



Shared Prosperity Dignified Life



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The American
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UNIVERSITY OF THE
WITWATERSRAND
JOHANNESBURG

INEQUALITY
STUDIES

Session 1: How did 2024 shape inequality?



Khedidja Benguanna

Khedidja Benguanna is a renowned Algerian journalist and television anchor with over 30 years of experience spanning Algeria, Switzerland, and Qatar. A trailblazer in Arab media, she was the first woman to host political talk shows on Al Jazeera, where she has worked since 1997. Benguanna has led flagship programs such as Inside Story and Ladies' Exclusive, and conducted high-profile interviews with global leaders including Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Mohamed Morsi, and Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. She previously worked for Radio Suisse Internationale and Algerian national television and radio. In 2016, she joined a UNHCR mission to Jordan's Zaatari Camp to report on the Syrian refugee crisis. Recognized by Forbes as one of the ten most influential women in the Arab world, she is fluent in Arabic and French, and proficient in English.



Jonathan Leape

Jonathan Leape is Executive Director of the International Growth Centre (IGC) and Associate Professor of Economics at the London School of Economics (LSE). As head of the IGC since 2013, he has driven the development of a new model for country-based knowledge partnerships, bringing together policy makers and academic researchers to promote sustainable growth through pathbreaking policy-focused research. He led the response to COVID, including co-chairing the FCDO COVID-19 Economic Advisory Group with FCDO Chief Economist Rachel Glennerster and, more recently, pivoted IGC's strategy towards sustainable growth. His research interests are in taxation, regulation, structural transformation and economic growth. He was the founding Director of the Centre for Research into Economics and Finance in Southern Africa, established at LSE in 1990 as an initiative of the Commonwealth Heads of Government to support the democratic transition in South Africa. He served as the Chief Academic Advisor on Taxation to the UK Government Economic Service. He holds an AB from Harvard University, a BA/MA from Oxford University and a PhD in Economics from Harvard University, where he was a National Science Foundation Fellow.



Markus Loewe

Markus Loewe is Head of Research Department “Transformation of Economic and Social Systems” at IDOS, the German Institute of Development and Sustainability in Bonn and Honorary Professor for Social Protection and Inclusive Growth at the University of Applied Science Bonn-Rhein-Sieg in St. Augustin. He studied development economics and political science in Tübingen, Erlangen and Damascus and got his PhD from Heidelberg University. His research focuses on social protection, poverty reduction, industrial policymaking, small and medium enterprise development, corruption and the concept of the social contract. His regional focus is the Middle East and North Africa.



Jawad Alanani

Jawad Alanani is a prominent Jordanian economist and public figure, holding a PhD in Economics from the University of Georgia, USA. Throughout his distinguished career, he has held numerous senior positions in the Jordanian government, including Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Labor, Minister of Industry and Trade, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Chief of the Royal Court, President of the Royal Scientific Society, and Senator.

Alanani is widely recognized for spearheading Jordan’s privatization program, personally overseeing the privatization of key national assets such as Royal Jordanian Airlines, the telecommunications sector, and the Cement factory. He founded three companies, led a consultancy firm, and contributed significantly to governance reforms in both public and private institutions. He chaired the boards of numerous public entities and currently serves as Chairman of Lafarge Cement Jordan. A prolific writer, he has authored over 70 academic papers and several books in English and Arabic.