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Regional Workshop on “Strengthening the VAT in the MENA Region”

January 19–20, 2026

Country authorities from across the MENA and GCC regions participated in a regional workshop on “Strengthening the VAT in the MENA Region” held in Riyadh during January 19–20, 2026, and hosted by the International Monetary Fund’s Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center (METAC) in collaboration with the Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD).

The two-day workshop focused on key policy and administrative aspects of value-added tax systems including core elements of VAT design, the rationale and evaluation of VAT tax expenditures, and the use of VAT gap models to assess compliance. Sessions also addressed VAT distribution and incidence, examining the economic impact of VAT across income groups, sectors, and regions, as well as the role of compliance risk management in strengthening VAT administration.

Interactive discussions and country presentations fostered peer learning and the exchange of practical experiences on VAT design, evaluation, and compliance gap analysis. Overall, the workshop provided a platform for authorities to explore reform options to strengthen VAT performance, enhance revenue mobilization, and improve efficiency and equity, taking into account the region’s institutional and economic constraints.