

Session 4: Social protection as a pathway for inequality reduction



Ahmed Elsayed

Ahmed Elsayed is the Executive Director of J-PAL Middle East and North Africa (MENA) at the American University in Cairo (AUC) and an Associate Professor at the AUC School of Business. He leads J-PAL MENA's strategic direction, overseeing research, policy outreach, and capacity-building initiatives, while fostering partnerships with policymakers in the region.

Before joining AUC and J-PAL in 2022, Ahmed was a Senior Researcher at IZA-Institute of Labor Economics in Germany, where he also served as Deputy Program Director of the "Gender, Growth, and Labor Markets in Low-Income Countries" research program.

He is currently a Research Fellow at IZA, ROA, and the Economic Research Forum (ERF). His research focuses on development economics, applied micro-econometrics, migration, and labor economics, with a particular interest in the intersection of research and policy. Ahmed holds an MSc in Business Research and a PhD in Economics from Maastricht University.



Abdillahi Said Guedi

Abdillahi Said Guedi was born in 1973 in Djibouti. He holds a degree in modern literature and began his professional career in 1995 as a French teacher. He was later appointed as a middle school principal, high school headmaster, and director of a hospitality high school. In 2012, he joined the Ministry of Energy where he served as Administrative and Financial Director. In 2016, he was appointed Technical Advisor at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Solidarity. He has extensive experience in the social field, having worked in the National Family Solidarity Program, in issues related to disability, and in community-led development projects.



Lina Marliani

Lina Marliani is the Executive Director of The Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab Southeast Asia (J-PAL SEA), one of the seven regional offices of J-PAL, hosted by the Institute for Economic and Social Research of the University of Indonesia (LPEM FEB UI). Lina provides strategic oversight to J-PAL SEA's core engagements of conducting research, policy outreach, and capacity building. During her time, Lina oversaw the office's multi-sector research engagement, providing guidance as the research team worked to generate evidence and valuable policy insights in social protection reform, urban transportation, health, and education. Lina also works closely with J-PAL SEA's policy team to guide project developments and catalyze the scale-up of high-impact policy solutions in sectors such as digital finance, social protection, MSMEs empowerment, early childhood education, and environment. Moreover, as part of the education and training activities, Lina actively participated as a lecturer in several workshops on evaluating social programs, which were held in collaboration with organizations such as the World Bank and The Indonesian Regional Science Association (IRSA), among others. Currently, Lina serves as one of the Co-chairs of the Ethics Committee of FEB UI.



Amal Ammar

Amal Amar is the President of Egypt's National Council for Women since November 2024 and a leading figure in the judiciary and human rights fields. She previously served as Assistant Minister of Justice for Human Rights, Women, and Children's Affairs, playing a key role in advancing women's empowerment nationally and internationally. Amal Amar was among Egypt's first female judges and has held various judicial positions in primary, economic, and appellate courts. She contributed to drafting laws and international agreements on women's and children's rights and developing judicial training programs. She is a board member of the Arab Women's Legal Network and the first Egyptian to serve as Vice President of the AU Advisory Board on Anti-Corruption. Recognized by Forbes among the 20 most powerful Arab women in government, she has authored influential research on judiciary and governance. She holds a Master's degree in International Business Law from Cairo University and Sorbonne Paris.