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STUDIES

## Session 5: What the experts say



### Maysoun Azzam

Maysoun Azzam is one of the most prominent media figures in the Arab world. She works at the Dubai-based Al Arabiya news channel as a news presenter, program anchor, interviewer, and lecturer. She is currently hosting a new program titled “Khat Al Muwajaha” (Line of Confrontation). Maysoun has interviewed prominent figures and decision-makers. Her professionalism has also led her to work as an instructor at the American University in Dubai. She focuses her work on humanitarian issues and plays a key role in promoting UN and humanitarian organization campaigns. She has participated in numerous conferences as a moderator and published political and social articles on AlArabiya.net. Maysoun has received several awards, including the “Atwar Bahjat Award”, “Best TV Presenter in Using Social Media for Social Affairs,” “Best Media Influencer on Humanitarian Issues,” and the “Excellence Award in Media” at the Arab Women’s Festival (2025). She was also chosen as a media supporter for the “Josour” initiative launched by ESCWA at the first Arab Forum for Equality in 2022.



### Attiya Waris

Attiya Waris is a distinguished law professor in Kenya, notable for being the second woman to achieve this title and the first from a religious, ethnic, and racial minority in the country. She stands as the only known Professor of Fiscal Law in Africa, contributing significantly to the intersection of finance and development, particularly in areas such as taxation, debt, and illicit financial flows. Professor Waris has held several leadership positions, and she currently serves as the UN independent expert on foreign debt and international financial obligations related to human rights. She is also active in various organizations, and her expertise has garnered international recognition, with recent citations in speeches by notable figures. Professor Waris is a founding member of several influential organizations focused on tax justice and fiscal studies in Africa.



### **Hania Sholkamy**

Hania Sholkamy is an Egyptian anthropologist, currently an associate research professor at the Social Research Centre of the American University in Cairo. Her work has focused on gender, health, and social protection in Egypt. She designed and piloted the cash transfers programs of the Government of Egypt as special advisor to the Minister of Social Solidarity. She has been a visiting fellow and professor at the American University in Beirut, the Arab Gulf University in Bahrain, and Yale University.



### **Ricardo Fuentes-Nieva**

Based in Mexico City, Ricardo Fuentes-Nieva is a distinguished international consultant with a focus on development and inequality. His research spans a broad spectrum, including climate change, food security, sustainability, and social policy, with an emphasis on understanding poverty and inequality dynamics. He has worked for the U.N., the World Bank, the IDB, Oxfam and ODI Global, among others. Recently, Ricardo shifted his attention to consultancy and advisory roles.



### **Faiza Shaheen**

Faiza Shaheen is an economist, writer, and political commentator with over 20 years of experience researching inequality, exclusion, and social mobility. She has published widely on issues such as austerity, immigration, and economic justice. Her book, *Know Your Place: How Society Sets Us Up to Fail and What We Can Do About It*, was released in 2023 by Simon & Schuster. Previous roles include Program Head for the Inequality and Exclusion Grand Challenge of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies at the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, Director of the Centre for Labour and Social Studies (CLASS), Head of Inequality and Sustainable Development at Save the Children and Senior Researcher at the New Economics Foundation. She holds a PhD and MSc from the University of Manchester and a BA from Oxford University.



### **Vivi Alatas**

Vivi Alatas is senior advisor to Policy Working Group National Team For Eradicating Poverty TNP2K in Indonesia. Formerly she was a Lead Economist of World Bank where she led a team of seasoned local and international economists in producing several flagship reports for national and global audiences, including 'Targeting Poor and Vulnerable Households in Indonesia', 'Making Poverty Work in Indonesia', 'Indonesia's Rising Divide', 'Indonesia Jobs Report' and "Aspiring Indonesia – Expanding the Middle Class". She has presented various of these research findings to high level policy makers from Indonesia and several other countries. She also has written several journal papers on poverty, inequality and labour issues. Some of the papers were written in collaboration with Nobel Laurettes Abhijit Banerjee and Angus Deaton who was also her advisor in Princeton.