Regional Workshops and Webinars - Fiscal Year 2026

Climate Change, Digitalization and Gender Equality

Bridging Gaps through Evidence-Based Policies (May 20)

Following the regional workshop "Bridging Gaps through Evidence-Based Policies: A Deep Dive into Gender Inequality and Macroeconomic Outcomes" held in Cairo in January 2025, METAC and IMF's Strategy, Policy and Review Department (SPR) organized a virtual discussion session for workshop participants. This is the first of a series of follow-up online meetings on the topic. Farida El Deeb, Economist at the Central Bank of Egypt's Monetary Policy Sector, and Rima Younes, Deputy Director and gender focal point at the Central Bank of Lebanon, recounted their experience with the tools learned, including how they applied them and what difficulties they faced in doing so. The presenters received feedback from a panel of experts that included Racha Ramadan, Professor of Economics at Cairo University, Lisa Kolovich, Senior Economist at IMF SPR, and Daniela Viana Costa, Economist at IMF SPR.

Female Labor Participation in the MENA Region (May 27)

How can increased female participation in the labor market positively impact economic growth? What policies are essential to raise participation, and what role does data play in this process? These pivotal questions guided the webinar organized by METAC and the IMF's Strategy, Policy, and Review Department. The discussion highlighted the macro-criticality of female labor participation as a key driver for sustainable economic growth and development. Enhancing women's engagement in the formal workforce boosts productivity by promoting entrepreneurship, bringing complementary skills and ideas to the workplace, and supporting sectoral reallocation. Peter Rademaker (ILO), Racha Ramadan (Cairo University), and Lisa Kolovich (IMF) brought to light the persistent structural, legal, and societal barriers that hinder women's opportunities, leaving their immense potential largely untapped.

Tax and Expenditure Policies to promote Women's Economic Empowerment (June 11)

The IMF's METAC, Africa Training Institute (ATI), and South Asia Regional Training and Technical Assistance Center (SARTTAC) jointly organized a webinar to discuss how tax policies influence inequalities between men and women. The webinar featured panelists Sarah Bou Atmeh, METAC tax policy advisor, Lekha S. Chakraborty, Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy in India; Maleshoane Lekomola-Danziger, Budget Controller in Lesotho's Ministry of Finance and Development Planning; and Brooks Evans, senior economist at the IMF. Maria Coelho, an economist from the IMF' s Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD), moderated the event. The discussion provided valuable insights drawn from country examples and best practices, highlighting how fiscal policies can either perpetuate or mitigate gender disparities.

Women's Economic Participation: A pathway for growth (June 25)

Increasing women's economic participation can be a major driver for growth, especially in the MENA region, where female labor market participation is generally low. The webinar explored the design of gender-aware macroeconomic policies that foster higher and more inclusive economic growth. This event was offered jointly by METAC and the IMF Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF). The panel included Lisa Kolovich, Senior Economist at the IMF; Susanne Mikhail, Director of Women Employment in the Green, STEM, and Care Economy at UN Women; and Zeina Zeidan, governance and financial strategy expert with experience in the public and private sectors. Sharing success stories and lessons learned, the panelists emphasized the role of women's economic participation in driving sustainable growth.

Transforming Public Finance Through Digitalization (July 22)

"Digitalization is not just a technical upgrade" emerged as a key message from the first webinar of METAC's newly launched Digitalization series. The session explored how digitalization can transform Public Finance. IMF fiscal economists Ms. Andja Komso and Mr. Alok Verma, and Ms. Sabine Corm and Mr. Kevork Baboyan, METAC tax administration and public financial management advisors, highlighted the role of digitalization as an enabler of stronger institutions and better governance. During the Q&A session, the audience raised several insightful topics, including system compatibility, data quality, the unique challenges faced by Fragile and Conflict-affected States, and barriers to successful digitalization.

Towards More Private Climate Investments (September 9)

Charlotte Gardes-Landolfini, IMF Financial Sector Expert, and Annapurna Mitra, IMF Senior Economist, outlined barriers to climate finance, including high debt and interest rates, lack of investment-grade ratings, weak project pipelines, and foreign exchange risks. The speakers discussed challenges in measuring climate finance flows, provided examples such as sustainability-linked loans and highlighted measures to make climate-related projects more attractive to private investors. The audience inquired about leveraging Public-Private Partnerships, programs to incentivize private investment, and strategies to avoid "greenwashing", while offering regional examples.

Implications of Central Bank Digital Currency for Monetary Operations (September 16)

IMF Financial Sector Expert Tansaya Kunaratskul explained Central Bank Digital Currencies (CBDCs) and their potential to reshape monetary operations. The webinar outlined strategies for central banks to improve liquidity forecasting, use liquidity-injecting instruments, and design CBDCs to reduce risks. The audience inquired about CBDCs' influence on monetary policy, the role of stablecoins and differences between wholesale CBDCs and reserves in digital form, especially in infrastructure and the settlement of tokenized assets.

Unlocking Economic Potential: Women's Empowerment as a Driver of Growth – Evidence from Morocco
(September 30)

In this webinar on women's economic empowerment, IMF's Lisa Kolovich and UN-Women's Zohra Khan showed how gender-responsive budgeting and policies boost women's participation and therefore growth. They explained how Morocco institutionalized gender-responsive budgeting over two decades, embedding it in law, training, and sectoral analysis to align resources with goals to empower women and girls. The Q&A explored how Morocco's reforms can be replicated across the region and emphasized the need for stronger data to guide decisions.

Fintech for Climate Finance (October 14)

This webinar explored how financial technology— from artificial intelligence and blockchain to digital platforms and data analytics—helps expand access to green finance, and build trust between investors, regulators, and climate projects. David Wang, Senior Financial Sector Expert from the IMF's Climate

Finance Policy Unit, explained how fintech innovations mobilize private capital and enhance the efficiency and transparency of green financial instruments. An engaging Q&A session focused on regulatory harmonization, macro-financial stability, and the role of public–private partnerships in scaling climate fintech solutions.

Women's Economic Participation and Revenue Administration: A Macro-Critical Agenda (October 21)

Cindy Negus, Senior Economist at the IMF Fiscal Affairs Department, explained why gender-responsive revenue administration boosts productivity, raises revenues, and strengthens fiscal resilience. Participants exchanged ideas and raised questions on strengthening collaboration between the ministries of finance and women and suggested integrating gender in IMF's TADAT assessments.

Optimizing Growth and Resilience through Evidence-based Policies and Budgeting (March 30- April 2)

METAC held in a hybrid workshop bringing together policymakers and technical officials from member countries to strengthen the integration of distributional considerations and women's economic participation into macroeconomic policy and budgeting. Participants engaged in an interactive program combining analytical presentations, hands-on tools, and peer learning, covering the macroeconomic costs of inequality, data and measurement of women's economic participation, gender-responsive tax and benefit policies, and the principles and practice of gender budgeting. Sessions featured practical exercises, including budget tagging, ex-ante gender impact assessments, and use of IMF tools such as TaxFit, alongside country experiences from the region. Building on this work, a follow-up live, in-person Part II of the workshop is planned, with dates and modalities to be determined.

Webinar on Tools to Assess Trade Disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz: PortWatch

METAC webinar brought together policymakers and analysts for a focused discussion on recent shipping disruptions affecting one of the world's most critical maritime chokepoints. IMF economists Sakai Ando and Oliver Exton presented the PortWatch platform, showcasing how satellite-based vessel data can be used to generate near real-time indicators of maritime trade, assess the scale of disruptions to traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, and analyze spillovers to the broader global maritime network and energy trade flows.

Webinar on Fiscal Response to Energy and Food Shock during the Conflict in the Middle East

METAC webinar examined how governments can respond to sharp increases in food and fuel prices in the context of conflict, fragility, and limited fiscal space. IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department discussed key policy trade-offs between protecting vulnerable households and preserving fiscal sustainability and price signals, drawing on recent experiences with energy and food price shocks. The presentation highlighted the limitations of generalized subsidies, the importance of well-targeted social protection, and the conditions under which temporary and carefully designed price interventions may be justified.

Webinar on Understanding Stablecoins

METAC examined the rapid growth of stablecoins and their increasing relevance for the global financial system. IMF experts from the Monetary and Capital Markets Department Marcello and Nobuyasu Sugimoto, and Stephanie Forte Walker (from IMF Legal Department) discussed recent market developments, emerging use cases, and the potential benefits of stablecoins, alongside key risks related to financial stability, consumer protection, monetary sovereignty, and financial integrity. The speakers also reviewed evolving regulatory approaches across jurisdictions and emphasized the importance of international coordination given the inherently cross-border nature of stablecoins.

Central Bank Operations

Monetary Policy Implementation (June 16-18, | Riyadh, KSA)

METAC held a workshop on Monetary Policy Implementation for METAC and GCC central banks in Riyadh (Saudi Arabia) The workshop strengthened central bankers' theoretical and practical knowledge related to monetary policy implementation and related tools. Monetary policy implementation tools are methods central banks use to control the supply of money and influence interest rates in the economy. These tools help keep prices stable and support steady economic growth by influencing borrowing costs for people and businesses through adjusting interest rates or minimum reserves, and buying or selling government bonds.

Government Finance Statistics and Public Sector Debt Statistics

Public Sector Debt Statistics Course (September 7-11| Kuwait)

A course on Public Sector Debt Statistics (PSDS) took place at the Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF), delivered by Mr. Imad Khanchaoui, Senior Economist, Statistics Department (STA), and Mr. Amir Hadziomeragic, METAC GFS and PSDS Resident Advisor. The course provided a comprehensive overview of the conceptual framework for PSDS, covered practical aspects of compiling and disseminating public sector debt data and emphasized the relevance of PSDS for debt sustainability analysis and policymaking. Twenty-four participants from fourteen countries brought diverse experiences in debt statistics that enabled a rich exchange of views and information.

Financial Supervision and Regulation

IFRS 9: A Supervisory Perspective (June 16-19)

METAC and the IMF Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) delivered a regional workshop for financial supervisors on the International Financial Reporting Standard 9 (IFRS 9). The workshop enhanced participants' understanding of IFRS 9, discussed supervisors role and implementation challenges, and facilitated the sharing of experiences among countries. The workshop received enthusiastic feedback from its 29 participants from 12 countries, highlighting its relevance to their work.

Regulatory and Supervisory Frameworks for Fintech and Cyber Resilience: Balancing Innovation and Security (October 12-16| Riyadh)

Building on the February 2025 Dubai workshop, this workshop provided a deep dive into balancing innovation and security amid digital financial transformation. It covered foundational concepts and examined emerging technologies like blockchain, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing, alongside their regulatory challenges. It addressed cybersecurity, digital banking, bigtech, and crypto-assets regulation. Interactive simulation exercises enhanced engagement, while roundtable discussions focused on developing strategic cyber-fintech roadmaps to support countries developing robust national regulatory frameworks.

Consolidated and Cross Border Supervision/Risk-based supervision

Supervisors from METAC member countries strengthened their capacity to conduct consolidated and cross-border supervision of banking groups operating across jurisdictions. Participants deepened their understanding of group-wide, forward-looking risk analysis—including capital, liquidity, contagion, and governance risks—and the application of supervisory judgment under Basel Core Principles and Basel III. Practical exercises enhanced supervisors' ability to use group risk matrices, assess consolidated capital and liquidity, and identify vulnerabilities not visible at the solo-entity level. Peer exchange helped benchmark practices, clarify legal and institutional gaps, and identify priorities for strengthening home-host cooperation and future technical assistance.

Governance and Anti-Corruption

METAC Workshop - Confronting Macro Critical Corruption

The METAC workshop on Governance and Anti-Corruption strengthened the capacity of officials across METAC member countries to address macro-critical corruption vulnerabilities in core state functions. Through interactive IMF-led sessions, country case studies, and peer exchanges, participants deepened their understanding of the IMF's governance and anti-corruption framework and the macroeconomic impacts of corruption on fiscal sustainability, growth, trust, and private sector development—particularly in fragile and conflict-affected settings. The workshop produced concrete results by equipping participants with practical tools to diagnose corruption risks, apply political-economy analysis, design feasible legal and institutional reforms, and improve inter-agency coordination. Country presentations enabled peer learning on reform implementation, coalition-building, and sustainability, while discussions also helped identify country-specific capacity development needs and priorities for IMF support in the coming fiscal year.

Government Finance Statistics and Public Sector Debt

GFS workshop

Participants from METAC member countries strengthened their capacity to compile and disseminate high-quality Government Finance Statistics (GFS) and Public Sector Debt Statistics (PSDS) aligned with international standards. The workshop improved understanding of advanced GFSM 2014 concepts, consolidation issues, and debt statistics compilation, leading to measurable learning gains and stronger readiness for regular international reporting. Peer exchange and hands-on exercises enhanced practical application of concepts, supported improvements in data quality, coverage, and timeliness, and increased preparedness for reporting to global GFS and debt databases.

Public Debt Management

Local Currency Bond Market (LCBM) Development Regional Workshop (May 4-8| Amman, Jordan)

The workshop provided an overview of LCBM development concepts by focusing on the six (6) key building blocks for LCBM: Money Market, Primary Market, Secondary Market, Investor Base, Legal and Regulatory Framework, and Market Infrastructure. The event also covered the LCBM framework jointly developed by the IMF and World Bank, published in 2021, used to assess market development. Participants discussed common challenges and the identification of reform priorities and policy recommendations to support domestic debt market development.

Country officials presented the key challenges and development issues related to their LCBMs and conducted a self-assessment on the stage of their market development. The interactive format of the workshop provided a platform for participants to learn from the experiences and good practices of peer countries. METAC encourages the participants to apply the knowledge gained to design policies and strategies for developing their country's LCBMs.

Public Financial Management

Climate Responsive Public Investment Management (May 18-22, Kuwait City- Kuwait)

The regional course was organized jointly with the IMF Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) in Kuwait, introduced climate considerations into the public investment management process using the Climate-Public Investment Management Assessment (C-PIMA) framework. The event brought together 34 participants from 14 countries, including 10 METAC members (Egypt, Djibouti, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and West Bank and Gaza), two GCC countries (Oman and Saudi Arabia), as well as Mauritania and Somalia.

The course addressed mid- to senior-level officials from ministries of finance, environment, industry, and trade. Its objective was to explain climate-responsive public investment management (PIM) and facilitate the exchange of practical experiences across countries. Participants presented the status of climate-responsive PIM practices in their countries and highlighted how the application of PIMA and C-PIMA supports progress in national PIM reforms.

Strengthening PFM Digitalization and FMIS Implementation in Fragile and Conflict Affected States (FCS)

The regional virtual workshop strengthened participants' capacity to design and implement Integrated Financial Management Information Systems (IFMIS) and PFM digitalization reforms in fragile and conflict-affected contexts. Officials from seven METAC countries clarified their national digitalization roadmaps, identified realistic sequencing approaches, and exchanged experience on integrating or launching IFMIS solutions under constrained conditions. Participants strengthened their understanding of core enablers for success—including legal frameworks, institutional ownership, and capacity building—and benefited from practical guidance on prioritizing budget and treasury functions, project monitoring, and sustainability of reforms. Peer learning, including Somalia's IFMIS experience, reinforced the importance of political commitment, phased implementation, and aligning digital solutions with country context.

Real Sector Statistics

GDP Rebasing and the new System of National Accounts (October 19-23| Kuwait)

A training course on national accounts statistics, jointly organized by METAC and Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF), provided training on rebasing concepts and techniques and on changes of the new System of National Accounts, 2025 to improve countries' national accounts estimates. Participants learned how to prepare GDP rebasing work plans, identify and acquire data sources, apply back casting methods, and understand the upcoming changes in the 2025 SNA.

Revenue Administration

CEF Regional Workshop on The Use of AI in Customs (October 13-16| Kuwait)

In this joint regional workshop with the CEF, over 35 participants learned about the strategic, ethical, and practical aspects of AI, sharing experiences and building new connections. METAC recommends that future support requests include awareness sessions on AI's strategic and ethical dimensions to help stakeholders prepare for upcoming changes.

Tax Leadership Forum (January 12-13)

The inaugural Tax Administration Leadership Forum in Cairo brought together 16 commissioners, deputy commissioners, and senior officials from eight countries to exchange perspectives on emerging trends and shared challenges in tax administration. This two-day event, organized by the IMF's Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center and the Fiscal Affairs Department, focused on four themes: (i) Mobilizing domestic revenue to support sustainable growth; (ii) IMF tax administration tools and global trends in modern tax systems; (iii) Adaptive leadership and large taxpayer management; and (iv) Artificial Intelligence in tax administrations—its risks, and opportunities across the region. Interactive panels and peer-learning sessions fostered an open dialogue among administrations, enabling the sharing of experiences, challenges, and opportunities that stimulated rich and insightful debate. Participants expressed strong appreciation for the wide range of topics covered and highlighted the importance of sustaining ongoing peer exchange.

Anti-Money Laundering And Combating The Financing Of Terrorism (AML/CFT) ***Co-hosted by METAC and financed by the AML/CFT Trust Fund***

Considerations and Challenges for Financial Intelligence and Enforcement Authorities Against Terrorist and Proliferation Financing (May 4-8 | Kuwait City, Kuwait)

The AML/CFT Regional Advisor participated in the delivery of a workshop on "Considerations and Challenges for Financial Intelligence and Enforcement Authorities Against Terrorist and Proliferation Financing", in the CEF - Kuwait City, Kuwait. The workshop discussed implementation challenges of Combating the Financing of Terrorism (CFT) measures in a number of MENA countries, including the understanding of terrorism financing (TF) risks, TF prosecution and investigations, establishing effective regimes for implementing UN targeted financial sanctions, domestic and international cooperation, and collaboration with the private sector. The workshop also provided a forum to discuss the ongoing implementation of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) related recommendations and the preparation of countries for the fifth round of evaluation. Participants included representatives from central banks, financial intelligence units (FIUs), AML/CFT supervisors, ministries of finance, as well as law enforcement authorities. The participants were highly invested and active in the discussions.

Regional Workshop on Investigation and Prosecution of Money Laundering Crimes (July 7 - 9| Cairo-Egypt)

The AML/CFT Regional Advisor participated in a workshop held in Cairo, Egypt on Investigation and Prosecution of Money Laundering (ML). Discussions with experts from the IMF, UNODC, GIZ, and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF). Topics discussed included the use of financial intelligence, the role of AML/CFT supervisors, the use of beneficial ownership information to support ML investigations and recover assets, challenges facing countries, and practical considerations. Practitioners from various fields of expertise, including Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs), Law enforcement Authorities (LEAs), and prosecution authorities participated in the event. Achieving effectiveness in money laundering investigations has been challenging across the entire Global Network, and greater efforts are still needed to address these challenges.

Enhancing the Understanding of Money Laundering (ML), Terrorist Financing (TF), and Proliferation Financing (PF) Risks (September 21-25| Kuwait)

The AML/CFT Regional Advisor with the IMF Legal Department delivered a five-day workshop on ML/TF/PF national risk assessment at the IMF CEF in Kuwait for officials from Financial Intelligence Units, AML/CFT supervisory authorities and investigation agencies. The training course focused on providing participants with the knowledge, process, and skills to understand the requirements regarding risk assessment under international standards, conduct mock risk assessments, overcome challenges in maintaining risk understanding, collect and analyse data, and develop mitigation policies targeting identified risks.

Outreach Activities

Launching the Light CRM Guide

In July, METAC and FAD initiated Phase 1 of a multi-phase project to develop a "How-To-Do-It Guide" for Light Compliance Risk Management (CRM) framework, aimed at supporting low-capacity and fragile states in adopting practical CRM approaches. This guide is designed to help tax administrations begin or strengthen their CRM journey through simplified, output-oriented tools.

The purpose of the guide is to provide step-by-step instructions and practical templates for producing three core CRM outputs: Compliance Risk Profiles, Compliance Risk Registers (CRR), and Compliance Improvement Plans (CIP). These tools are essential for identifying and addressing taxpayer compliance risks in a structured and effective manner.

Phase 1, initiated in July, focused on data collection and analysis. A structured questionnaire was finalized and will soon be distributed to METAC countries to assess current CRM practices, challenges, and institutional readiness. The responses will provide valuable insights into the status quo and common barriers to CRM implementation, laying the foundation for the guide's content and structure.

The upcoming phases will include (i) Drafting the guide with practical instructions and tools; (ii) Pilot testing in selected countries; (iii) Reviewing and finalization; and (iv) Dissemination and capacity building through workshops and trainings.

TADAT Coffee Chat in Arabic: Smart Prioritization: TADAT insights for transforming tax administration in the Middle East

During July TADAT Coffee Chat, senior officials from Iraq and Jordan's tax administrations came together in a virtual setting to share their experiences with the TADAT assessment and its role in shaping their reform agendas. Both countries highlighted how the assessment results provided a clear diagnostic of strengths and weaknesses, helping them prioritize reforms and attract targeted support from development partners. Participants also reflected on implementation challenges such as resource constraints, resistance to change, and coordination hurdles, offering practical strategies for overcoming them. The session underscored the importance of peer dialogue in fostering reform and encouraged countries beginning their TADAT journey to embrace the assessment as a catalyst for structured, evidence-based transformation.

MENAFATF's 40th plenary (May 7 – 8 | Amman, Jordan)

The AML/CFT Regional Advisor participated in the 40th plenary of the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF) in Amman, Jordan. While the new round of MENAFATF's mutual evaluations is set to start in mid-2025, several countries (including the Financial Action Task Force gray-listed countries) are stepping up preparations to enhance their AML/CFT frameworks. The advisor discussed with representatives from several countries the opportunities for support under the new AML/CFT CD project to assist MENA countries that could be provided in preparing for evaluations. He also discussed with TA providers (e.g., the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit - GIZ, and the World Bank) opportunities for coordination of CD activities in the region, especially in relation to Algeria and Yemen's IMF AML/CFT CD projects.

Implementing the System of National Accounts 2025 and Compiling Digital Supply and Use Tables (9-11 September | Abu Dhabi)

In September, METAC contributed to the regional workshop organized by the Arab Monetary Fund (AMF) and the United Nations United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA). METAC presented recent updates of the Balance of Payments and International Investment Positions Manual (7th edition), challenges in measuring informal digital activities, and key consideration in developing digital supply and use tables. The team also introduced the new IMF's supply and use tables compilation tool.

Other Engagements with Member Countries

During the **2026 Annual Meetings** of the IMF and World Bank in Washington, DC, the new METAC director Monique Newiak met with member country delegations to hear first hand about priorities, and coordinate plans. She also visited Damascus and Ramallah to engage with government officials, including to gain feedback on ongoing technical assistance support.

Other outreach included a panel discussion during at the **Lebanese Association of Certified Public Accountants' 22nd International Congress,** a good opportunity to highlight the macrocriticality of good governance and anti-corruption measures—issues that will be covered by a new workstream at METAC this fiscal year.