

**ABSTRACT OF PAPER ON
“EMPLOYMENT CREATION, POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION
IN THE ARAB WORLD: THE UNFINISHED AGENDA”**

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Achieving the objective of *poverty* reduction/ eradication and promotion of social *integration* depends crucially on the expansion of productive and decent *employment*. Identifying the characteristics and trends of these three dimensions of the economy and society, as well as the linkages between them, is crucial for the design of policies that would contribute positively to increasing the welfare of Arab citizens.

The paper examines first the nexus of employment, poverty and social protection. From the time reforms were initiated in most Arab countries since the early 1990s till today. In doing so, the paper reviews key facts and inferences that have been put forward at least till the 2010. Myths or assertions aside, countries in the Arab did not make the progress the designers and proponents of economic reforms claimed, nor did employment creation lagged behind or poverty increased as advocated by the critics. Moreover, the paper puts forward the proposition that while many Governments, international organizations as well as local and regional analysts have put much emphasis on issues pertaining to Arab youth, their importance for employment and more broadly economic outcomes has been declining of time.

After identifying some critical facts in the areas of employment, human capital development and social protection, the paper re-evaluates some of the conventional policies Arab countries have pursued so far and proposes new ones that could contribute more than in the past to the creation of sustainable and decent employment, and increase the prosperity of Arab citizens both within the economy and society.