



MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

February – April 2025

Content

Key Highlights	1
Outreach.....	2
Stories from the Field	3
Regional Workshops	4
Webinars	6
Technical Assistance and Training	6
Technical Assistance Reports	15
Staff News	15
Analytical Corner	16
IMF Online Courses	19
Activities Planned during May – July 2025	20

Key Highlights

METAC delivered 38 country CD activities, two webinars and six regional workshops in the fourth quarter of FY25. A slight slowdown during Ramadan has allowed the METAC team to prepare for the upcoming **Steering Committee Meeting**, which will be held on June 3 in Cairo, Egypt.

A highlight during the past quarter were the **2025 Spring Meetings** of the IMF and World Bank in Washington, DC, where METAC director Holger Floerkemeier had the opportunity to meet with METAC member country delegations, learn about CD priorities, and coordinate plans with IMF CD departments and country teams. A noteworthy event during the Spring Meetings was a [high-level roundtable for Syria](#), which informed METAC’s planned re-engagement and will be followed by a respective roundtable session during the Steering Committee meeting. METAC is closely coordinating with IMF headquarters, development partners, and other Technical Assistance providers to prepare for future CD delivery.

On **Staff News**, the fiscal year ended with a farewell and a recognition: Real Sector Statistics Advisor Elirjeta Pepaj concluded her very productive assignment at end-March 2024 to join the IMF’s Africa Regional Technical Assistance Center South in Mauritius. We wish Ms. Pepaj all the best in her new assignment and thank her for her efforts in advancing our member countries’ statistical capacity during an exceptionally challenging regional security situation. On April 30, IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva presented METAC director Holger Floerkemeier with the IMF Staff Association Committee’s 2025 Outstanding Leadership Award.

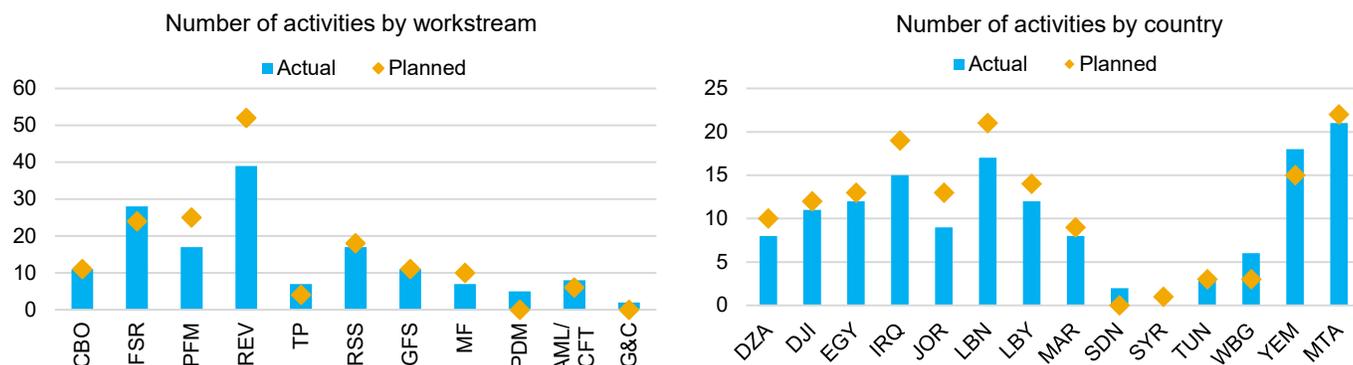
DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS



MEMBERS



Capacity Development Activities May 2024 to April 2025



Workstream acronyms: CBO: Central Bank Operations; FSR: Financial Supervision and Regulation; PFM: Public Financial Management; REV: Revenue Administration; RSS: Real Sector Statistics; TP: Tax Policy; MF: Macroeconomic Frameworks; GFS: Government Finance Statistics; C&G: Climate and Gender; AML/CFT: Anti-Money Laundering & Combating the Financing of Terrorism.

Country acronyms: AFG: Afghanistan; DZA: Algeria; DJI: Djibouti; EGY: Egypt; IRQ: Iraq; JOR: Jordan; LBN: Lebanon; LBY: Libya; MAR: Morocco; SDN: Sudan; SYR: Syria; TUN: Tunisia; WBG: West Bank and Gaza; YMN: Yemen; REG: Regional Activities.

Note: Does not include outreach activities or webinars

Outreach

2025 IMF/World Bank Spring Meetings (21-26 April | Washington, DC)

METAC director Holger Floerkemeier had the opportunity to meet with METAC member country delegations, learn about CD priorities, and coordinate plans with IMF CD departments and country teams. A noteworthy event during the Spring Meetings was a [high-level roundtable for Syria](#), which provided crucial orientation on METAC’s planned re-engagement. Syria’s central bank governor and finance minister attended the spring meetings, representing the country at this forum for the first time in more than 20 years. There was broad recognition of the urgent challenges facing the Syrian economy and a collective commitment to support the authorities’ efforts for recovery and development. METAC is currently in discussions with development partners to prepare for future CD and ensure close coordination with its partners and other Technical Assistance providers.

First High-Level Dialogue on the IMF-Saudi Arabia CD Partnership (9 April | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia)

The first High-Level Strategic Dialogue on Capacity Development between the Kingdom of Saudi

Arabia’s Ministry of Finance and the IMF provided the opportunity to discuss CD priorities, update on CD activities under the partnership agreement, and agree on resource allocations in the period ahead. The Saudi authorities welcomed the strategic discussion of joint priorities and emphasized the importance of scaling up CD support to the region—Syria in particular, and Fragile and Conflict-Affected States (FCS) more generally. The event, marking the start of the second year of the IMF’s 10-year partnership with the Ministry of Finance, positions the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as one of the IMF’s major global CD partners.



Stories from the Field

ELIRJETA PEPAJ

Real Sector Statistics Advisor



Working on national accounts and price statistics for Middle Eastern countries presents significant personal and professional challenges, especially during periods of conflict, instability, and evacuations. I vividly remember October 6, 2023, the day my family and I arrived in Lebanon, filled with excitement about our new journey in the Middle East. However, things quickly took an unexpected turn. By October 9, I was starting my role at METAC, meeting new colleagues, and engaging in the handover processes, but the situation escalated quickly, and we were forced to leave Lebanon. We flew back to our home country, where we felt like immigrants after five years abroad. Despite the overwhelming circumstances, we had to settle in quickly. I had to dive right into my responsibilities, with no time to process or rest. In times like these, being proactive and adaptable is essential for success and navigating this upheaval.

As a new advisor in the region, building trust with counterparts in statistical offices and ministries was crucial. Active listening and iterative technical dialogues helped me piece together fragmented information. Being a non-Arabic speaker added to the challenge, as I relied on interpreters, and much of the working documentation was in Arabic. However, with time, my efforts to learn some basic Arabic and my counterpart colleagues' attempts to communicate in English helped establish stronger interpersonal and working relationships.

Providing statistics technical assistance in fragile and conflict-affected states is challenging. Statistical infrastructure has been destroyed, data collection mechanisms disrupted, and skilled personnel lost. Fractured governance and political conflicts often result in inconsistent data. All of these challenges hinder the accurate estimation of economic indicators and the production of reliable national accounts and price statistics.

However, these challenges are not insurmountable. Overcoming them requires innovative approaches, including using alternative data sources, collaborating with local authorities and other international organizations, and leveraging the expertise of IMF area departments. Tailored capacity development and off-site missions help provide the necessary support to member countries. At METAC, I am part of a very dedicated team that has been resilient and adaptable, maintaining a strong sense of commitment despite the difficult



Ms. Elirjeta Pepaj (middle) with METAC staff bidding farewell to Ms. Pepaj who joined another IMF Regional Technical Assistance Center in March 2025.

circumstances. These experiences have made my role as an advisor in this regional center incredibly rewarding. Throughout my work, I had the privilege to appreciate the rich history and culture of the Middle East and North Africa. The diversity and dynamism of the region made my job enriching and full of opportunities to understand the diverse culture and people. The resilience of civil servants and statisticians, particularly in fragile and conflict-affected states, deeply inspired me. Despite the challenges, their tireless efforts to build capacity and strengthen institutions were remarkable.

Regional Workshops

Regulatory and Supervisory Frameworks for Fintech and Cyber Resilience: Balancing Innovation and Security

(17-21 February | Dubai, UAE)



The workshop explored the intersection of Fintech innovation and cybersecurity regulation, opportunities, and risks in the digital transformation of financial services, as well as the impact of innovations in blockchain, artificial intelligence, and cloud computing on Fintech and cyber resilience. It emphasized practical regulatory and supervisory approaches through case studies and group exercises, integrating regional perspectives and international cooperation frameworks, with focus on challenges from BigTech, e-money, open banking, decentralized finance, and cyber threats.

Workshop on Quarterly National Accounts

(4-9 April | Virtual)

METAC and the Arab Institute for Training and Research in Statistics (AITRS) conducted a three-day virtual regional workshop on quarterly national accounts. The workshop was delivered by Mr. Issam Alsammak (METAC) and Mr. Omar Hakouz, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) statistics resident advisor at Jordan's Department of Statistics. AITRS provided administrative and logistical support for this workshop. The workshop was attended by 48 participants from 13 countries, mainly national accounts compilers from National Statistical Offices.

Implementing Effective Regulation and Supervision of Climate-related Financial Risks

(7-10 April | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia)



The workshop provided an overview of the Basel Committee for Banking Supervision's Principles on climate risk supervision and regulation and presented strategic approaches for improving supervisory frameworks and prudential regulation of climate-related financial risks. Participants also engaged in practical discussions on climate scenario analysis and risk management practices in the supervisory context. Prominent speakers from the Bank of England, the Central Bank of Brazil, and the IMF shared insights on the Basel Committee's evolving agenda and advice on developing climate risk regulation and supervision frameworks and enhancing supervisory management practices.

Tax-Customs Cooperation in METAC Countries

(14-17 April | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia)



The four-day workshop, bringing together 20 officials from 10 METAC countries, aimed to foster

collaboration between tax and customs administrations, share good practices, and enhance the effectiveness of tax and customs cooperation in the region. It provided international good practices on the legal framework for data exchange, types of data exchanged to enhance compliance risk management and mitigate the risks, and other forms of cooperation, such as joint audits. It further discussed challenges and opportunities in tax and customs management, shared successful strategies and experiences, and identified areas for collaboration between the two administrations, highlighting the advantages of such cooperation.

Compilation of GFS for State-Owned Enterprises (20-24 April | Kuwait)



A one-week workshop at the IMF's Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) (SOE) focused on measuring fiscal positions of SOEs and related exposure for budgets through the linkages between SOEs accounting source data and creation of GFS statistics, which would enable to better assessment of fiscal risks. The workshop emphasized the practical GFS compilation by deriving integrated stocks and flows for SOEs,

utilizing a designed tool based on case studies, and facilitated peer-to-peer knowledge exchange.

Macroeconomic Management in Resource Rich Countries (28 April-1 May | Kuwait)



The course at the IMF's Middle East Center for Economics and Finance (CEF) provided a comprehensive overview of monetary policy regimes, monetary transmission mechanisms, and the role of monetary policy in macroeconomic stabilization, with a special emphasis on the GCC region. Macroeconomic Frameworks advisor Nasser Badra discussed monetary policy frameworks, including exchange rate arrangements, exchange rate targeting, inflation targeting, and hybrid (managed) cases with examples from various countries. Central Bank Operations advisor Stefaan Ide explained the role monetary policy implementation under the GCC monetary policy frameworks. The workshop included hands on sessions and workshops aimed at applying theoretical concepts empirically.

Webinars

Policies to Foster Green FDI: Best Practices for Emerging Market and Developing Economies (8 April)

Case studies: A policy framework for renewable energy

For renewable energy, a broad and updated policy framework is useful

- Successful countries introduce a large number of policies in electricity
- Different policy instruments are used
- Policy instruments tend to be introduced in the same order
 - Declare Targets
 - Set up institutions (for monitoring and enforcing climate policy)
 - Remove barriers (e.g., regulatory for solar rooftops)
 - Offer incentives (tax breaks for renewable energy)
 - Regulate (emission limits)

Number of Policies by Instrument Types

Year of Initial Policy Adoption



This webinar discussed how foreign direct investment (FDI) can play a key role in emerging market and developing economies' ability to finance green projects amid low fiscal space and financially constrained domestic investors. Combining econometric evidence with country case studies, Gregor Schwerhoff from the IMF Research Department explored whether climate policies can help attract FDI in green projects and how other domestic policies and global factors affect these flows. The presentation was followed by a highly engaged Q&A session in which webinar participants discussed green financing methods, best practices in renewable energy taxation, and obstacles in attracting green FDI.

Technical Assistance and Training

Central Bank Operations

Jordan

Monetary Operations and Liquidity Forecasting

In February, METAC continued its support to Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) to implement quantitative MCM tools for central bank liquidity forecasting and fitting the demand curve for central bank liquidity. The CBJ also sought guidance on enhancing the size and efficiency of the interbank market while maintaining the exchange rate peg as the nominal anchor. The mission proposed two

Frayed Societies: Decoding the Interplay between Conflicts and Gender Inequality (29 April)

WEBINAR | **IMF** | **MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**

FRAYED SOCIETIES: DECODING THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN CONFLICTS AND GENDER INEQUALITY

April 29, 2025
4:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. Beirut Time



CAN SEVER
Economic Advisor
African Department
IMF

PAOLA GANUM
Economic Advisor
Strategy, Policy, and Review
Department
IMF



As women's empowerment is vital to economic growth, the associations between conflicts and gender inequality provide a long-lasting drag on economic performance following those episodes. In the Q&A session, participants engaged presenters Paola Ganum and Can Sever from the IMF with questions on the impact of conflict on education and the two-way causality between political violence and gender inequality. Participants examined how conflicts influence changes in legislation and how conflict-related increases in gender inequality contribute to worse economic performance and GDP losses. The discussion underscored the multifaceted challenges posed by conflicts and the critical need for targeted policy interventions.



monetary policy implementation options to achieve this: a parsimonious floor system or a return to a mid-corridor system. In both scenarios, the MCM tools will aid the decision-making process to

calibrate the appropriate size of open market operations.

Djibouti

Introducing Reserve Requirements

METAC provided remote follow-up technical assistance for the implementation of the reserve requirement (RR). The BCD is committed to introducing an RR soon. This mission addressed the outstanding recommendations and assisted the BCD with practical implementation. This includes finalizing the draft regulation, preparing technical documents to support decisions on the parameters and properties of the RR, as well as providing guidance for outreach and communication with the banking sector.

Financial Supervision and Regulation

Algeria

Enhancing Onsite Inspection Manual



In April, METAC supported the Banque d'Algérie in updating its inspection manual—drafted more than 15 years ago—to align with the newly developed bank rating methodology, developed with METAC's assistance. Two new chapters on governance and concentration risk were added, and the credit risk chapter was significantly revised. Remaining sections on liquidity, internal control, and operational risk will be updated in a future mission. The manual provides a unified framework and practical tools for onsite inspectors, enhancing risk-based supervision and complementing progress made in the bank risk rating initiative.

Iraq

Development and implementation of the Basel Framework's Pillar 2 supervisory review process



In February, METAC supported the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI) in the development and comprehensive implementation of the Basel Framework Pillar 2 supervisory review process. This third follow-up mission focused on regulating the Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process for banks, following an initial internal review conducted in the CBI. The mission aimed at further developing the risk matrix and assessing business models from the perspective of off-site supervision.

Lebanon

Enhancing Bank Examiner's Capacity to Assess Asset Classification and Provisioning Levels

In March, METAC strengthened Banking Control Commission of Lebanon (BCCL) supervisors' capacity in the assessment of asset classification and provisioning levels as an essential supervisory function. The mission emphasized evaluating and ensuring the quality of various asset categories following international standards, including a careful review of participations in subsidiaries and associates, investments in financial securities and real estate portfolios, and making thoughtful adjustments to the book value of assets.

Enhancing Bank Examiner's Capacity to Conduct Business Model Analysis



A series of capacity-building sessions in April assisted the BCCL examiners in improving their skills to review and evaluate the sustainability of banks' business models. This encompasses the entire process from licensing to ongoing supervision and is consistent with the Basel Core Principles.

Jordan

Developing SRP Risk Rating Methodology for Banks

In April, METAC continued its support to the Central Bank of Jordan in developing a risk rating framework for banks, inspired by the European Supervisory Review and Evaluation Process (SREP) methodology. This is a multi-phase, medium-term project conducted in a hybrid format, aimed at advancing the CBJ's transition to a more risk-based supervisory approach. During the current phase, the mission reviewed the manual on key elements of the Supervisory Review Process (SRP), including its overall structure, as well as components covering credit risk, liquidity, business model, and operational risks. The mission provided recommendations to enhance and streamline these components. An upcoming mission, scheduled for May, will focus on discussing the recommendations and finalizing Step One of the three-step SRP roadmap.

Morocco

Developing Supervisory Guidelines for ILAAP Review



In February, METAC assisted the Bank Al-Maghrib in developing internal guidelines to support supervisors in reviewing banks' ILAAP (Internal Liquidity Adequacy Assessment Process) reports. These guidelines outline key questions for on-site and off-site supervisors to address during the review, highlighted critical areas of liquidity risk assessment, and specified control techniques to be performed. The mission also provided training to ensure effective implementation of the guidelines, which help supervisors assess banks' liquidity risk profiles, align with Basel III Pillar 2 requirements, and ensure that banks take corrective actions or implement additional liquidity buffers where necessary.

West Bank and Gaza

Enhance Risk-Based Supervision of Financial Institutions

In March, METAC supported the Palestine Monetary Authority (PMA) in its efforts to enhance risk-based supervision (RBS) of financial institutions and further develop the Supervisory Review Process (SRP) project. The mission served as a follow-up initiative to assess the outcomes of the initial testing and implementation of the draft SRP manual and risk matrix. It also provides an opportunity to identify key areas for improvement, fostering an environment of continuous enhancement in supervisory practices.

Yemen

Strengthening Supervisors' understanding of the Basel III Pillar 1 Capital Adequacy Framework



In February, METAC assisted to the Central Bank of Yemen in strengthening its supervisors' understanding of the standardized approaches outlined in the Basel III Pillar 1 Capital Adequacy Framework applicable to conventional banks. The mission presented practical examples and utilized draft supervisory reporting templates developed by METAC to demonstrate the calculation of regulatory capital. It also addressed the implementation of standardized approaches for credit risks and the simplified standardized approach for market risk. The draft templates were tailored as necessary to ensure alignment with the draft regulation while considering additional factors pertinent to the Yemeni banking sector.

Public Debt Management

Algeria, Djibouti and Morocco

Scoping Missions in Debt Management

Three in-person scoping missions to the debt management departments in Morocco (6-7 March), Algeria (10-11 March) and Djibouti (24-25 March) introduced the new debt management workstream to assist member countries with issues in public debt management. The scoping missions took stock of the debt management operational frameworks, and the advisor worked closely with the country authorities to identify and address their technical assistance needs in public debt management, which will be incorporated into METAC's work plan for the coming fiscal year.

Public Financial Management

Djibouti

Addressing Fiscal Risks from Public Private Partnerships (PPP)



A mission during 13-17 April supported Djibouti's authorities in strengthening their capacity to improve monitoring and managing fiscal risks associated with Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs). The mission reviewed the existing legal and regulatory framework for PPPs as well as their treatment in the budget process and assessed existing mechanism for monitoring and managing respective fiscal risks. The mission also presented the PPP Fiscal Risk Assessment Model (PFRAM) tool and conducted a three-day training for 42 staff from the PPP Unit in the Ministry of Economy and Finance, the Ministry of Budget, and contracting authorities.

Egypt

Managing Fiscal Risks from State-Owned Enterprises (SOE)



METAC provided training on the use of the IMF

Fiscal Affairs Department’s state-owned enterprise Health Check Tool ([SOE-HCT](#)) to assess two entities—Alexandria Port Authority and EgyptAir—to strengthen the SOE financial oversight in the Ministry of Finance and build capacity of prospective staff of the newly established Fiscal Risks Unit. Over the course of five-days, METAC organized working sessions with the Ministry’s technical team to deliver hands-on training and support the practical application of the tool. The mission also introduced the Debt Guarantees and Loans Assessment Tool ([DGAT](#)) as a potential instrument to improve the assessment of risks related to loans and guarantees.

Support to the Macro-fiscal Planning Unit (MFPU)

A desk review of Egypt’s Macro-Fiscal Framework reviewed the current forecasting methodology and Excel-based templates to provide advice on possible improvements. METAC will provide follow-up in-country support to operationalize the proposed improvements and support drafting of a user’s manual.

Lebanon

Joint budget costing training with the Institute of Finance



In collaboration with the Lebanon Institute of Finance, PFM Advisor Ms. Amra Srdanovic delivered a budget costing workshop during April 14–17, introducing costing techniques widely used in other countries to strengthen budget credibility, ensure equal treatment of line ministries and agencies, and improving alignment with government priorities. Key practices underpinning the budget preparation process, and the practical use of baselines, were introduced to over sixty budget and finance staff, as prerequisites for establishing a reliable Medium-Term Fiscal Framework (MTFF) and Medium-Term Budget Framework (MTBF).

Sudan

Development of an Integrated PFM Law

Since November 2024, METAC is providing on-going support to Sudan for the development of an integrated PFM law which the authorities consider to be a first step prior to other key PFM reforms such as the adoption of an Integrated Financial Management Information & System (IFMIS). METAC provided guidance on the structure of the law and suggested the addition of a chapter fully dedicated to fiscal responsibility, including detailed written comments by chapter to strengthen their content and consistency. METAC organizes weekly discussions with the authorities to emphasize the most essential recommendations for the chapters on definitions, prerogatives, and principles, fiscal responsibility, budget preparation, and budget execution.

Yemen

Rolling out the Expenditure Control and Monitoring of Commitments (ECMC) framework

An off-site mission in Amman during February supported Yemen’s Ministry of Finance in rolling out its new “expenditure control and monitoring of commitments” (ECMC) framework. The mission evaluated the progress made in institutionalizing the ECMC framework, and identified challenges in the 2024 rollout, such as resistance from key stakeholders, sudden interruption of donor funding for training and, the limitations of the Excel tool developed to help implement the framework. The mission team also supported the authorities in developing a realistic roll-out plan for 2025, which also included training and IT tool development components. The event concluded with a review of recommendations and next steps to support Yemen implement this key reform.



Strengthening Cash Management Practices



An off-site mission in Amman during April supported Yemen's Cash Forecasting Team (CFT) from the Ministry of Finance in strengthening existing cash management practices. Officials from the Ministry of Finance, the Tax Authority and the Customs Authority participated. The mission first discussed the two cash forecasting scenarios prepared by the CFT for 2025 and took stock of progress made in cash forecasting practices and processes. It then supported the authorities in developing an initial annual borrowing plan for discussion with the Central Bank of Yemen prior to integration in the cash forecasts. The mission also delivered a two-day workshop to build the capacity of the CFT in preparing risk scenarios. At the request of the Yemeni delegation, it presented different practices of institutional arrangements for cash management and treasury single account designs based on country examples.

Revenue Administration

Djibouti

Support to the Djibouti Customs Strategic Plan Launch and Donor Roundtable

A mission in February supported Djibouti's Customs Administration (DCA) in the preparation, planning, and delivery of the customs-development partners' [roundtable](#). This event officially launched the inaugural DCA strategic plan (2025-2029), which was presented to the development partner community and the private sector. The strategic plan will be used as a platform to garner development partner support to facilitate the execution of priority modernization initiatives. The

roundtable, which was opened by the Minister of Budget, supported by the Secretary General of Budget and Director General of Customs, attracted over 100 participants both on-site and online, including representatives from over 20 development partners.



Opening ceremony of the event bringing together (from left to right) Secretary General of the Ministry of Budget Simon Mibrathu, the Director General of Customs Administration Gouled Ahmed Youssouf, the Minister of Budget Isman Ibrahim Robleh, and METAC Customs Administration Advisor Andrew Allan.



The Minister of Budget Isman Ibrahim Robleh greeting participants at the event's opening ceremony.

Iraq

Support to Draft and Validate an Instruction on Customs Transit

A hybrid mission during February 3-20 enabled the Iraq General Authority of Customs (GAC) to draft, discuss, and validate an Instruction on Customs Transit for approval by the GAC Director General. A first desk-based phase included drafting the

regulation while the second, field-based phase included discussions and validation with the GAC Legal working group.

Lebanon

Excel training for auditors in the Value Added Tax (VAT) Directorate and the Large Taxpayers Office (LTO)



This training in March was jointly organized by METAC and Lebanon's Institute of Finance (IoF) to enable auditors to make better use of standard Excel functions to analyze large amounts of accounting data. As a pilot initiative, the training was very well received by participants and lays the groundwork for future, joint activities with the IoF in areas such as (i) general audit techniques; (ii) computer assisted and risk-based auditing; and (iii) specific soft skills required for VAT and Large Taxpayers Office (LTO) auditors.

Transfer Pricing Workshop

The workshops, delivered in March, helped the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in developing comprehensive transfer pricing regulations. Designed as an introductory training, the workshops provided insights into potential next steps to be taken by the MoF from legal, operational, and organizational perspectives. They explored the practical implementation of a comprehensive transfer pricing regime and fundamental provisions for the income tax law.

Libya

Tax Procedures Code Development

In February, METAC conducted a mission as the first phase of a joint project with the IMF Legal Department to develop a Tax Procedures Code

(TPC) for Libya. This project consists of three distinct phases: (i) diagnostic phase, (ii) drafting phase, and (iii) TPC draft finalization phase. During the diagnostic phase, the mission team facilitated a series of workshops with Libyan tax authorities, focusing on good practices in legislating tax procedures. The team also assessed the current legal framework for tax procedures and its practical application. The discussions were crucial in identifying the most suitable approaches for the Libyan context and in outlining a comprehensive legal reform strategy that will guide the drafting of the TPC in the upcoming phase scheduled for FY26.

Enhancing the Management of the Large Taxpayers Office

The April mission assisted the Libyan Tax Authority (LTA) in reviewing and improving the management of the Large Taxpayers Office (LTO), which is essential for securing a substantial portion of tax revenues for the administration. Through workshops and discussions, the mission team engaged with LTA officials to examine the current management approach for large taxpayers and to introduce international good practices for LTOs. The sessions identified several key areas for enhancement, which include developing a tailored LTO compliance strategy, redefining the classification of large taxpayers, and establishing a separate organizational structure for the LTO. Additionally, the mission emphasized the importance of creating a centralized Risk Management Unit (RMU), modernizing casework processes and practices, and developing a tailored capability development plan for the LTO.

Enhancing the Implementation of the Cargo Manifest and Guarantees Functionalities

METAC organized a workshop in Amman to enhance the Libyan Customs Authority's (LCA) implementation of the cargo manifest and guarantees functionalities within ASYCUDA World (AW). It focused on evaluating the system's capability to manage cargo manifests under various operational scenarios and the automatic write-off of declarations. Additionally, the workshop examined LCA's current guarantee procedures and explored technical and organizational measures to ensure their effective integration with AW.

West Bank and Gaza

TADAT assessment

In collaboration with the World Bank (WB), METAC supported [TADAT](#) pre-assessment training and the initial TADAT assessment of the Palestinian tax administration authority. A very constructive relationship was established with the Ministry of Finance and the tax administration, the World Bank, and European Union teams to identify next steps for the development and implementation of a post-TADAT reform roadmap.

Yemen

Developing a Tax Procedures Code

In February, METAC supported Yemen's General Taxation Department (GTD) in developing a Tax Procedures Code (TPC). This initiative, executed jointly with the IMF's Legal Department, consists of three distinct phases: (i) diagnostic phase, (ii) drafting phase, and (iii) TPC draft finalization phase. The team conducted a series of workshops with the Yemeni tax authorities to share good practices in legislating tax procedures and to evaluate the existing legal framework and its practical application. Discussions with the delegation focused on understanding the current situation, clarifying the distinctions between the administrative provisions of the Income Tax Law and the General Sales Tax Law, and establishing a unified approach for the tax procedures of both laws. The team also outlined a comprehensive legal reform strategy to be adopted during the drafting of the TPC in the upcoming second phase, scheduled for FY26.

Remote Mission on Tax Debt Management

In April, METAC conducted a remote mission to enhance understanding of Yemen's tax debt management practices. Through a series of workshops and discussions, the mission team explored the current practices, the relevant legislative framework, and the status of tax arrears. This analysis was crucial for formulating a strategy aimed at debt reduction and prevention, which is vital for improving the collection of tax debt. The insights gained during this mission will support efforts to enhance tax revenue management and ensure effective fiscal operations.

Training the Yemen Customs Authority on the Core Framework of the ASYCUDA World System.

This follow-up initiative during 10-17 April in Amman, provided four officials from the Yemen Customs Authority with hands-on expertise in the core framework of the ASYCUDA World system. The entirely practical sessions featured advanced exercises that both reinforced concepts covered in a prior training phase and introduced new capabilities – particularly in reporting and dashboard creation.

Tax Policy

Djibouti

Tax Expenditures Reporting

An in-person mission from February 17 to March 7 followed up on previous CD work on preparing tax expenditures reports and delivered a targeted training seminar. The mission provided recommendations to improve the process of updating necessary information for preparing tax expenditures reports and how to increase the accuracy of the estimates.

Government Finance Statistics and Public Sector Debt Statistics

Egypt

Consolidation of the General Government Sector in Egypt

A joint IMF Fiscal Affairs Department (FAD) and Statistics Department (STA), and METAC mission visited Cairo from April 8–20, 2025, to support the Ministry of Finance (MoF) in strengthening fiscal reporting of the general government (GG). The IMF-METAC team followed up on the previous mission, during which the MoF team had prepared a consolidated Statement of Operations for the FY2025/26 budget using tailored Excel templates. This work resulted in a markedly improved alignment between consolidated and unconsolidated fiscal aggregates. The mission also delivered hands-on training to about 30 officials from the MoF and seven Economic Authorities,

focusing on the GFSM 2014 framework, including economic classification, institutional coverage, and consolidation principles. A preliminary version of a Compilation Guide was drafted during the mission, laying out the practical steps and specific treatment of transactions covered during the training.

Yemen

Compiling and Disseminating Government Finance Statistics (GFS) and Public Sector Debt Statistics (PSDS)

Three institutions (Central Bank, Ministry of Finance, and Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation) participated in this mission in April to build their capacity in assessing the quality of debt time series, check integration of above- and below-the-line data, review quality and coverage of the compiled GFS and learning about international standards and requirements for data reporting to the World Bank/IMF databases. Presentations on specific topics focused on practical demonstration and hands-on work. The mission made several recommendations to improve GFS/PSDS, which will be followed up in virtual meetings during May–June 2025.

Real Sector Statistics

Iraq

Improving the Producer Price Index

The mission during April assessed the producer price index (PPI) compiled by the Central Organization Bureau of Statistics and Information Technologies of Iraq, identified areas to improve, and provided guidance to implement a new PPI in line with international recommendations.



Jordan

Measuring the Non-Observed Economy

The mission during February assisted the Jordanian Department of Statistics in analyzing data sources and developing methods for the compilation of the non-observed economy in Jordan's national accounts.

Lebanon

Developing a Construction Cost Index

The mission in April reviewed the work completed by the Central Administration for Statistics since the previous mission, identified potential improvements, and helped to plan the remaining work required to allow the final Construction Cost index to be published by July 2025.

Yemen

Enhancing Staff Capacities on the GDP Compilation

A mission during April trained staff of the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) and assisted the CSO with data assessment and design of a high-level workplan for annual GDP compilation.

Macroeconomic Frameworks

Egypt

Updating the Quarterly Projection Model

The mission examined the Central Bank of Egypt's existing inflation targeting practices and extended the current framework to incorporate multiple Philips curves and a credit channel bloc. The mission also presented various nowcasting models in the pursuit of updating existing nowcasting models. The incorporation of a fiscal bloc and external sector developments will follow in the upcoming missions to obtain a fully operational Quarterly Projection Model (QPM). The mission also revisited communication strategies and public reporting methods.

Anti-Money Laundering & Combating the Financing of Terrorism¹

Algeria

Enhancing AML/CFT risk-based supervision and beneficial ownership framework

The mission supported the Bank of Algeria in enhancing AML/CFT risk-based supervision of

banks. The TA team also conducted an in-depth analysis of the framework to collect and verify information on beneficial ownership, under the purview of the National Center for Commercial Register. A workplan was developed to enhance the framework.

Technical Assistance Reports

The following reports were uploaded to the IMF's Partners Connect website. Steering Committee members of countries and donor partners who have signed a confidentiality agreement with the IMF may access the reports at [TA Reports \(imfconnect.org\)](https://imfconnect.org):

Government Finance Statistics and Public Sector Debt Statistics

Djibouti: Djibouti Report on Government Finance Statistics Mission – February 2025

Financial Supervision and Regulation

Algeria: Développement d'un règlement sur les risques opérationnels – March 2025

Egypt: Interest Rate Risk in the Banking Book – April 2025

Public Financial Management

Libya: Strengthening Budget Preparation – January 2025

Revenue Administration

Iraq: Drafting of Regulations on the Customs Valuation of the Goods – January 2025

Iraq: Registration and Annual Tax Declaration Reporting – March 2025

Lebanon: Analytics and Compliance Strategy Next Steps – March 2025

Libya: Support to draft SOP for the use of the ASYCUDA system – January 2025

Tunisia: Détection d'anomalies avec l'intelligence artificielle et Python – February 2025

Yemen: Developing a Compliance Improvement Plan for the Banking Sector – February 2025

Real Sector Statistics

West Bank and Gaza: National accounts mission - Quarterly GDP – April 2025

Staff News



Ms. **Elirjeta Pepaj** concluded her very productive assignment at METAC at end-March 2024 to start as Real Sector Statistics Advisor at the IMF's Africa Regional Technical Assistance Center (AFRITAC) South in Mauritius.

Ms. Pepaj joined METAC as Regional Advisor on national accounts and price statistics in October 2023. We wish Ms. Pepaj all the best in her new

assignment and thank her for her efforts in advancing our member countries' statistical capacity during an exceptionally challenging regional security situation.

METAC Director Holger Floerkemeier receives Outstanding Leadership Award

IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva presented METAC Director Holger Floerkemeier with the 2025 Outstanding Leadership Award, granted by the IMF's Staff Association Committee

¹ Technical assistance is funded by the AML/CFT thematic Fund which is supported by Canada, Germany, France, Luxembourg,

Switzerland, Japan, Korea, Qatar, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and The Netherlands.

for excellence in leadership and commitment to inclusive, inspiring, and humane management. METAC's team highlighted Mr. Floerkemeier's exceptional leadership during challenging times and his supportive and staff-focused approach. Mr. Floerkemeier has taken decisive actions to enhance

METAC's operations, improving transparency, accountability, outreach, and communications. His inclusive and non-hierarchical leadership has been inspirational and greatly appreciated. The award ceremony took place during an IMF townhall meeting after the Spring Meetings.

Analytical Corner

Flagship Publications

[World Economic Outlook: A Critical Juncture amid Policy Shifts](#) (April 2025)

After enduring a prolonged and unprecedented series of shocks, the global economy appeared to have stabilized, with steady yet underwhelming growth rates. However, the landscape has changed as governments around the world reorder policy priorities, and uncertainties have climbed to new highs. Forecasts for global growth have been revised markedly down, reflecting effective tariff rates at levels not seen in a century and a highly unpredictable environment. Intensifying downside risks dominate the outlook, amid escalating trade tensions and financial market adjustments. At this critical juncture, countries should work constructively to promote a stable and predictable trade environment and to facilitate international cooperation, while addressing policy gaps and structural imbalances at home.

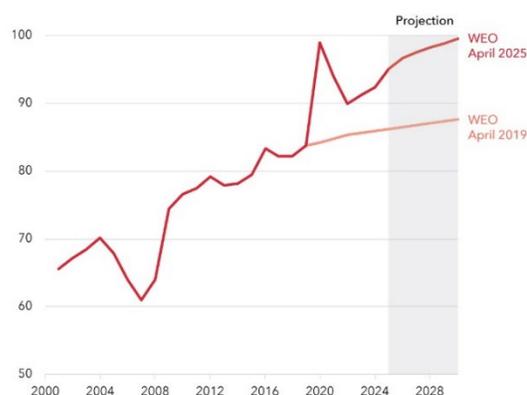
[Fiscal Monitor: Fiscal Policy under Uncertainty](#) (April 2025)

Escalating uncertainty and policy shifts are reshaping the fiscal outlook. Global public debt projections have been revised upwards, while tariffs, uncertainty and market volatility, increased defense spending, and declining foreign aid are intensifying risks. Countries must implement gradual fiscal adjustments within credible medium-term frameworks to reduce debt and build buffers against heightened uncertainty. Reforms to major expenditure programs, such as energy subsidies and pensions, are crucial to reducing fiscal vulnerabilities while fostering growth. Chapter 2 of the report examines strategies to build public support for reforms to energy subsidies and public

pensions, which are crucial for reducing fiscal vulnerabilities and fostering inclusive growth.

Global Public Debt is high and likely to keep rising

Global public debt, percent of GDP

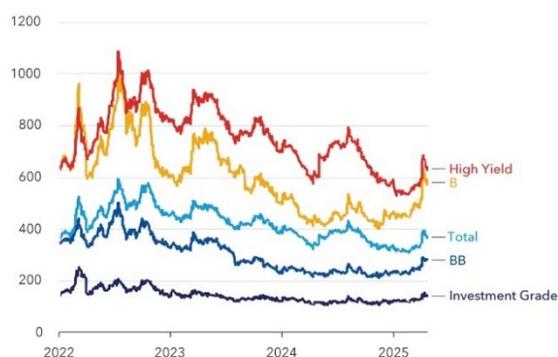


[Global Financial Stability Report: Enhancing Resilience amid Uncertainty](#) (April 2025)

Global financial stability risks have increased significantly, driven by tighter global financial conditions and heightened trade and geopolitical uncertainty. This assessment is supported by three key forward-looking vulnerabilities: (i) high valuations in key markets; (ii) highly leveraged financial institutions and their nexus with banking systems; and (iii) risks of market turmoil and challenges to debt sustainability for highly indebted sovereigns. Major geopolitical risk events can trigger a significant decline in stock prices and raise sovereign risk premiums, thereby posing a potential threat to macro-financial stability.

Financing costs in emerging economies surged during recent market turmoil

Average sovereign spreads by rating categories, basis points



Regional

[Regional Economic Outlook for the Middle East and Central Asia](#) (May 2025)

THE SHADOW OF UNCERTAINTY

Persistently high global uncertainty could lead to **output losses of 2.5%** for the average economy in the Middle East and Central Asia.

How can countries build resilience?

IMF.org

Rising trade tensions and policy uncertainty are adding to the impact of conflicts and extended oil production cuts to weaken MENA's growth prospects and widening economic imbalances. Growth is still projected to increase in 2025 and 2026, but at a considerably slower pace than anticipated last October as spillovers from escalating global trade tensions and heightened uncertainty add to a more gradual resumption of oil production, lingering effects of conflicts in the region, and slow progress in implementing structural reforms in some economies. The risks to the outlook remain to the downside and include a resurgence of conflicts, persistently heightened global uncertainty, particularly related to changes in tariffs and potential trade dislocations that could stifle domestic and external demand and further tighten financial conditions and weaken the oil sector.

[Digital Transformation in the Gulf Cooperation Council Economies](#) (April 2025)

This paper provides a thorough review of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries' significant acceleration in digital transformation. Based on findings from a novel composite index, the GCC has (on average) closed its gap with Advanced Economies, with strengths particularly in digital infrastructure and affordability. Additional economic gains from further advancing digitalization in the GCC would require comprehensive strategies to further leverage digitalization to enable a more effective and transparent public sector, balance opportunities and risks associated with fintech, enhance digital skills and digital adoption, with adequate social safety nets and appropriate training to strengthen social protection and labor market inclusion, and create an enabling environment to further digital penetration.

Egypt

[IMF Executive Board Completes the Fourth Review of the Extended Fund Facility Arrangement](#) (March 2025)

The Egyptian authorities preserved macroeconomic stability amid a difficult regional environment, but progress on the structural reform agenda was mixed. Looking ahead, more decisive implementation of reforms will be critical to secure sustained and robust growth. Priorities comprise boosting domestic revenues, improving the business environment, accelerating divestment, and leveling the playing field, while enhancing governance and transparency. The completion of the fourth reviews allows the authorities to draw the equivalent of about US\$1.2 billion. The Executive Board also approved the authorities' request for an arrangement under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility and completed the 2025 Article IV Consultation.

Jordan

[IMF Staff Reach Staff Level Agreement on the Third Review under the Extended Fund Facility \(EFF\)](#) (April 2025)

Jordan's EFF-supported economic program is firmly on track despite considerable external headwinds.

The authorities continue to demonstrate strong commitment to sound macro-economic policies and structural reforms to strengthen Jordan's resilience, confront uncertainty, and accelerate growth. Substantial progress was made toward agreement on an arrangement under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility to address Jordan's long-term vulnerabilities in the water and electricity sectors and to enhance its ability to address health emergencies, including future pandemics. Discussions are expected to be continued with the aim to reach agreement soon.

Lebanon

[IMF Staff Concludes Visit to Lebanon](#) (March 2025)

An IMF fact-finding mission visited Lebanon from March 10-13. It welcomed the authorities' request for a new IMF-supported program to support their efforts to address Lebanon's significant economic challenges. Lebanon's economy continues to face major challenges. Humanitarian and reconstruction needs are substantial and require coordinated international support. Recent policy actions have helped maintain some degree of economic stability. IMF staff will remain in close contact with the authorities to help them develop a comprehensive economic reform program.

Libya

[Libya: Staff Concluding Statement of the 2025 Article IV Mission](#) (April 2025)

The dispute over the leadership of the central bank last August and the associated disruption in oil production weighed on growth in 2024. Following the resolution of the dispute, oil production has rebounded and is now approaching 1.4 million barrels per day. The economic outlook is dominated by developments in the oil sector. Real GDP growth is projected to rebound in 2025, primarily driven by an expansion of oil production, before moderating in the medium term. The outlook is subject to elevated uncertainty, and risks are tilted to the downside, particularly from domestic political instability, oil price volatility, intensifying regional conflicts, and deepening geo-economic fragmentation.

Morocco

[Request for an Arrangement Under the Flexible Credit Line and Cancellation of Current Arrangement](#) (April 2025)

The Moroccan economy showed remarkable resilience to recent shocks, although a succession of droughts severely curtailed agricultural production and pushed unemployment to historical highs. Morocco's very strong institutional and policy framework has been effective in addressing these shocks, with well-calibrated fiscal, monetary, and financial policies. The authorities continue to implement their ambitious structural reform agenda, towards a more resilient, greener, inclusive, private sector-led growth, and further strengthening their institutional policy frameworks. The authorities remain fully committed to maintaining very strong policies and policy frameworks.

[Morocco: 2025 Article IV Consultation and Third Review Under the Arrangement Under the Resilience and Sustainability Facility](#) (April 2025)

GDP growth slowed in 2024, as another drought curtailed agricultural production. Domestic demand remained robust in the first three quarters of the year, with consumption boosted by lower inflation and fiscal support, and investment benefiting from the start of an infrastructure-building cycle. Labor market conditions remain weak, due to significant job losses in the agricultural sector and low labor force participation. The authorities have continued with their structural reform agenda and have announced a new strategy to boost employment.

[IMF Executive Board Approves New Two-Year US\\$4.5 Billion Flexible Credit Line Arrangement for Morocco](#) (April 2025)

The IMF approved a two-year successor arrangement of about US\$ 4.5 billion for Morocco under the Flexible Credit Line (FCL), designed for crisis prevention. Morocco qualifies for the FCL by virtue of its very strong institutional policy frameworks and economic fundamentals, its track record of implementing very strong policies, and its continued commitment to maintaining such policies in the future. The arrangement will enhance Morocco's external buffers and provide insurance against downside risks in an uncertain environment.

[IMF Staff Completes 2025 Article IV Consultation with Morocco](#) (February 2025)

Economic growth is accelerating thanks to strong domestic demand, amid a new investment cycle in many sectors. Tax reforms allowed the fiscal deficit in 2024 to be lower than expected while also funding spending measures. Going forward, saving part of the revenue windfall would help strengthen the fiscal buffers. The current monetary policy stance is appropriate and should remain data dependent.

Syria

[Joint Statement by Saudi Finance Minister, IMF Managing Director, and World Bank Group President on Syria](#) (April 2025)

On the sidelines of the 2025 Spring Meetings in Washington, the IMF, World Bank and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia hosted a high-level roundtable for Syria, bringing together the Syrian authorities, finance ministers, and key stakeholders from multilateral and regional financial institutions. The event provided a platform for the Syrian authorities to present their efforts to stabilize and rebuild their country, reduce poverty, and achieve long-term economic development. There was broad recognition of the urgent challenges facing the Syrian economy and a collective commitment to support the authorities' efforts for recovery and development.

IMF Online Courses

General information is available at: <https://www.edx.org/school/imfx>. Registration for online courses, available to government officials and, in some cases, to the public can be accessed at: <http://imf.smartcatalogiq.com>

The IMF Institute offers online training to both member countries officials and the general public. Microlearning videos are available at: [IMF Institute Learning Channel - YouTube](#)



Activities Planned during May – July 2025

Country	Topic and Lead METAC Advisor	Date
Central Bank Operations – Mr. Stefaan Ide		
LBY	Domestic Liquidity Management under and exchange rate peg	May
REG	Regional Workshop on monetary policy implementation	Jun
JOR	Central Bank Operations	June
Financial Supervision and Regulation – Ms. Nehmat Hantas		
JOR	Developing SRP rating methodology for banks	May
JOR	Developing regulation on Internal Capital Adequacy Assessment Process (ICAAP)	May
REG	IFRS 9: A Supervisory Perspective	Jun
TUN	Developing Supervisory Framework for Payment Companies	Jul
Public Debt Management – Mr. Chaker Soltani		
REG	Regional workshop on LCBM development	May
EGY	MTDS and ABP developing and implementing	May
MAR	MTDS and ABP training	Jun
JOR	LCBM development	Jul
LBN	Debt portfolio management	Jul
Financial Supervision and Regulation – Ms. Lusine Margaryan		
YMN	CD Risk Management Regulations for Banks	May
IRQ	SRP Project (ICAAP regulation and risk matrix development)	May
WBG	SRP/On-site Supervision	June
IRQ	SRP Project (Off-site Manual and risk matrix development)	July
Public Financial Management – Ms. Amra Srdanovic		
REG	CEF-Kuwait – Regional workshop on climate responsive Public Investment	May
IRQ	TSA and cash management workshop	July
Public Financial Management – Mr. Kevork Baboyan		
MAR	Digitalization of Internal Audit	May
Tax Administration – Mr. Rosen Bachvarov		
MAR	Follow-up on E-invoicing	May
DZA	Compliance risk management framework in oil and gas sector – follow up	June
Tax Administration – Ms. Sabine Corm		
IRQ	Training an Audit practices	Jun
LBY	Develop business processes	Jul
	Assist the general directorate of taxes in the development of a tax procedure code	Jul
Customs Administration – Mr. Andrew Allan		
DJI	Support on new Customs Legislation	Jun
IRQ	Support on legal and organizational framework	Jun
TUN	Provide support to the IT Dept in the development of the Selectivity Model	Jul
Tax Policy – Ms. Sarah Bou Atmeh		
YMN	Follow up mission - Tax Policy Recommendations	Jul

Government Finance Statistics and Public Sector Debt Statistics – Mr. Amir Hadziomeragic		
MAR	GFS Expansion of coverage to General Government Sector	May
LBN	Restarting and expansion of GFS compilation	May/Jun
Real Sector Statistics – Ms. Elirjeta Pepaj		
LBY	AGDP/SUT - Annual National Accounts	Jul
LBY	CPI development	Jul
Anti-Money Laundering and Combating the Financing of Terrorism – Mr. Peter El Sharoni		
REG	CEF-Kuwait – Regional workshop on “Legal Considerations and Challenges for	May
OA	The Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force 40th Plenary	May
Climate and Gender Work Program		
REG	Follow-up webinar to ‘Bridging Gaps through Evidence-based Policies”	May
REG	Female Labor Force Participation in MENA	May
REG	METAC-SARTTAC-ATI collaboration: Tax and Expenditure in a Gender Lens	Jun
REG	METAC-CEF Collaboration: Why a Gender Lens Matters: Unlocking Solutions to Macroeconomic Challenges	Jun

Note: OA: Outreach activity; REG: Regional activity

The following Development Partners and Member Countries provide financial support to METAC:



EUROPEAN UNION



ALGERIA



FRANCE



EGYPT



GERMANY



MOROCCO



THE NETHERLANDS



SAUDI ARABIA



SWITZERLAND



International Monetary Fund

Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center

metacss@IMF.org; IMFmetac.org