

2021 MENA-OECD Ministerial Week

Governance FORUM

30-31 March 2021

VISIONS FOR RECOVERY

Delivering for the most vulnerable

31 March
14:00 – 15:15 (CET)

ZOOM

Overview of the 2021 MENA-OECD Ministerial Week

MENA-OECD Competitiveness Forum	MENA-OECD Governance Forum	MENA-OECD Initiative on Governance and Competitiveness for Development
Government-Business Summit 30, 31 March (13h-16h CET)	Governance Forum "Visions for Recovery" 30, 31 March	Ministerial meeting 1 April (13h-16h CET)
Launch of the publication "Middle East and North Africa Investment Policy Perspectives" (MENA IPP)	Citizens' Voice: Effective public communication for enhancing open government and supporting the COVID-19 recovery 30 March (11h-13h CET)	Opening session
Economic integration at the core of recovery and growth - Enabling a sound business climate and promoting investment - Enhancing trade, connectivity and value chains	High-level conference for the European Neighbourhood South region on user-centric service delivery: "Putting users, citizens and businesses, at the centre" (with SIGMA) 30 March (13h-15h CET)	High-level Ministerial Panel: Designing a Roadmap to Recovery in MENA
A post-COVID economy delivering decent jobs - An eco-system for youth economic empowerment - Moving away from informality to entrepreneurship, employment and social resilience	Visions for Recovery: Digital Governance and Rule of Law for more open, accessible and efficient public services (with MENA-OECD Training Centre of Caserta) 31 March (10h-12h CET)	Closing session: Way forward and adoption of the Ministerial Declaration
	Visions for Recovery: Delivering for the most vulnerable 31 March (14h-15h15 CET)	

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- Avoid discussing any highly-sensitive matters.

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AGENDA

Visions for Recovery in MENA

Delivering for the most vulnerable

31 March, 14:00-15:15 (CET)

Via Zoom - Kindly register [HERE](#)

Simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Arabic will be provided.

Moderator: **Dr. Rita STEPHAN**, Regional Coordinator, Religious and Ethnic Minorities, USAID

14:00 – 14:15

Opening Remarks

- **Ms. Hasna BEN SLIMANE**, Minister to the Head of Government in charge of Civil Service and co-chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme
- **H.E. Ambassador Edward OAKDEN**, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Tunisia
- **Ms. Elsa PILICHOWSKI**, Director, Public Governance Directorate, OECD

14:15 – 15:10

Roundtable and Open Discussion

Introduction: **Ms. Miriam ALLAM**, Head of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, OECD

Roundtable Discussion (45 minutes)

- **Ms. Fabiana DADONE**, Minister of Youth, Italy
- **Dr. Sahar EL SONBATY**, Secretary General of the National Council for Childhood and Motherhood, Egypt
- **Mr. Chris HODGES**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Assistance Coordination and Press and Public Diplomacy, Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, United States Department of State
- **Dr. Salma NIMS**, Secretary General of the National Commission for Women, Jordan
- **H.E. Ambassador Paul GARNIER**, Ambassador of Switzerland to Egypt

Continue below



AGENDA

Visions for Recovery in MENA

- **Mr. Ahmed LAAMOUMRI**, Secretary General, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Administrative Reform, Morocco
- **Mr. Tarek NESH-NASH**, Founder of Impact for Development, GovRight and ICT4Dev R&D, Morocco
- **Mr. Labid ZAAFRANE**, CEO of the Financing Bank of Small and Medium Enterprises (BFPME), Tunisia
- **Ms. Lynn CHEIKH MOUSSA**, young journalist, Lebanon

Open Discussion (10 minutes)

15:10 – 15:15

Closing Session

- **H.E. Ambassador Antonio BERNARDINI**, Ambassador of Italy to the OECD, Co-Chair of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme

Context

COVID-19 is causing serious human suffering with critical and long-term implications for people's health and life prospects. Governments across the region have taken unprecedented steps to expand bailout plans as well as welfare programmes and social safety nets in an effort to support households and businesses throughout the crisis. Even so, vulnerable and disadvantaged groups continue to be severely impacted by the crisis.

The COVID-19 outbreak is notably challenging for the elderly as they are at a higher risk of developing serious complications. Women and youth as well are overrepresented in economic sectors that are most impacted by the crisis (e.g. tourism, retail or restaurants and catering) and face a greater risk of unemployment or loss of income. School closures and the switch to remote learning since the beginning of the crisis have amplified educational inequalities for children and will create long-term educational attainment and professional setbacks for younger generations. The global surge in cases of domestic violence against women, due in part to lockdowns and mobility restrictions put in place in response to the epidemic, have further contributed to the increasing marginalisation of women and children.

The MENA region has the world's youngest population, is home to the largest community of refugees in the world and is affected by conflict and instability. The impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable groups in the region has thus been particularly devastating. Estimates indicate that the economic slowdown caused by the pandemic will cause an additional 8.3 million people from the region to fall into poverty and 700,000 women to lose their jobs¹. The recovery from the crisis will thus require to adopt a more inclusive approach in order to make sure that no one is left behind.

Vulnerability in times of COVID-19 has often been reduced to certain simplistic characteristics related to physical health, socio-economic levels or demographics. However, we should not speak of vulnerability but rather of vulnerabilities since they are often the result of different but interconnected characteristics. Governments should therefore pay particular attention to how these categories interact with others, such as class, mobility or geography, to create compounded inequalities and further marginalisation.

To that end, several countries have already started to adopt relevant policy tools such as gender and youth-sensitive impact assessment tests or age/gender-disaggregated evidence. They inform policy-makers about the costs of specific policies and services on vulnerabilities and inequalities and how they can best be remedied. Adopting such a "vulnerability-sensitive" and "people-centric" approach is essential to ensure that government responses are responsive to the needs and demands of those most impacted by the current crisis and that plans for the post-COVID-19 recovery deliver fair and inclusive policy outcomes for all.

Moreover, the participation of vulnerable groups in public life and the decision-making process, in all their complexity and diversity, through new and innovative forms of consultation and engagement would bring further attention to the demands of the most vulnerable. Public action and services cannot truly answer the specific needs of vulnerable people if they do not have the means and space to participate actively in the process from start to finish.

This high-level event will thus be an opportunity for government representatives, youth and civil society actors to share their different visions and exchange best practices on what governments can do to deliver better policies for better lives as well as a better recovery for the most vulnerable across MENA and the world.

Relevant OECD Publications

OECD publications on **COVID-19**

- [COVID-19 crisis response in MENA countries](#)
- [COVID-19 crisis in the MENA region: impact on gender equality and policy responses](#)
- [Women at the core of the fight against COVID-19 crisis](#)
- [Youth and COVID-19: Response, recovery and resilience](#)
- [Response, recovery and prevention in the coronavirus \(COVID-19\) pandemic in developing countries: Women and girls on the frontlines](#)
- [Securing the recovery, ambition, and resilience for the well-being of children in the post-COVID-19 decade](#)
- [COVID-19: Protecting people and societies](#)

OECD publications on **Youth and Intergenerational Justice**

- [Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice](#)
- [Youth Stocktaking Report](#)
- [Youth Policy Shapers in Tunisia – Project Brochure](#)
- [Local Youth Ambassador Programme in Jordan – Project Brochure](#)
- [Youth Empowerment in Jordan, Morocco and Tunisia](#)
- [Engaging young people in open government: A communication guide](#)
- [Soutenir la participation des jeunes dans la vie publique locale à Salé, Maroc : Guide pratique](#)
- [Pour un meilleur engagement de la jeunesse dans la vie publique en Tunisie](#)
- [Youth in the MENA Region: How to bring them in](#)

OECD publications on **Gender Equality**

- [La participation des femmes à la prise de décision dans l'administration publique en Tunisie](#)
- [La place de femmes dans la vie politique locale en Tunisie](#)
- [Women's Political Participation in Egypt: barriers, opportunities and gender sensitivity of select political institutions](#)
- [Women's Political Participation in Jordan](#)
- [Seven key findings from the Youth Governance Survey](#)
- [Gender Balance Guide: Actions for UAE Organisations](#)
- [Women in Public Life: Gender, Law and Policy in the Middle East and North Africa](#)
- [OECD Recommendation of the Council on Gender Equality in Public Life](#)



THE OECD

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organization in which governments work together to find solutions to common challenges, develop global standards, share experiences and identify best practices to promote better policies for better lives.

THE MENA-OECD GOVERNANCE PROGRAMME

The MENA-OECD Governance Programme is a strategic partnership between MENA and OECD countries to share knowledge and expertise, with a view of disseminating standards and principles of good governance that support the ongoing process of reform in the MENA region. The Programme strengthens collaboration with the most relevant multilateral initiatives currently underway in the region. In particular, the Programme supports the implementation of the G7 Deauville Partnership and assists governments in meeting the eligibility criteria to become a member of the Open Government Partnership. Through these initiatives, the Programme acts as a leading advocate of managing ongoing public governance reforms in the MENA region. The Programme provides a sustainable structure for regional policy dialogue as well as for country specific projects. These projects correspond to the commitment of MENA governments to implement public sector reforms in view of unlocking social and economic development and of meeting citizens' growing expectations in terms of quality services, inclusive policymaking and transparency.

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