

World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa

Dead Sea, Jordan 21-23 May 2015

Media Fact Sheet

Fast Facts

- The World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa is taking place in the Dead Sea, Jordan, 21-23 May 2015.
- The theme of the meeting is [Creating a Regional Framework for Prosperity and Peace through Public-Private Cooperation](#)
- The meeting is hosted by Jordan with the full support and engagement of His Majesty the King and Her Majesty the Queen.
- The meeting was last hosted in Jordan in 2013 in partnership with the King Abdullah II Fund for Development (KAFD); this year will mark the eighth time Jordan will host the meeting.

The Meeting in Numbers

- The Forum will convene more than **900 participants** from more than **50 countries** representing the private and public sectors, civil society, and the science and arts communities.
- More than **200 top executives** from the Forum's Partners and Members are actively participating.
- Governments will be represented by **two members of the royal family of Jordan, ten heads of state/government** and almost **40 ministers**.
- Some **200 journalists** from national, regional and international news media will cover the meeting.
- More than **90 members** of the Forum's New Champion communities will take part.
- The private and public programme contains more than **40 sessions**, plenary debates and workshops, including **six televised debates**.

Meeting Co-Chairs



Omar K. Alghanim
Chief Executive Officer, Alghanim Industries, Kuwait



Gordon Brown
Chair, World Economic Forum Global Strategic Infrastructure Initiative; Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (2007-2010)



Suma Chakrabarti
President, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), London



Bodoor Al Qasimi
Chairperson, Sharjah Investment and Development Authority – Shurooq; Young Global Leader, United Arab Emirates



John Rice
Vice-Chairman, GE, Hong Kong SAR

World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa

Dead Sea, Jordan 21-23 May 2015

Regional Benchmarking

Competitiveness

- Jordan ranks 64th in the Forum's [Global Competitiveness Report 2014-2015](#), placing it between the resource-rich countries of the Gulf and North African countries, where Morocco is placed the highest (72).

Gender

- Jordan ranks 134th in the Forum's [Global Gender Gap Report 2014](#).
- Kuwait, at 113th, is the highest-placed country in the region.
- The United Arab Emirates, at 115th, falls in the rankings but shows significant improvement in economic and political participation.

Global Challenges

The meeting's programme is built around some of the World Economic Forum's [10 Global Challenge initiatives](#) and their regional aspects and impact.

Environment and Resource Security: The recent volatility in energy markets, combined with significant geopolitical developments, are greatly impacting the MENA region. The Forum's energy programme will convene key policy-makers and business leaders to debate how stakeholders are reacting to recent dynamics and what is expected.

Long-Term Investing, Infrastructure and Economic Development: Infrastructure partnerships are going to be a focus of this meeting in the framework of the Forum's [Global Strategic Infrastructure Initiative](#), chaired by Gordon Brown. With an estimated global \$1 trillion infrastructure investment gap per year, participants will discuss ways for infrastructure to be delivered more efficiently and how new mechanisms for investment can mitigate risks and enable private and public investors to close the gap.

Employment, Skills and Human Capital: As part of the New Vision for Arab Employment project, the meeting will convene key business leaders to address talent challenges and prepare the workforce for upcoming changes in the region's labour markets.

The Forum will launch the *Human Capital Report 2015* on 13 May, evaluating the untapped human capital potential globally and in the region.

Gender Parity: The MENA region has closed 60% of its gender gap according to the latest *Global Gender Gap Report*. Israel (65), Kuwait (113) and the United Arab Emirates (115) ranked the highest for the region, while Saudi Arabia (130) and Jordan (134) are in the bottom half. While several countries have displayed some of the biggest improvements over the last decade, at the current pace of change, the region's gender gap may close in the year 2148. The Forum's Gender Parity Global Initiative will convene business leaders to explore industry-specific actions to close gender gaps in the region's largest industry sectors.

World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa

Dead Sea, Jordan 21-23 May 2015

Economic Growth and Social Inclusion: [1] *Inclusive growth:* Income inequality can best be tackled through inclusive growth. The Forum has been developing a measurement that will help policy-makers and the public better understand the issue and how to address it. The Forum [has identified 14 measurable interventions](#) that affect inclusiveness, from business ethics and basic infrastructure to wages and social protection.

[2] *Health:* The region's two-speed dynamics can also be seen in its greatest healthcare challenges. As well as the rapid growth of healthcare infrastructure and facilities in some countries, there are also economies without enough healthcare professionals and hospital beds to meet demand – exacerbated in some areas by increasing numbers of refugees. Meanwhile, across the region, the rise of non-communicable diseases, a leading cause of premature death and disability, raises growing concern.

Health sessions at the meeting will explore these challenges, the shifts needed to deliver an effective response, and how public-private partnerships can enable these economies to lift their health systems into a sustainable future.

World Economic Forum Communities

Global Shapers: The [Global Shapers Community](#) counts as its members 4,500 young (under 30), entrepreneurial millennials from all walks of life in over 350 city-based Hubs worldwide. To date, more than half of all Hubs have established local, grassroots initiatives, from career mentorship and tackling youth employment, to building free Wi-Fi hotspots in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. During the meeting, Global Shapers from across the region will discuss best ways to scale up their initiatives, collaborate, garner financial support and have a greater impact on issues they care about. Thirty Shapers will take part in the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa.

Young Global Leaders: The meeting will bring together more than 15 World Economic Forum Young Global Leaders (YGL), who are making an impact on regional issues across sectors. They will contribute to the discussions on critical challenges facing the region and their sessions will focus on the new type of leadership that the region requires.

The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs: The Schwab Foundation for Social Entrepreneurs is a group of leading innovators who are applying practical, original and sustainable approaches to benefit society, with a special focus on the marginalized and the poor. Each year, the Schwab Foundation identifies 20-30 extraordinary entrepreneurs who are driving transformation in various fields, including education, health, environment and enterprise development.

Useful Links

- Follow the World Economic Forum on the Middle East and North Africa at www.wef.ch/mena15
- Find out more in the [meeting overview and the programme at a glance](#)
- View the best Forum **Flickr** photos at <http://wef.ch/la15pix>
- Watch live **webcasts** of sessions at <http://wef.ch/live>
- Become a fan on **Facebook** at <http://wef.ch/facebook>
- Follow us on **Twitter** at <http://wef.ch/twitter> and <http://wef.ch/livetweet>
- Read our **blogs** at <http://wef.ch/agenda>