

**DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS:** European Union | France | Germany | Switzerland | The Netherlands

**MEMBERS - CONTRIBUTORS:** Algeria | Egypt | Iraq | Lebanon | Morocco | Sudan

**MEMBERS:** Afghanistan | Djibouti | Jordan | Libya | Syria | Tunisia | West Bank & Gaza | Yemen

## Technical Assistance and Training Missions

### *Public Financial Management*

#### **Afghanistan**



METAC designed and delivered a one-week training workshop aiming at strengthening cash management capacities. It focused on cash planning and forecasting techniques and how the forecasts can be used in support of financial decisions. In addition, linkages between the budget execution control framework and cash management were discussed. The Afghan delegation presented the main reports prepared by their Cash Management Unit, leading to discussions on the ways to improve their relevance for decision-makers and their convergence with international good practices. Building on the findings of this workshop, METAC will consider further support, including a hands-on and in-depth review of tools and data used for the preparation of daily and monthly cash plans.

### *Revenue Administration*

#### **Egypt**

During the period December 9-20, 2018, METAC provided further technical assistance to support the Egyptian Tax Authority (ETA) in developing and implementing improved filing and payment compliance management procedures based on international good practice. After completion of the pilot phase designed with METAC support, the ETA is currently half way

through a national roll-out; the new procedures have been introduced into 188 offices with encouraging early results. The mission assisted the ETA to monitor and analyze the results of the use of improved filing and payment compliance management procedures on a regular basis and advised on how to use the information gathered through monitoring and analyses, to adjust the procedures. Additionally, it supported the authorities in building a sustainable project management and analytical capability, mitigation of project risks and developing outcome-based performance measures.

#### **Jordan**

METAC organized a two-weeks expert visit to Amman, Jordan during the period November 25-December 6, 2018 to assist the Income and Sales Tax Department (ISTD) of Jordan in developing a formal binding ruling mechanism. The visit is part of on-going project in tax administration reform supported by METAC, which aims to establish a system for issuing formal binding public and private rulings that provide taxpayers with certainty on how the tax administration will apply the tax law. The mission provided ISTD with (i) updated timeline for the implementation of a binding rulings system, including the implementation of the program for establishment of public rulings and development of a legal framework for private rulings, and (ii) roles and functions of newly established Rulings Steering Committee to oversee implementation of the Public and Private Binding Rulings system. The mission also supported the authorities in defining the key elements in the design of Private Binding Rulings.

### *Statistics*

#### **Egypt**

METAC conducted a mission to assist the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, and the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics, in improving the measures of gross fixed capital formation (GFCF) in the national accounts and the supply and use tables. The mission reviewed methods used to estimate

GFCF in the observed and non-observed economy and identified data gaps and sources to fill them. The mission also made recommendations to address some of the differences in methodology that contribute to different GDP estimates between the annual national accounts and the supply and use tables.

## Regional Workshops

### *Risk Management in Customs*



METAC organized a regional workshop on “Risk Management in Customs” during December 10-13, 2018 in Amman, Jordan. Nineteen senior officials of customs authorities and finance ministries from 10 METAC member countries attended the workshop.

The workshop presented international good practices in effective risk management for compliance and institutional risks in customs administration. It provided the participants with an initial overview of the key concepts and elements of the compliance risk management process, including detailed discussions of identification, assessment and ranking of compliance risks. The workshop included a session on the awareness of good practices in the management of institutional risks. Workshop participants shared extensively their own administrations’ experiences in establishing and implementing the risk management function, which in turn gave them a fuller perspective of the challenges they face in building and improving this function.

### *Statistics on International Trade in Goods and Services*



METAC and IMF Statistics Department conducted a joint regional workshop on “Statistics on International Trade in Goods and Services” during December 16-20, 2018 in Amman, Jordan. Twenty-three participants from central banks, national statistics offices, and one exchange office covering 11 METAC member countries attended the workshop (Afghanistan, Djibouti, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and West Bank and Gaza).

The workshop’s objective was to enhance compilers’ capacity to produce reliable current account statistics and promote a better understanding of the linkages between international merchandise trade statistics and the goods component of the balance of payments. The interactive workshop helped strengthen compilers’ knowledge of emerging demands and international initiatives on trade in services, and addressed issues related to informal cross-border transactions, digital trade, and globalization.

### *Strengthening Regulations and Supervision on Institutions Offering Islamic Financial Services*



METAC, jointly with the IMF Monetary and Capital Markets Department and the Center for Economics and Finance (CEF), organized a regional workshop on “Strengthening Regulations and Supervision on Institutions Offering Islamic Financial Services”. The workshop was attended by 33 senior bank supervisors from 10 Arab League countries and two senior supervisors from Afghanistan.

The workshop discussed thematic topics related to establishing an effective Islamic banking regulatory and supervisory regime. Participants acquired practical methods on identifying and measuring risks and sharing their countries’ experiences.

## Outreach Activities

Mr. Issam Alsammak, METAC's Statistics Advisor, participated in a World Bank workshop with the National Statistics and Information Authority of Afghanistan, which took place in New Delhi, India. Mr. Alsammak presented METAC's technical assistance work and recommendations for Afghanistan on the supply-and-use-based approach to compiling revised national accounts estimates, arguing that the theoretical soundness of the methodology used was acceptable given the data constraints. He also made several suggestions to improve the methodology and better align it with the 2008 System of National Accounts.

## Season's Greetings



METAC staff wishes you and your families a very happy holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous new year.

## TA Reports

The following TA reports were uploaded to METAC's website during December 2018. Steering Committee members of countries and donors who have signed a confidentiality agreement with the IMF may access the reports @ [www.imfmetac.org](http://www.imfmetac.org)

Statistics	<b>Iraq</b>
	National Accounts Statistics
	<b>Tunisia</b>
	National Accounts Statistics
	National Accounts Statistics Compilation of the ROW sector
	<b>West Bank and Gaza</b>
National Accounts Statistics	

## IMF Online Courses

Available to government officials and, in some cases, to the general public through <http://imf.smartcatalogiq.com> and <https://www.edx.org/school/imfx>. Current and forthcoming online courses include:

- **Energy Subsidy Reform (ESRx)**  
Language: Arabic, January 16 – February 27, 2019  
Course Conducted Online  
**Apply online by January 9, 2019**
- **Energy Subsidy Reform (ESRx)**  
Language: English, January 15 – April 30, 2019  
Course Conducted Online  
**Apply online by April 16, 2019**
- **Financial Market Analysis (FMAx)**  
Language: English, January 15 – April 30, 2019  
Course Conducted Online  
**Apply online by April 16, 2019**
- **Financial Programming and Policies, Part 1: Macroeconomic Accounts and Analysis (FPP.1x)**  
Language: French, January 15 – April 30, 2019  
Course Conducted Online  
**Apply online by April 16, 2019**
- **Macroeconomic Management in Resource-Rich Countries (MRCx)**  
Language: English, January 15 – April 30, 2019  
Course Conducted Online  
**Apply online by April 16, 2019**
- **Macroeconometric Forecasting (MFx)**  
Language: English, January 15 – May 15, 2019  
Course Conducted Online  
**Apply online by May 1, 2019**

# METAC Planned Missions: January 2019

Country	Topics	Resident Advisor	Short-Term Expert	Dates
<b>Banking Supervision</b>				
Afghanistan	Training on dealing with weak banks	-	Engin Akckoja	01/21 - 24
Lebanon	Training on Stress Testing	-	Michael Lau	01/14 - 18
<b>Public Financial Management</b>				
Algeria	Legal Framework and Medium-Term Budgeting	-	Claude Wendling	01/08 - 21
Lebanon	Fiscal Risks Identification, Assessment, and disclosure	Xavier Rame	Gerhard Steger	01/08 - 17
Lebanon	Public-Private Partnerships: Fiscal Costs and Risks Assessment	Xavier Rame	Katja Funke	01/28 - 02/01
<b>Revenue Administration</b>				
Afghanistan	Establishment of a VAT Refund System	Stoyan Markov	Shane Reardon	01/20 - 24
Jordan	Development of a compliance improvement plan	-	Shane Reardon	01/06 - 17
<b>Statistics</b>				
Egypt	Prices: Improving producer price index (PPI) methods and practices	-	Andrew Baer	01/13 - 22
Sudan	Prices: Household budget survey effect on the CPI and further recommendations for the development of the compilation system	-	Muhanad Sammar	01/06 - 10
West Bank and Gaza	National accounts: Compilation methods and sources for the supply and use tables	-	To be advised	01/27 - 31
METAC & CEF Countries	National Accounts: Compilation issues - Price and volume measures	Issam Alsammak	Massimiliano Iommi	01/21 - 24