-General & Executive Secretary of Economic and Social Commission of West Asia (ESCWA); former Minister of Planning, Economic Development & International Cooperation, Egypt; former Minister of Tourism, Egypt; ERF Research Fellow
- **H.E. Dr. Jihad Azour**, Director of the Middle East and Central Asia Department at the International Monetary Fund; former Minister of Finance, Lebanon | [Participating online](#)
- **H.E. Dr. Nasser Saidi**, Founder and President, Nasser Saidi & Associates; former Minister of Economy and Industry, Lebanon; former Deputy Governor, Central Bank of Lebanon | [Participating online](#)

| Meet Our Distinguished Speakers



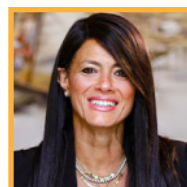
H.E. Dr. Ahmed Galal



H.E. Dr. Hala Elsaid



Dr. Raed Safadi



H.E. Dr. Rania Al-Mashat



H.E. Dr. Jihad Azour



H.E. Dr. Nasser Saidi



DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14

Parallel Sessions - Group (A) 11:30 - 13:00

Theme: International Economics

Climate Policy, Energy Transition
& Distributional Impacts in Open Economies

Parallel Session 1

Location: Regency 3

Chairperson & Discussant
Nora Aboushady

- The Impact of the EU's Emissions Trading System on 3rd Countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), **Camilla Jensen**
- Powering the Energy Transition in Enterprises: Empirical Insights into the Global Value Chain–Energy Innovation Nexus, **Nancy Barakat & Myriam Ramzy**
- The Green Finance Blind Spot: A Bibliometric Analysis on GVC, Green Finance and Decarbonization, **Ghassen Jabri & Sami Mensi**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Microeconomics

AI Strategies and Misinformation

Parallel Session 2

Location: Regency 2

Chairperson & Discussant
Nisreen Salti

- Mediatization of National AI Strategies: The Sociotechnics of Egypt's AI Policy, **Mennatullah Hendawy & Nurudeen Olalere**
- Artificial Intelligence Adoption in Small Enterprises Across Europe: A Comparative and Efficiency-Based Evaluation with Policy Implications for Türkiye, **Muhammad Salar Khan & Abdullah Altun**
- Can Individuals Be Inoculated against Fake News: An Experimental Study on a Sample of Egyptian X Users, **Mazen Hassan, Sarah Mansour, Asmaa Abd El Khalek, Mohamed Sabry Amer & Zeyad Kelani**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Labor Economics

Intergenerational Mobility Outcomes

Parallel Session 3

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Chairperson & Discussant
Mahdi Majbouri

- The Sibling Penalty: Unequal Gendered Effects of Childbirth on Sibling's Time Allocation, **Javad Dashtimanesh, Mohammad Vesal & Javad Shaker Arani**
- Shielding Women from Violence: The Effects of Violence Prevention and Monitoring Centers on Intimate Partner Violence in Türkiye, **Güneş Aşık, Bilge Erten, Erdal Tekin, Semih Tumen & Hakan Ulucan**
- Intergenerational Labor Market Transitions in MENA: Exploring the Impact of Climate Shocks, **Yasmine Abdelfattah, Shireen AlAzzawi & Vladimír Hlásny**
- Equal Opportunity Stagnation: Intergenerational Income Mobility in Iran, **GholamReza Keshavarz Haddad, Safoura Moeeni, Ali Abdollahi Demneh & Mojtaba Nazari Amineh**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Political Economy

Governance, Redistribution
& Political Economy

Parallel Session 4

Location: Regency 1

Chairperson & Discussant
Bedri Kamil Onur Tas

- Conflicts of Use and Environmental Governance in the Bizerte Lagoon: A Strategic Analysis Using the MAC-TOR Method, **Lamia Mokaddem**
- From Zero-Min to Zero-Max: Enhancing Kurdish Rights and Reducing Regional Development Gaps Through Multistate Coordination, **Nader Habibi**



DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14

Parallel Sessions - Group (B) 14:00 - 15:30

Theme: Poverty & Inequality

Poverty Measurement, Dynamics, and Crises

Location: Regency 1

Parallel Session 5

Chairperson & Discussant
Khaled Nasri

- When Sanctions Hit Home: Measuring Poverty Dynamics in Iran Using a Synthetic Panel Approach, **Shakiba Kheirkhahan & Atiyeh Vahidmanesh**
- Micro-Level Estimation of Poverty in Iran: Evidence from 2016 Census Data, **Sadegh Hossein Zadeh & Atiyeh Vahidmanesh**
- Health Insurance and Financial Protection: Evidence from Egypt, **Hoda El-Enbaby**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Macroeconomics

Macroeconomic Policy, Monetary Dynamics, and External Spillovers

Location: Regency 3

Parallel Session 6

Chairperson & Discussant
Ilham Haouas

- Egypt's Economy in the Age of Permacrisis, **Mahmoud Mohieldin, Amira El-Shal, Eman Moustafa, & Hanan Saleme**
- Exchange Rate Management and Monetary Autonomy in Egypt, **Sara Alnashar, Wissam Harake & Mazen Fathy**
- Evaluating a US Policy Rate Threshold Effect on Economic Growth in the GCC Region: Do Oil Prices Matter? **Assil El Mahmah**

Theme: Financial Economics

Sustainability, Growth and Performance

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Parallel Session 7

Chairperson & Discussant
Ahmet F. Aysan

- Driving Sustainable Competitiveness in Selected MENAAP Countries: Synergies Between Financial Development and Green Growth, **Héla Miniaoui & Habib Ouni**
- Mind the Gap: Carbon Intensity, Regulatory Quality, and Transition Risk, **Ayça Tekin-Koru, Işıl Sevilay Yılmaz & İlkay Şendeniz-Yüncü**
- Can Financial Access Improve Firms' Environmental Performance? **Mohamed Elshafie & Riham A. Ezzat**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Environment & Energy

Green Transition, Trade & Infrastructure Impacts

Location: Regency 2

Parallel Session 8

Chairperson & Discussant
Reham Rizk

- Understanding Brown Lock-In: Evidence from MENA Economies and Firm-Level Insights from Turkey, **Seda Ekmen Özçelik**
- Rainfall, Birthweight and Endogenous Pregnancy, **Fatemeh Asghari & Mohammad H. Rahmati**
- Decarbonizing at the Border: Assessing the Readiness of MENA's Steel Sector for the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, **Nazire Nergiz Dinçer, Ali Ersin Dinçer & Abdullah Demir**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

DAY 1 | Sunday, June 14



Hybrid Session
[Register to attend online](#)

16:00-17:30 | Featured Policy Roundtable 1:

Extending Social Protection Systems in MENA to Informal Workers and their Families

In MENA, social protection remains fragmented, with contributory schemes largely limited to formal workers. As a result, many informal workers, who account for a large share of the labor force, remain excluded from effective coverage. Social assistance often reaches only the poorest households, leaving many vulnerable workers and families exposed to income shocks, health risks, and old-age insecurity.

This roundtable will examine the policy gaps and emerging models for extending social and health protection to informal workers and their families. It will focus on the legal, administrative, financial, and institutional barriers that prevent inclusion, and will draw on ERF research and country experiences from Egypt, Jordan, Tunisia, and potentially Lebanon.

The discussion will assess the effectiveness and scalability of different approaches, including subsidized contributions, simplified enrollment, digital identification, links between social assistance and insurance, and mechanisms to reach workers outside standard employment relationships. The session will be grounded in both empirical evidence and policy practice.

Chairperson and Moderator:

- **Dr. Ragui Assaad**, Professor and Freeman Chair in International Economic Policy, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota; ERF Research Fellow

Distinguished Speakers:

- **H.E. Nesreen Barakat**, Chief Executive Officer, Jordan Strategy Forum; former Minister of Social Development, Jordan; former Minister of Public Sector Development, Jordan
- **Dr. Irene Selwaness**, Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, Cairo University; ERF Research Fellow
- **Dr. Khaled Nasri**, Assistant Professor of Applied Statistics and Econometrics, Higher Institute of Management, University of Gabes, Tunisia; ERF Research Associate

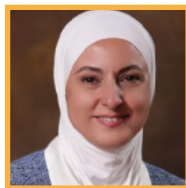
Lead Discussant:

- **Dr. Camille Laporte**, Deputy Director, Research Department, Agence Française de Développement (AFD)

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Dr. Ragui Assaad



H.E. Nesreen Barakat



Dr. Irene Selwaness



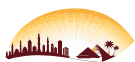
Dr. Khaled Nasri



Dr. Camille Laporte



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DAY 2 | Monday, June 15

At a Glance

9:00 - 10:30 Plenary Session 2 | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor





[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

10:30 - 11:00 Coffee Break | Foyer - 5th floor



11:00- BOT Meeting (Closed Meeting)

11:00 - 12:30 Parallel Sessions: Group (C)

Session	Parallel Session 9	Parallel Session 10	Parallel Session 11	Parallel Session 12	Parallel Session 13
Theme	International Economics	Microeconomics	Labor Economics	Political Economy	Poverty & Inequality
Location	Regency 2	Sky Meeting Room	Regency 1	Regency 3	C-West
Session Format	in-person session	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session	in-person session

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch Break | Park Restaurant Terrace - 1st floor

14:00 - 15:30 Parallel Sessions: Group (D)

Session	Parallel Session 14	Parallel Session 15	Parallel Session 16	Parallel Session 17
Theme	Poverty & Inequality	Macroeconomics	Financial Economics	Environment & Energy
Location	Regency 3	Sky Meeting Room	Regency 1	Regency 2
Session Format	in-person session	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	 Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee Break | Foyer - 5th floor

16:00 - 17:30 Featured Policy Roundtable 2 | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)



DAY 2 | Monday, June 15



Hybrid Session
[Register to attend online](#)

9:00-10:30 | Plenary 2:

Reform Under Constraint:

Fiscal Space, Private Investment, and the New Growth Bargain

This plenary will examine how MENA economies can sustain reform when public finances are under pressure, borrowing costs remain high, and private investment is not yet strong enough to drive broad-based growth. The central issue is that countries in the region are being asked to stabilize, protect, reform, and invest at the same time, often with limited fiscal space and constrained institutional capacity.

The session will focus on the economic bargain now facing the region. Governments must preserve macroeconomic stability and social cohesion, but they must also create the conditions for investment, productivity, job creation, and structural transformation. This requires clearer prioritization, stronger policy credibility, and better alignment between fiscal policy, financial systems, competition, industrial policy, and labor-market reform.

The discussion will also consider the evolving role of the state: not as a substitute for markets, but as a credible reformer, risk manager, regulator, and enabler of private investment. Particular attention will be given to SMEs, infrastructure, human capital, and sectors where the region can build competitiveness in a more fragmented and risk-aware global economy.

Questions for Discussion

- How can MENA governments pursue reform when fiscal space is limited and financing costs remain high?
- What should be protected, what should be reprioritized, and what can no longer be postponed?
- How can public policy crowd in private investment rather than crowd it out?
- What reforms are most urgent for productivity, competitiveness, and job creation?
- How can financial systems support firms, especially SMEs, during periods of uncertainty?
- What does a credible new growth bargain between the state, firms, and citizens look like in the region?

Chairperson and Moderator:

- Dr. Tarik Yousef, Senior Fellow, Middle East Council on Global Affairs; ERF Research Fellow



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DAY 2 | Monday, June 15

9:00-10:30 | Plenary 2:
Reform Under Constraint:
Fiscal Space, Private Investment, and the New Growth Bargain



Hybrid Session
[Register to attend online](#)

Distinguished Speakers:

- **Dr. Adeel Malik**, Globe Fellow in the Economies of Muslim Societies, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies; Associate Professor in Development Economics, University of Oxford; ERF Senior Associate
- **Dr. Ishac Diwan**, Professor in the Practice of Economics, American University of Beirut; Director of Research, Finance for Development Lab, Paris School of Economics; ERF Research Fellow
- **Dr. Amir Lebdioui**, Associate Professor of the Political Economy of Development; Director, Technology and Industrialisation for Development Centre | [Participating online](#)
- **Dr. Nur Arafah**, Fellow, Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut

| Meet Our Distinguished Speakers



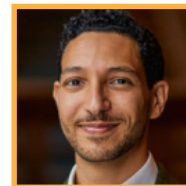
Dr. Tarik Yousef



Dr. Adeel Malik



Dr. Ishac Diwan



Dr. Amir Lebdioui



Dr. Nur Arafah



DAY 2 | Monday, June 15

Parallel Sessions - Group (C) 11:00 - 12:30

Theme: International Economics

GVC Integration, Digitalization & Structural Transformation in MENA

Location: Regency 2

Parallel Session 9

Chairperson & Discussant
Bernard Hoekman

- Shaping Egypt's Sectoral Positioning in Global Value Chains: The Role of Bilateral Real Exchange Rate, **Mariz Abdou**
- From Connectivity to Competitiveness: How Digitalization Shapes Firm Integration into Global Value Chains in the MENA Region, **Marouane Ikira, Youssef Bouazizi & Meriem Oudmane**
- Does Global Value Chain Participation Depress Labor Shares in Manufacturing? **Hüseyin Alperen Özer, Halit Yanikkaya & Taner Turan**
- GVCs and Entrepreneurial Activity: The Role of Institutions and Labor Provisions, **Yasmine Eissa & Mariz Nagy**

Theme: Microeconomics

Digitalization, Enterprise Performance, and Inequality

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Parallel Session 10

Chairperson & Discussant
Hassan Aly

- Competition, Digitalization, and Innovation: Empirical Evidence from Developing and Emerging Economies, **Riham A. Ezzat**
- A Survival Analysis to Explore the Determinants of Digitalization in Egyptian Business Enterprises, **Esmat Kamel, Mariam Hegazy & Mohamed Abdelraouf**
- Does Digital Transformation Reduce Social Inequalities in MENA Countries? **Imen Khanchel, Naima Lassoued & Ilyes Mekni**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Labor Economics

Policy Interventions and Labor Market Outcomes

Location: Regency 1

Parallel Session 11

Chairperson & Discussant
Vladimir Hlasny

- Higher Education and Female Labor Supply: Evidence from a Large-Scale Expansion Policy, **Asena Caner, Merve Derebasoglu, & Cagla Okten**
- Low Taxes, Low Productivity? Labor Supply, Informality, and the Role of Personal Income Taxes in the MENA Region, **Ceyhun Elgin**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Political Economy

The Economic Consequences of Political Conflict

Location: Regency 3

Parallel Session 12

Chairperson & Discussant
Nader Habibi

- Financial Literacy, Conflict Dynamics, and Household Economic Resilience: Evidence from Palestine, **Rabeh Morrar, Yousuf Daas & Sameh Hallaq**
- The Economic Impact of the Israel-Iran Conflict on GCC Countries and Strategies to Mitigate Adverse Effects, **Salah Abosedra, Md Qamruzzaman & Sylvia Kor**

Theme: Poverty & Inequality

Inequality of Opportunity & Educational Outcomes

Location: C-West

Parallel Session 13

Chairperson & Discussant
Rana Hendy

- Quantifying School Segregation in MENA Countries: A Comparative Analysis, **Abbas El Akari & Aomar Ibourek**
- Unconditional Cash Transfers and Children's Schooling in Tunisia: A Fuzzy Regression Discontinuity Approach, **Mohamed Dewahi, Mohamed Amara & Imen Mouaddeb**
- Maternal Education and Childhood Obesity in Türkiye: Is There A Causal Link? **Deniz Karaoğlan & Meltem Dayıoğlu**
- Syrian Refugees and Native Health in Türkiye: An Analysis of Healthcare Utilization, Access, and Health Conditions, **Abdullah Tirgil, Abdullah Selim Öztekin, Ümit Acar, & Ali Recai Direkçi**



DAY 2 | Monday, June 15

Parallel Sessions - Group (D) 14:00 - 15:30

Theme: Poverty & Inequality

Labor Markets, Climate Shocks
& Social Protection

Location: Regency 3

Parallel Session 14

Chairperson & Discussant
Imane Helmy

- Does Formalization Improve Welfare? Evidence from Social Insurance in Algeria, **Walid Merouani, Maya Gheroufella & Moundir Lassassi**
- Roles, Rules, and Controls: An Analytical Review of the Governance of Social Protection in Egypt, **Nada Kassem**

Theme: Macroeconomics

Public Finance, Behavioral Responses
& Policy Incentives

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Parallel Session 15

Chairperson & Discussant
Hebatallah Emam

- Rewarding Nominal Growth: Unintended Impacts of Tax Cuts in Iran, **Javad Dashtimanesh & Mohammad Vesal**
- Nudges: Lever for Improving Tax Compliance in the Moroccan Context, **Sanae Solhi & Yusra Serghini**
- Do Automatic Enrollment Schemes Cannibalize Voluntary Retirement Saving? Evidence from a Nationwide Quasi-Experiment, **Sadettin Haluk Çitçi, Halit Yanıkkaya & Yunis Dede**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Financial Economics

AI, Fintech and Banks

Location: Regency 1

Parallel Session 16

Chairperson & Discussant
Samir Ghazouani

- Artificial Intelligence in Banking: Who Wins, Who Waits, and Why It Matters? **Atta Ul Mustafa, Ahmet Faruk Aysan & Nicholas Aperi**
- Do Youths Use Fintech or Banks in North Africa? Complementary vs Substitution Effect, **Imène Berguiga & Philippe Adair**
- FinTechs and Financial Literacy: Assessing Their Joint Impact on Financial Inclusion in the MENA Region, **Rachida El Yamani**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Environment & Energy

Climate Change, Vulnerability & Adaptation

Location: Regency 2

Parallel Session 17

Chairperson & Discussant
Ali Fakh

- Are Egypt's Elderly Prepared for A Warmer Future? Studying The Nexus Between Climate Change and the Wellbeing of Elderly in Egypt, **Amira Elayouty & Hala Abou-Ali**
- When Water Runs Dry: How Irrigation Water Scarcity Shapes Smallholder Farmers' Mitigation Strategies and Migration Aspiration in Developing Countries, **Assem Abu Hatab, Mohamed Abdelhameed Ahmed, Shilpa Asokan & Carl-Johan Lagerkvist**
- Impact of Climate Change Adaptation Strategies on Household Food Security: Empirical Evidence from Tunisia, **Asma Souissi, Hassen Ouergemmi, Rania Soula, Bou-baker Dhehibi, Abeyou W. Worqlul & Aymen Frija**

DAY 2 | Monday, June 15



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

16:00-17:30 | Featured Policy Roundtable 2: Unlocking Evidence for Jobs and Inclusion: Launch of the Jordan Labor Market Panel Survey

This high-profile roundtable will mark the launch of the Jordan Labor Market Panel Survey and highlight its relevance for employment and inclusion policy. The session will consider how improved labor-market data can strengthen policy design, deepen understanding of labor-market dynamics, and support more effective strategies for job creation, inclusion, and social mobility in Jordan and the wider region.

The discussion will place particular emphasis on how panel data can help researchers and policymakers understand transitions between education, employment, unemployment, informality, migration, and household vulnerability. It will also examine how better data can improve the targeting and evaluation of labor-market programs, social protection reforms, and policies aimed at women and youth.

Chairperson and Moderator:

- **H.E. Dr. Haidar Fraihat**, Director General, Jordan Department of Statistics

Distinguished Speakers:

- **Dr. Ragui Assaad**, Professor and Freeman Chair in International Economic Policy, Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota; ERF Research Fellow
- **Dr. May Gadallah**, Associate Professor, Department of Statistics, Cairo University; ERF Data Manager; ERF Research Fellow
- **Dr. Ibrahim Alhawarin**, Associate Professor, Al-Hussein Bin Talal University

Lead Discussant:

- **H.E. Dr. Mary Kawar**, Former Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan; ERF Policy Affiliate

| Meet Our Distinguished Speakers



H.E. Dr. Haidar Fraihat



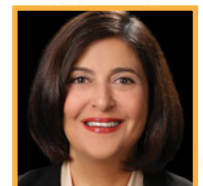
Dr. Ragui Assaad



Dr. May Gadallah



Dr. Ibrahim Alhawarin



H.E. Dr. Mary Kawar



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DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16

At a Glance

9:00 - 10:30 Plenary Session 3 | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

10:30 - 11:00 Coffee Break | Foyer - 5th floor

11:00 - 12:30 Parallel Sessions: Group (E)

Session	Parallel Session 18	Parallel Session 19	Parallel Session 20	Parallel Session 21
Theme	International Economics	Microeconomics	Labor Economics	Political Economy
Location	Regency 3	Regency 1	Regency 2	Sky Meeting Room
Session Format	Hybrid Session Register to attend online	Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session	Hybrid Session Register to attend online

12:30 - 14:00 Lunch Break | Park Restaurant Terrace - 1st floor

14:00 - 15:30 Parallel Sessions: Group (F)

Session	Parallel Session 22	Parallel Session 23	Parallel Session 24	Parallel Session 25
Theme	International Economics	Macroeconomics	Financial Economics	Environment & Energy
Location	Regency 1	Regency 3	Regency 2	Sky Meeting Room
Session Format	in-person session	Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session	Hybrid Session Register to attend online

15:30 - 16:00 Coffee Break | Foyer - 5th floor

16:00 - 17:30 Parallel Sessions: Group (G)

Session	Parallel Session 26	Parallel Session 27	Parallel Session 28	Parallel Session 29
Theme	Poverty & Inequality	Microeconomics	Labor Economics	Financial Economics
Location	Regency 3	Sky Meeting Room	Regency 1	Regency 2
Session Format	in-person session	Hybrid Session Register to attend online	Hybrid Session Register to attend online	in-person session

17:30 - 18:00 Celebrating Excellence and Closing Session | C-West Ballroom - 3rd floor





DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16



Hybrid Session
[Register to attend online](#)

9:00-10:30 | Plenary 3:

Protecting People in the Shock Economy: Jobs, Informality and Vulnerable Groups

This plenary will focus on the groups most exposed to economic shocks and least protected by existing systems. In the MENA region, crises do not affect all people equally. Young people, women, informal workers, low-income households, refugees, displaced populations, and workers in fragile sectors often absorb the largest costs through job losses, lower earnings, interrupted education, reduced mobility, and weaker access to services.

The session will examine how the war and broader economic disruption have affected employment, livelihoods, social protection, and human capital. It will also consider the structural reasons why vulnerability remains so persistent in the region, including informality, fragmented social insurance systems, weak labor-market intermediation, gender barriers, spatial inequalities, and limited pathways from education to decent work.

The discussion will move beyond protection as emergency relief. It will ask how MENA countries can build systems that protect people before shocks become social crises, while also enabling participation, mobility, and productivity. This includes better labor-market data, more inclusive social protection, active labor-market policies, skills systems, and targeted support for groups at risk of exclusion.

Questions for Discussion

- Which groups have been most affected by the current crisis, and through which channels?
- How have labor markets transmitted the shock to workers, households, youth, women, and informal workers?
- Why do existing social protection systems still leave many vulnerable groups exposed?
- How can countries extend protection without creating unsustainable fiscal burdens?
- What policies can help vulnerable groups move from protection to participation?
- How should ERF's research agenda better capture vulnerability, informality, displacement, and exclusion in the region?

Chairperson and Moderator:

- **Dr. Raed Safadi**, Managing Director, Economic Research Forum; ERF Research Fellow



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DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16

9:00-10:30 | **Plenary 3:**
Protecting People in the Shock Economy:
Jobs, Informality, and Vulnerable Groups



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Distinguished Speakers:

- **H.E. Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin**, Professor, Department of Economics, Cairo University; UN Special Envoy on Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; former Minister of Investment, Egypt; ERF Senior Associate | [Participating online](#)
- **Dr. Roberta Gatti**, Chief Economist, Middle East, North Africa, Afghanistan and Pakistan Region, World Bank
- **Dr. Hamza Meddeb**, Research Fellow, Malcolm H. Kerr Carnegie Middle East Center, Beirut | [Participating online](#)
- **H.E. Dr. Mary Kawar**, Former Minister of Planning and International Cooperation, Jordan; ERF Policy Affiliate

| Meet Our Distinguished Speakers



Dr. Raed Safadi



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DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16

Parallel Sessions - Group (E) 11:00 - 12:30

Theme: International Economics

Geoeconomics, Sanctions & Institutional Drivers of Trade

Location: Regency 3

Parallel Session 18

Chairperson & Discussant
Assil Elmahmah

- Industrial Policy in MENA: Objectives, Drivers and Scope for Plurilateral Cooperation, **Bernard Hoekman, Bedri Kamil Onur Taş & Rohit Ticku**
- Revolutionary Changes in Institutions and Firm Exports, **Fatma Aly, Daniel Mirza & Chahir Zaki**
- Economic Sanctions and Nationalist Solidarity: An Empirical Test of the Rally-Around-the-Flag Effect in Iran (2005-2020), **Mohammad Reza Farzanegan & Hassan Gholipour**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Microeconomics

Land Use and the Informal Economy

Location: Regency 1

Parallel Session 19

Chairperson & Discussant
Tarek Selim

- The Impact of Garden-to-Building Conversion on Residential Property Price, **Somayeh Foroughi, Saeed Tajrishy & Mohammad Vesal**
- Casting Light on Africa's Shadow Economy, **Hany Abdel-Latif & Mousa G. Selmey**
- Unpacking PHC's Financial Protection Effects: From the Lived Experience of Patients to the Promise of Systemic Equity in Tunisia, **Chokri Arfa**
- From Taxes to Transformation: Impact of Tax Increases on Smoking Behavior in Turkey, **Asena Caner, Belgi Turan & Yenal Can Yigit**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Labor Economics

Labor Market Dynamics

Location: Regency 2

Parallel Session 20

Chairperson & Discussant
Dina Abdel Fattah

- Where Have All the Mothers Gone? COVID and Mothers Leaving the Labor Force in Egypt, **Ali Abboud, Serena Cnaan, Mahyar Rezazadeh & Nisreen Salti**
- Women's Labor Force Attachment in Jordan: Understanding Attrition, Retention, and Re-Entry, **Rozan Wehbe, Nisreen Salti & Ali Abboud**
- How Exposed Are Workers in MENA to AI? Evidence on Employment Risk and Task Complementarity, **Shireen AlAzzawi & Vladimir Hlasny**

Theme: Political Economy

Religion & Socio-economic Outcomes

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Parallel Session 21

Chairperson & Discussant
Samer Atallah

- Religion and Economic Attitudes in Arab Countries, **Moamen Gouda**
- Religious Observance and Criminal Behavior: The Case of Ramadan in Türkiye, **Abdullah Tirgil, Ümit Acar & Ali Recai Direkçi**
- Conflict Exposure in a Multi-Sectarian Society: Evidence from Lebanon, **Maleke Fourati & Danielle Hayek**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)



DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16

Parallel Sessions - Group (F) 14:00 - 15:30

Theme: International Economics

Trade Policy Shocks, Uncertainty & Firm/Export Performance

Location: Regency 1

Parallel Session 22

Chairperson & Discussant
Nazire Nergiz Dinçer

- Shifting Shores: The Effect of Anti-Dumping Measures on Egyptian Firms, **Mohamed Afifi**
- Promoting Exports in the MENA Region: Do Uncertainty Risks Matter? **Assil El Mahmah**

Theme: Macroeconomics

Macroeconomic Policy, Monetary Dynamics, and External Spillovers

Location: Regency 3

Parallel Session 23

Chairperson & Discussant
Imène Guetat

- Oil Income and Entrepreneurial Activity in MENA: A Panel Analysis of Six Countries using GEM Data (2016-2022), **Ahrum Yoo**
- The Impact of Uncertainty on Firm Financial Fragility: How Has It Evolved Over Time? **Hüseyin Kaya, Yasir Küçükşahin & Mücahit Çitil**
- How Prices Change in a High-Inflation Economy: Evidence for Menu Cost Models, **Hamidreza Aziminia, Seyed Ali Madanizadeh & Amineh Mahmoudzadeh**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Financial Economics

Microcredit, Climate Risk & Bank

Location: Regency 2

Parallel Session 24

Chairperson & Discussant
Ayça Tekin-Koru

- Why Do They Walk Away: Understanding Microcredit Client Drop-out in Egypt's Microfinance Sector from the Loan Officer's Perspective, **Shymaa Bedaiwy Allam & Ingy Mohamed Abdel Hamid**
- Climate Risk and Credit Allocation: A Study of Domestic and Foreign Banks in Türkiye, Yusuf Emre Akgündüz, **Seyit Mümin Cilasun, M. Akif Dokumaci & Canan Yildirim**
- Assessing Liquidity at Risk in Turkish Banks: A Copula-Driven Monte Carlo Stress Test, **Serdar Özgür**

Theme: Environment & Energy

Energy Transition & Governance

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Parallel Session 25

Chairperson & Discussant
Abeer Elshennawy

- Natural Resources and the Energy Trilemma in MENA: How Important Are Governance and Financial Development? **Dalia M. Ibrahiem, Eslam A. Hassanein, Sara Muham-madullah and Rehab R. Esily**
- Does the Impact of Renewable Energy on Environment Performance Depend on Threshold Effects and Moderating Variables in GCC Countries? **Thouraya Hadj Amor, Ridha Noura & Christophe Rault**
- Fueling a Sustainable Future: The Impact of Financial Inclusion on Green Energy Transition Among Micro- and Small-Sized Firms in Egypt, **Emmanuel Orkoh & Assem Abu Hatab**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

DAY 3 | Tuesday, June 16

Parallel Sessions - Group (G) 16:00 - 17:30

Theme: Poverty & Inequality

Inequality, Vulnerability & Governance

Location: Regency 3

Parallel Session 26

Chairperson & Discussant
Ragui Assaad

- Mental Health and Income Inequality in the MENA Region: Understanding the Role of Good Governance and Economic Growth, **Wasseem Rizkallah & Marwa Sweilam**
- Rising Temperatures, Widening Gap: A Study of Income Inequality Amidst Climate Change in the MENA Region, **Laila Elgindy & Yasmine Abdelfattah**
- Poverty and Inequality in Iran: From Land Reform to the Present, **Djavad Salehi-Isfahani**

Theme: Microeconomics

Entrepreneurship Drivers in Challenging Contexts

Location: Sky Meeting Room

Parallel Session 27

Chairperson & Discussant
Mohamed El-Komi

- Encouraging Organ Donation: Evidence from a Randomized Informational Intervention in Tunisia, **Maleke Fourati & Christina Sarah Hauser**
- Factors of Entrepreneurial Success in Tunisia: A Statistical and Empirical Study of Personal, Environmental and Managerial Determinants, **Amani Zaouali, Anis Bahri & Fatma Mrad**
- Conflict Intensity and Entrepreneurial Intentions: Evidence from Iraqi Regions, **Hassan F. Gholipour, Georges Harb & Mohammad Reza Farzanegan**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Labor Economics

Demographic Shocks and Outcomes

Location: Regency 1

Parallel Session 28

Chairperson & Discussant
Ahmed Elsayed

- Encouraging Babies with Time Off: The Impact of Maternity Leaves Extensions on Fertility Decisions in Iran, **GholamReza Keshavarz Haddad & Mehdi Djalalib**
- Motherhood and Women's Agency in Egypt: Evidence from a Staggered Difference-in-Differences Approach, **Fatma Mosaad & Noha Adel**



[Hybrid Session](#)
[Register to attend online](#)

Theme: Financial Economics

Sustainability, Development and Stability

Location: Regency 2

Parallel Session 29

Chairperson & Discussant
Halit Yanikkaya

- Material Topics in Corporate Sustainability Reporting: Building Türkiye's First Structured Dataset, **Nazire Nergiz Dinçer, Ayça Tekin-Koru, Ali Ersin Dinçer, Abdullah Demir, Gökçenur Başaran, Dogasu Polat & Furkan Gudek**
- CO2 Emissions and Financial Development: Does Geopolitical Risk Matter? Evidence from MENA Countries, **Rayhana Chabbouh El Asmi & Essahbi Essaadi**
- Sustainability and Banking Stability in GCC Economies: Threshold Effect of Green Innovation, Bank Competition and Institutional Quality, **Ahmed Chafai**



General Information

Conference Venue and Facilities

Hyatt Regency Cairo West
Pyramids Heights Business Park,
Km 22 Cairo - Alexandria Desert Rd,
First 6th of October, Giza, 8655, Egypt

All plenary sessions will take place in

C-West Ballroom - on the 3rd floor

All other parallel sessions will be in breakout rooms:

- **Regency 1,**
- **Regency 2,**
- **Regency 3,**
- **and Sky Meeting Room**

All on the 5th floor

All lunches will take place at:

The Park Restaurant - on the 1st floor

All coffee breaks will take place at:

The Foyer - on the 5th floor

Wi-Fi connection will be accessible across the entire hotel for all participants.

Virtual Attendance*

To attend all the annual conference hybrid sessions, please register through the available links.

* Please note that Egypt is observing daylight saving time. This means that the Egyptian time zone is (GMT+3). Kindly double-check the time difference with your local timezone to avoid any confusion.

For further information or queries, please contact:
Mrs. Hoda Azmi - Conference Manager
hazmi@erf.org.eg

Conference Material

All information about the plenary sessions can be accessed through the following link:

<https://erf.org.eg/events/erf-32nd-annual-conference-after-the-shock/>

All conference papers for the parallel sessions should be accessed through the following links:

- **Labor Economics**
<https://erf.org.eg/events/erf-32nd-annual-conference-parallel-sessions-on-labor-economics/>
- **International Economics**
<https://erf.org.eg/events/erf-32nd-annual-conference-parallel-sessions-on-international-economics/>
- **Microeconomics**
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- **Poverty & Inequality**
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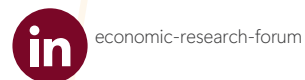
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After the Shock

Reform, Resilience,
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