



ANNUAL MEETINGS
2023 | **مراكش Marrakech**
WORLD BANK GROUP
INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND

The Arab Reform Initiative at the 2023 IMF & WBG Annual Meetings in Marrakech




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Launch Event: Global Campaign on Universal Social Security

Platform Online Campaign Launch

 Wednesday, 4 October

 14-15PM Morocco time

This session is moderated by:

Farah Al Shami, Senior Fellow and Social Protection Program Director, Arab Reform Initiative

[For more details about the event](#)

[To attend on Zoom](#)

Partners

All members of the Global Campaign on Universal Social Security, led by Human Rights Watch

End Austerity Activism Festival

Platform Independent

 9AM-18.30PM Morocco time

 Saturday, 7 October

 [Cadi Ayyad University Club, Marrakech, Morocco](#)

To access the venue in person, [registration is required](#)

[For more details about the festival](#)

Partners





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End Austerity! Reclaim the Right to Education, Health and Social Security

Platform Reclaim Our Future Conference

 13-14.30PM Morocco time

 **Sunday, 8 October**

 Cadi Ayyad University Club, Marrakech, Morocco


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The Human Rights Impact of the World Bank's Digitalization Agenda

Platform Reclaim Our Future Conference

 10.30AM-12PM Morocco time

 **Monday, 9 October**

 Cadi Ayyad University Club, Marrakech, Morocco

This session will examine the World Bank's agenda to promote and advance digitalization, and the ways in which it impedes access to social security and worsens inequality. Panelists will discuss case studies of the human rights harms caused by Bank-financed initiatives to establish or enhance digital government, such as the establishment of social registries to support narrowly means-tested cash benefit programs, digital ID systems to verify and police the identity of beneficiaries, and e-payment systems to deliver cash assistance. Attendees will be invited to discuss how universal social security provides an alternative conceptual and policy framework for fostering technological innovation that helps social security systems achieve universal coverage and ensure adequate benefits for all.

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IFIs, Climate Finance, and Social Spending: The Missed Opportunity!

Platform Reclaim Our Future Conference

 10.30AM-12PM Morocco time

 **Monday, 9 October**

 Cadi Ayyad University Club, Marrakech, Morocco

Climate finance has been a cooptation tool in the hands of neoliberal multilateralism whereas, it could be turned into an opportunity to: i) redistribute financial resources within and between countries, and ii) raise government revenues to finance public and social spending. In other terms, it can enhance development effectiveness if rather used in line with the good principles and practices of development financing. This session discusses how international financial institutions (IFIs), especially the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), have been preventing climate debt from being an opportunity to reduce both inter and intra-country inequality as well as finance public/social services. The session also revolves around the waves of activism against this de-facto situation, focusing on the demands and grievances expressed therein, and tapping into the potential that these movements have in making an actual change. Finally, the session aims to propose feasible solutions for environmental and socio-economic justice, as part of larger and incremental shifts in the economic and development paradigms upheld by IFIs.

Moderator:

Shereen Talaat, MENAFEM Movement

Speakers:

Wael Gamal, Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights

Farah Al Shami, Arab Reform Initiative

Suzan Nada, Labor and legal activist, MENAFEM Movement

Imene Cherif, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung-MENA

English <-> Arabic interpretation will be available

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To attend on Zoom



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Civil Society Roundtable with the World Bank Group Board of Executive Directors

Platform WBG closed meeting



Tuesday, 10 October



13-14.30PM Morocco time

To attend, [registration is required](#)

Organizer

World Bank Group

The Road Ahead for IDA: A Conversation with Civil Society Partners

Platform WBG-IDA closed meeting



15-16.30PM Morocco time



Tuesday, 10 October



[Sahara Quarter - Room SB02 Argan](#)

[This event requires registration](#)

Organizer

World Bank Group



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The Impact of IFIs on Social Protection in the Arab Region

Platform Independent Side Event

 16-18PM Morocco time

 **Tuesday, 10 October**

 **2 CIELS LUXURY BOUTIQUE HOTEL & SPA**

This event falls on the first day of the IMF-WBG Civil Society Policy Forum (CSPF) and gathers the community of CSO representatives working on social and economic policies in the Arab region to discuss the status quo of social protection systems in the region and the role that IFIs are playing in shaping these systems. It aims to mobilize a critical mass on the subject in question and equip the participants with latest updates, needed information, policy recommendations, and key tactics to advocate for the right to universal social security at the CSPF and annual meetings at large.

Moderator:

Mohamad Haddad, Tunisian Journalist

Speakers:

Howaida Roman, Arab Reform Initiative

Shereen Talaat, MENAFEM Movement

Speaker from Friedrich Ebert Stiftung-MENA

Isabel Ortiz, Initiative for Policy Dialogue

Refreshments will be served

English <-> Arabic interpretation will be available

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[Attend on Zoom](#)




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Cocktail Reception

Platform On the margin of the Independent Side Event  18-19.30PM Morocco time


 Tuesday, 10 October


 2 CIELS LUXURY BOUTIQUE HOTEL & SPA

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Internal Meeting: Global Campaign on Universal Social Security

Platform On the margin of the Independent Side Event  19-20.30PM Morocco time

 Tuesday, 10 October

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Time to Tax Wealth in the MENA Region

Platform IMF-WBG Civil Society Policy Forum

 10.30-12PM Morocco time

 **Wednesday, 11 October**

 **SC03 Saghro**

The session will present the new findings of the upcoming Oxfam report on inequality and taxing the wealthy in the MENA region. It will highlight the links between rising inequalities and lack of fair taxation policies in the MENA Region. It will provide evidence on the impact of IMF policy recommendations and conditionalities on inequality, and show how much could the countries of the region reap from taxing wealth to address inequality and avoid austerity. The panel will present evidence on the impact of existing inequitable tax systems on inequality and how taxing the wealthiest can address crucial challenges Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia and Egypt. The panel will discuss how the IMF could play a positive role in addressing inequalities in the MENA region through progressive taxation and moving away from austerity measures to support public services and social protection

Sponsor

Oxfam International

Co-Sponsors

Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)

Arab Watch Coalition (AWC)

Arab Reform Initiative (ARI)

Carnegie Middle East Center

Centre Ali Ben Ghedhahem pour La Justice Fiscale (CAFJ)

Project Zero (SIFR)

International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)



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Financing Universal Social Protection Systems in the Arab Region: What alternatives to debt and austerity?

Platform IMF-WBG Civil Society Policy Forum



Thursday, 12 October



Room SC03



9-10:30AM Morocco time

This session looks into financing mechanisms for more inclusive, effective, and sustainable social protection systems in the Arab region. It presents recent research findings by ARI and its partners on the role of the IMF in shrinking fiscal spaces, thus limiting public and especially social spending. It demonstrates how the Fund is promoting austerity, imposing conditionalities that hinder alternatives, driving countries into a debt trap, and enforcing detrimental credit risk management. The session proposes alternatives to this prevalent model, ranging from key fiscal reforms and solidarity financing instruments to utilizing climate finance as an opportunity for funding universal social security.

Moderator:

Nadim Houry, Executive Director, Arab Reform Initiative

Speakers:

Farah Al Shami, Senior Fellow and Social Protection Program Director, Arab Reform Initiative

Osama Diab, Research Consultant, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES)-MENA

Shereen Talaat, Director, MENA Feminist Movement

Roberto Cardarelli, Assistant Director to the Middle East and Central Asia Department

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The Right to Social Security and Austerity: A Phony Crisis

Platform The Global Counter Summit of Social Movements

 **Friday, 13 October**


 **9-11.00AM Morocco time**


Partners All members of the Global Campaign on Universal Social Security,
led by Human Rights Watch

Building a New Eco-social Contract and Advancing Social Security in Times of Debt and Austerity

Platform IMF-WBG Civil Society Policy Forum

 **14-15.30PM Morocco time**

 **Friday, 13 October**

 **SC03 Saghro**

Recent research (for instance, by Oxfam, IPD, and HRW) analysing IMF programs from the last years show that, far from “mitigating” austerity measures, IMF social spending floors, for instance through the use of poverty-targeted social protection often complementing World Bank’s targeted safety nets projects with countries projects, fail to address the systemic negative impacts of their policy conditionalities, thus exacerbating inequalities. As an alternative approach, the panel will explore how the World Bank and IMF could conceive their interventions not just as technical safety nets for the poor, but as an effort to build a human rights economy within a new eco-social contract.

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