



CARPO

Center for Applied Research
in Partnership with the Orient

Annual Report

2020/21

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1 Introduction

With the years 2020 and 2021 having been particularly challenging years for CARPO, we have decided to make an exception and look back at those years in the format of a biannual report. After all, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic forced us to channel the resources of our staff differently, and to dedicate all we have to keeping our various projects operational and maintaining the size of our team. This came after years of solid growth and development in a reasonable pace for an organization like CARPO.

We had started into 2020 with an enlarged team, deeply motivated to continue our project work with our awe-inspiring colleagues and partners in the Middle East. In January, February and early March, our staff undertook project-related field trips to Tehran, Ankara, Istanbul, London and Riyadh and held track-2 workshops in Amman, Córdoba and Ankara in January and February, only to be 'grounded' at our office in Bonn and, a few weeks later, in our homes due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Early on into the increasing uncertainties, we decided to cancel and postpone our activities planned from mid-March onwards. That month, we had planned to hold a bilateral workshop on Iraq-Saudi relations in Riyadh, to implement a Tafahum workshop at the headquarters of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) in Solna and a local workshop in Yemen in the framework of our Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative. After a few weeks of hope that after the summer things would go back to normal, we had to realize that all our projects and activities scheduled for 2020 would have to be adapted to the new circumstances. Obviously, we were not the only ones, as even the most comprehensive risk mitigation strategy of any project proposal out there had not foreseen a global pandemic. So, for implementing partners, donors and regional stakeholders alike, this was a completely new context to deal with which dragged on throughout 2021.

An integral part of all CARPO projects has been to convene researchers and experts for dialogue, knowledge exchange and knowledge transfer. What matters most in the framework of these track 1.5, track 2 and track 3 workshops is the personal encounter. There is broad consensus in our field that while the actual workshop sessions and the thematic exchange at the table are key, the 'real magic' happens during coffee breaks, lunches, dinners or joint strolls after a long workshop day. Obviously, most of this magic cannot be transferred to the virtual space. This has posed a significant challenge to our work. We have therefore aimed to develop, to the best of our abilities, different online formats for all of our projects; formats that would ensure that trust building through exchange can continue. We did so in close coordination and

communication with our donors. The task for us was to keep alive the momentum generated in all projects by conducting new dialogue formats, be it online only or in a hybrid format, i.e. combining online and on-site participation. Thanks to the creativity of our team on one hand, the trust and flexibility of our donors on a second hand, and the openness to taking things forward in the virtual space by our partners in the region on a third hand (yes, we grew a third hand during this period!), we were able to continue the implementation of all our initiatives and were therefore not forced to halt or freeze any of our projects.

We thus continued to engage Yemeni stakeholders with a specific focus on economic and developmental policies in the Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative, jointly implemented with the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies and DeepRoot Consulting and funded by the European Union and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Yemen. In the framework of Research Cooperation on Peacebuilding in Yemen, implemented on behalf of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and by commission of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union, international scholars and their counterparts from Yemen examined the role different societal groups of Yemen can play for peacebuilding efforts in their country. With the Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies at the University of Bonn and the Gender Development Research & Studies Center (GDRSC) at the University of Sana'a we continued to implement the project Teaching and Advising on Post-Conflict Reconstruction, which sought to develop a syllabus on post-conflict reconstruction that is to be taught at GDRSC in the framework of its master course 'International Development and Gender'. Our Tafahum project, jointly implemented with the Gulf Research Center Foundation and funded by the German Federal Foreign Office, continued in its second and third year and followed up on the findings of its first year to develop concrete entry-points for a process towards regional security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula – a region that encapsulates the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) plus Yemen, Iraq and Iran. We are very happy to start the second phase of this project from December 2021 onwards named Tafahum wa Tabadul, which aims at leading shared regional understanding (tafahum) to joint operational exchange (tabadul). Our Iraq and its Neighbours project, launched in 2019 with the EastWest Institute and funded by the European Union, elevated bilateral deliberations between Iraqi stakeholders and their counterparts from neighboring countries on a regional level by raising some of the bilateral themes in a multilateral setting to explore avenues of cooperation in technical, cultural and political areas. This project ended in August 2021 at a very exciting regional moment: when

Iraq hosted the “Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership”. We, therefore, saw the essence of our project’s objective having come to life in an actual regional summit. From December 2021 onwards, we continued our Iraq-related work in the framework of a new project, funded by GIZ. Together with our partners in Stimson Europe (the former team of the no longer operational EastWest Institute’s MENA department) we focused on Iraq’s institutional landscape of think tanks, NGOs and research institutions working in socioeconomic development.

In our Iran-Saudi Dialogue Initiative, funded by the Swiss Federal Department for Foreign Affairs and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and for which we also join forces with Stimson Europe, we developed the format of one-on-one online tandems in order to allow our Iranian and Saudi participants to have more space to interact with each other and discuss themes that ranged from culture to academia, security, ideology, the role of external actors in the Middle East to environment and trade related issues. We are very happy that from October 2021, and after a short break, we have entered a new 18-months phase of this project.

Additionally, we at CARPO and our colleagues at Stimson Europe launched the Brussels MENA Briefing, a closed briefing format developed for the Brussels-based policy community to discuss Middle East related dynamics with speakers from the region and from Europe. Due to the pandemic, we only held the first briefing in-person in March 2020 and have continued them virtually thereafter. In addition to the projects briefly presented above, we have been active in smaller research projects and dialogue initiatives, all of which have been in line with our mission to “open enduring channels for trustful dialogue and interactive knowledge transfer”.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, the pandemic prevented us from physically convening regional stakeholders to in the framework of our activities. But in the course of the many online meetings, we witnessed genuine regional solidarity among them, as they regularly shared impressions on how life has been impacted by COVID-19 in their respective countries. With regards to the online formats, there was overall agreement among regional stakeholders, European partner organizations and the donor community that they cannot replace in-person dialogue settings. The limitations of online formats thus became apparent early on. First and foremost, the sense of confidentiality generated at our in-person workshops cannot be replicated in online formats. Concerns about online sessions being recorded or monitored by third parties were voiced time and again, and a significant number of regional stakeholders decided to either not engage in such formats, or preemptively announced their

inputs would be rather generic and less substantive. Trust building, too, which necessitates personal interaction online meetings cannot provide, is difficult or impossible to implement virtually. Bearing this in mind, we at CARPO conclude that online formats and platforms will be a useful tool in the future to complement in-person dialogue formats, particularly where they allow for the inclusion of stakeholders who would otherwise not be able to participate. We came to realize that participants who already know each other from in-person formats had comparably less hesitation to meet in online meetings. Similarly, technical topics with less political sensitivity are easier to be discussed in a virtual setting. Quick follow-ups and the continuation of exchanges initiated at in-person workshops can be easily set up and help maintain the momentum of exchange between in-person workshops.

Internally at CARPO, we also underwent important developments and changes. We were excited to welcome in our team Tobias Zumbrägel from November 2019 onwards and Julia Pickhardt from January 2020 to July 2021. Among other tasks, Julia introduced us to new facilitation methods for our manifold dialogue and mediation projects. Tobias has championed the launch of the CARPO Sustainability Series – a series of publications that aim to contribute to the slowly growing but still quite marginal research on sustainability in the Middle East and North Africa. In addition to Tobias and Julia, a group of greatly motivated student assistants joined us in 2020 and 2021. But with the pandemic taking over, we decided to shut down our office as of April 2020 and had to get used to working remotely. This forced us to further digitalize our communication structures and administrative processes – an experience that was made by many of our partner organizations, and it was wonderful to exchange lessons learned and best practices with them. While geographically separated and totally grounded in terms of mobility, there was a sense of connection to partners in the region and elsewhere as we all had to undergo a very new and, at times, surreal experience.

This surreal experience may have also led to some rethinking in the minds of political leaders of the region we are focused on. As 2020 came to an end, there were cautious signs and potentials of new political openings within the GCC (between Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar), as well as between Saudi Arabia and Iran. These dialogue channels, most of which had been hosted in Iraq, have continued in 2021 and have, indeed, created some hope for future with less tensions. In Yemen, too, new dynamics in the negotiations under the auspices of UN Special Envoy Hans Grundberg give ground for cautious hope. While the road towards the goal of a more peaceful future remains long and has many pitfalls, there are at least positive prospects on the horizon. Our dialogue projects have always aimed at developing concrete

and tangible ideas for cooperation between these regional states as well as within Yemen in order to be taken up and implemented immediately once the political climate allows for it. We at CARPO hope that these gradual openings may continue and may lead the region to de-escalation and diplomatic rapprochement in the near future.

To learn more about how we approach this goal, we would now like to invite you to browse through our Biannual Report 2020–2021. We appreciate your interest in what we do.

Sincerely,

The CARPO Executive Board

2 About CARPO

CARPO was founded in 2014 by Germany-based academics trained in the fields of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Political Science and Social Anthropology. Our work is situated at the nexus of research, consultancy and exchange with a focus on implementing projects in close cooperation and partnership with stakeholders in the Orient.

Mission

Our mission is to conduct independent research and analysis in partnership with experts from the Orient. We believe that a prosperous and peaceful future for the region can best be achieved through inclusive policy-making and economic investment that engages the creative and resourceful potential of all relevant actors. Therefore, CARPO opens enduring channels for interactive knowledge transfer between academics, citizens, civil society, entrepreneurs, and policymakers. Our network of researchers and experts establishes a functional interface between state, economy, and society to generate both context-specific and globally relevant knowledge.

Vision

Exploring and initiating sustainable cooperation and partnership with(in) the Orient.

Services

In order to reach our goals and to strengthen cooperation with our partners, CARPO offers a broad range of services:

- Research

CARPO brings together a network of researchers with distinguished expertise on countries of the Orient. We are well connected with researchers and research institutions in the region and familiar with pertinent fields of study. Through continuous presence in international workshops and conferences, our researchers follow and shape the global academic discourse on the region in various disciplines. CARPO offers to establish channels for academic exchange and knowledge transfer between researchers from the region and Europe by organizing conferences and workshops as well as initiatives and working sessions for joint publications.

- Consultancy

CARPO's country experts are specialized on policy-relevant dimensions of social, economic and political dynamics in specific country contexts. Thanks to their expertise and because of their access to influential social and political actors, our experts are able to work with and consult policy-makers working in and on the region. CARPO offers in-depth analyses of significant developments that help assessing current and future dynamics of respective country contexts. Based on these assessments, realistic future scenarios are produced and tangible policy recommendations formulated. CARPO also offers to explore prospects and potentials for entrepreneurial activities in the Orient. Our experts provide risk analyses, concepts for fact-finding missions and need assessments and, thereby, connect national and international entrepreneurs.

- Exchange

We are convinced that sustainable people-to-people relations are key to improving relations between Europe and the Orient. By generating exchange platforms for stakeholders to interact, gates for political, intercultural and inter-societal dialogue are opened. Citizen-oriented development – particularly in conflict-prone contexts – can only be fostered effectively by engaging societies and by enabling their participation in shaping the future of their countries. CARPO offers to design exchange projects that connect influential actors such as policymakers, academics and intellectuals, artists, religious figures, musicians or activists from different countries and regions in order to explore potential grounds for cooperation.

Active CARPO Projects in 2020 and 2021

Project	Project Period	Budget	Partners	Funded by
Rethinking Yemen's Economy (RYE)	03/2019 – 08/2021	1.188.287,00 EUR	DeepRoot Consulting, Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies	European Union/Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Yemen
Iranian-Saudi Track-II Dialogue Initiative	10/2019 – 06/2021 10/2021 – 03/2023	189.120,00 EUR 260.163,00 EUR	Stimson Europe (formerly EastWest Institute)	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (FDFA), Switzerland/Foreign Ministry of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Tafahum	10/2019 – 09/2021	1.716.178,00 EUR	Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF)	German Federal Foreign Office
Teaching and Advising on Post-Conflict Reconstruction*	05/2019 – 12/2020	195.812,00 EUR	Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies /University of Bonn, Gender-Development Research & Studies Center/Sana'a University	German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD)
Research Cooperation on Peacebuilding in Yemen	02/2019 – 01/2020	121.830,00 EUR	-	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development via Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)
Iraq and its Neighbours	06/2019 – 08/2021	600.000,00 EUR	Stimson Center Europe (formerly EastWest Institute)	European Union
Mapping Security Governance in Yemen	04/2020 – 02/2021	228.000,00 EUR	Yemen Polling Center (YPC)	Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development
Global Autocratic Collaboration in Times of COVID-19: Game Changer or Business as usual in Sino-Gulf Relations*	02/2021 – 07/2022	119.000,00 EUR	University of Erlangen, Institute of Political Science, Chair of Middle East Politics and Society/Albert-Ludwigs-University Freiburg	VolkswagenStiftung
kull:tour – Enhancing Cultural Dialogue between the Gulf States and Germany	10/2021 – 12/2021	47.444,00 EUR	-	German Federal Foreign Office
Tafahum wa Tabadul	12/2021 – 05/2023	904.430,00 EUR	Gulf Research Center Foundation (GRCF)	German Federal Foreign Office
Enhancing the Capacities and Capabilities of Iraq's Institutional Landscape	12/2021 – 06/2022	249.981,00 EUR	Stimson Europe	German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development via Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

* project lead not by CARPO

3 Projects

3.1 Enhancing the Capacities and Capabilities of Iraq's Institutional Landscape

3.1.1 Summary

Severe economic challenges impose enduring hardship on the livelihoods of the Iraqi populations. To help bridge the divide between the state and society and to support the process of socioeconomic development and reform, this project aimed to develop the capacities of relevant Iraqi government stakeholders, private research institutions, think tanks, and NGOs to act as an intermediary between state and society. It further assisted project participants to work jointly on a sustainability strategy for the promotion of dialogue and participation in Iraq that would contribute to policy reforms. After a thorough mapping and needs assessment, the implementing organizations defined tailored capacity-development measures and activities for Iraqi partners.

Project Duration

December 2021 – June 2022

Project Partner

Stimson Europe (formerly EastWest Institute)

3.2 Global Autocratic Collaboration in Times of COVID-19: Game Changer or Business as usual in Sino-Gulf Relations

3.2.1 Summary

There is strong empirical evidence that COVID-19 acts as a booster for processes of global autocratization in which autocratic protagonists present themselves as more effective role models in fighting the pandemic than the 'liberal script' of Western societies. This project aimed at explaining these corridors of autocratic collaboration based on the example of Sino-Gulf relations that challenge Europe's and Germany's international alliances and partnerships. The project consisted of two research blocs: Firstly, it dealt with the traveling of autocratic practices and asks how global autocratic collaboration manifests itself in times of crises. Secondly, the project addressed questions of competition for China's favor: How are regional actors competing in terms of their 'special relations' with China? The project is funded by the Volkswagen Foundation.

Project Duration

February 2021 – July 2022

Project Partner

- Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen-Nürnberg (lead partner)
- Albert-Ludwigs University of Freiburg

3.3 Iranian-Saudi Dialogue Initiative (ISDI)

3.3.1 Summary

Since 2015, CARPO has implemented an Iran-Saudi dialogue format in cooperation with the EastWest Institute in Brussels (now Stimson Europe). This initiative entails workshops and publications focusing on the exchange of perspectives on relevant issues between diplomats, policy analysts and security experts from both countries. A first project phase – funded by the German Ministry for Foreign Affairs through the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (ifa) – ran from 2015 to 2018. Throughout this period, numerous workshops on a broad variety of topics were implemented and their insights published through publicly [available](#). In 2019, the initiative entered its second phase and is now jointly funded by the Foreign Ministries of Switzerland and the Netherlands. In October 2021, both donors extended their funding until 2023. As in previous years, this initiative continued to bring together distinguished stakeholders from Tehran and Riyadh to exchange viewpoints and assessments on issues of shared interest and concern in the Middle East.

Project Duration

October 2015 – April 2023

Project Partner

Stimson Europe (formerly: EastWest Institute)

3.3.2 Events

Unsurprisingly, 2020 and 2021 held also for the Iran-Saudi Dialogue Initiative unexpected challenges. Originally, it was planned to organize two dialogue workshops until April 2021 with Iranian and Saudi participants in order to support trust building as well as knowledge exchange and production between them. Owed to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences for international travelling and conferences, CARPO had to re-think this approach. Instead of physical workshops, CARPO has been organizing a series of online consultations and has been setting up written exchange channels, allowing Iranian and Saudi participants to discuss relevant and timely topics such as environmental cooperation, post-pandemic economic relations and future visions of the Middle East in safe online spaces. As the regional climate remains volatile and tense, dialogue channels remain highly relevant. Owed to its flexible and proactive approach, the Iran-Saudi Dialogue Initiative has been able to adapt to the current situation and continues to contribute to ongoing de-escalation efforts.

In order to keep the dialogue channels intact and to continue the exchange, even in times of the pandemic, the Iran-Saudi Dialogue Initiative managed to bring Iranian and Saudi stakeholders together virtually, showing that such dialogue is possible against all odds. By applying an innovative online tandem format, the project fulfilled its original objective to generate both knowledge exchange as well as trust-building. Furthermore, this initiative produced insightful and highly topical written outputs that do not only provide critical assessments of current dynamics and developments in the Persian Gulf region but also proposed concrete ideas and recommendations for further dialogue and cooperation between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

3.4 Iraq and its Neighbors (IAN)

3.4.1 Summary

In June 2019, CARPO and the EastWest Institute (now Stimson Europe) started their EU-funded project 'Iraq and its Neighbours – Enhancing Dialogue and Regional Integration in West Asia'. The project envisioned Iraq as the center point for regional dialogue and cooperation, rather than as a theater of regional proxy wars and conflict. It implemented a series of bilateral and multilateral workshops to facilitate dialogue between civil society advisors from Iraq and its immediate neighbours Turkey, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Kuwait, with the aim of identifying and operationalizing tangible avenues for cooperation and coordination on issues of shared interest and concern. Also, the current and future role of the European Union, both in Iraq and the region as a whole, were continuously discussed.

Given the restrictions on travel and face-to-face meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the project had to move its activities to the virtual sphere from April 2020 onward. Based on the dynamic that was created during the project activities in the first months of 2020, the momentum was maintained by continued online exchanges, virtual workshops and ongoing conversations by phone, email and social media. All stakeholders – especially those in Iraq and its neighbouring countries – showed an enormous willingness to continue on this path and to work for increasing regional dialogue and cooperation. The year 2021 continued with more virtual events and a focus on stakeholder outreach in Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Saudi-Arabia, Turkey and Iran. In order to clearly outline how the influential foreign policy communities of Iraq's neighbouring envision the future of political affairs in Iraq, CARPO and Stimson Europe held focused policy outreach web calls and produced concise read-outs/policy documents on how the neighbouring capitals view the political developments in Iraq. The project ended in August 2021 after a concluding conference in Brussels.

Project Duration

June 2019 – August 2021

Project Partner

Stimson Europe (formerly EastWest Institute)

3.4.2 Events

Workshop “Deliberations on Iraq-Turkey Relations” (February 2020, Ankara)

This workshop pursued the aim of developing an update on themes of shared interest and concern between Baghdad and Turkey, and shed light on interdependencies on the one hand, and potential avenues for broadened relations and cooperation on the other hand. Furthermore, it established how Iraqi – Turkish relations play into regional dynamics and vice versa. Important discussed topics were the countries security relations, the shared reconstruction of ISIS liberated areas, possibilities for shared water management and possible progress in the people-to-people relations.

Virtual Session “Political affairs between Iraq and Saudi Arabia” (June 2020)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop in Saudi Arabia could not take place. It was replaced with two online-consultations. The first consultation discussed political matters concerning the two countries, including border security, counter-terrorism, as well as possible shared research and knowledge-production processes to overcome misperceptions between the two countries

Virtual Session “Economic affairs between Iraq and Saudi Arabia” (October 2020)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop in Saudi Arabia could not take place. It was replaced with two online-consultations. In the second online consultation the focus was on economic affairs. Shared interests in the fields of energy, trade and agriculture as well as religious tourism were discussed.

Virtual Session “Deliberations on Relations between Iraq and Iran” (September 2020)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop in Iran could not take place. It was replaced with two online-consultations. In the first consultation, the way towards a strategic dialogue between the two countries was discussed. Due to their close ties and interdependencies, both countries are interested in the other country’s sustainable stability.

Virtual Session “Deliberations on Relations between Iraq and Iran” (October 2020)

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the workshop in Iran could not take place. It was replaced with two online-consultations. The second consultation revisited the outcomes of the first consultation, further emphasizing the need for a strategic dialogue between Iraq and Iran.

Online Consultation with European Experts “How to Advance EU Engagement in Iraq and its Neighbourhood” (February 2021)

An essential part of the project’s deliberations has been to define which role the European Union (EU) can play to initiate, incentivize and facilitate regional dialogue in West Asia. To better assess the feasibility of ideas that were developed with regional stakeholders, CARPO and Stimson Europe gathered a group of renowned European policy experts with distinguished knowledge about regional affairs and EU policies. This online consultation took place in February 2021 and was widely appreciated by the participating experts.

Online Academic Exchange on “Iraq’s National Security in a Shifting Regional Context: Role of Academia in Enhancing Peace Building and Strengthening Regional Cooperation” (June 2021)

On Monday, 7 June 2021, the College of Political Science at al-Nahrain University in Baghdad, Stimson Europe and CARPO hosted a conference on Iraq’s national security in a shifting regional context with a focus on how academia can contribute to regional stability and cooperation. The online event was attended by high-level Iraqi leaders and officials, experts, academics, and students from Iraq (in person), as well as experts from Saudi Arabia, Iran, Kuwait and Jordan (virtually). This event served as the first ‘follow-up activity’ of the initial workshop phase and constituted the first outcome of exchanges between academics from Iraq with their counterparts in the context of this project.

Concluding Conference “Enhancing Dialogue and Regional Integration in West Asia” (July 2021, Brussels)

The concluding conference held in Brussels on 13 and 14 July 2021 brought together in a hybrid format key stakeholders from Iraq, the region and Europe, who had been involved in this project. Given the promising success of Iraq in hosting Iran-Saudi security talks in Baghdad and the overall regional trend toward de-escalation and détente, the participants dived deep into the evolving regional role of Iraq, to what extent bilateral ties between Iraq and its neighbours have shifted, and whether the vision of Iraq as a center for regional dialogue remained a distant objective or might be achievable in the not-too-distant future.

3.5 kull:tour – Enhancing Cultural Dialogue between the Gulf States and Germany

3.5.1 Summary

To enhance Gulf-German cultural dialogue, CARPO implemented this German Federal Foreign Office-funded project in late 2021. Its main activity was a workshop in December 2021 that brought together artists from the Gulf Arab States and Germany. Due to travel restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the event took place in a virtual format. The workshop offered the participants the opportunity to exchange ideas about their cultural commitment in the areas of culture and realities of life, culture and sustainability and culture in everyday life. As a result of this workshop, concrete ideas for joint cultural projects were developed that brought together German and Gulf Arabian perspectives and insights. It is intended to realize these ideas at a later stage.

Project Duration

October 2021 – December 2021

3.6 Mapping Security Governance in Yemen

3.6.1 Summary

The objective of this research project was to map local security structures in al-Hudayda, Ta'iz and Aden with the goal of formulating recommendations on transitional security governance in support of the efforts of the UN Special Envoy to Yemen. We sought to determine whether and how existing institutions can contribute to the implementation of both local agreements as well as a comprehensive peace or ceasefire agreement. This project was implemented in partnership with the Yemen Policy Center (YPC) and funded through the Peace and Stabilization Operations Program (PSOPS) of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development.

Project Duration

April 2020 – February 2021

Project Partner

Yemen Policy Center (YPC)

3.6.2 Events

YPC/CARPO Briefing on Local Security Governance in Time of War (21 April 2021)

On 21 April 2021, Mareike Transfeld, Mohamed al-Iriani, Maged Sultan and Marie-Christine Heinze held a briefing for invited members of the international and Yemeni community focusing on the security sector, including representatives from the OSESGY, to introduce them to the findings of the YPC/CARPO Policy Report published a week earlier. The presentations touched on the objectives and methodology of the research, specific findings from the three governorates under investigation (al-Hudayda, Ta'iz and Aden) and findings on women's and girls' security concerns in Yemen.

3.6.3 Publications

YPC/CARPO Policy Report: Local Security Governance in Yemen in Times of War. The Cases of al-Hudayda, Ta'iz and Aden

by Mareike Transfeld, Mohamed al-Iriani, Maged Sultan and Marie-Christine Heinze

After six years of war, state institutions in Yemen have fragmented along multiple fault lines. The security sector is no exception. Given their role as central nodes of the country's security governance structure, this Policy Report

explores governorate-level Security Committees in three governorates that have been particularly affected by violence and institutional fragmentation: Ta'iz, al-Hudayda and Aden. Next to seeking to understand the institutional set-up and functions of the Committees, questions guiding this Report are how the Committees have evolved in the context of state fragmentation and what, if any, capacities they have to play a potential role in local-level mediation (for instance, regarding humanitarian access) or transitional security governance arrangements.

Online available

3.7 Research Cooperation on Peacebuilding in Yemen

3.7.1 Summary

This ongoing initiative seeks to develop the capacities of Yemeni and international researchers and organizations in researching and advising on peacebuilding in Yemen. Within its framework, an ongoing series of publications, each resulting from a Yemeni-international research partnership, on aspects of peacebuilding in Yemen is developed and published. The initiative is implemented on behalf of Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH and co-financed by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and the European Union.

Project Duration

February 2019 – ongoing

Project Partners

- Amran University
- Gender-Development Research & Studies Center (GDRSC), Sana'a University
- Itar for Social Development
- Yemen Polling Center (YPC)
- Youth Without Borders Organization for Development (YWBOD)

3.7.2 Publications

CARPO Brief 19: The Role of the Private Sector in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Tarek Barakat, Ali al-Jarbani and Laurent Bonnefoy

This Brief analyzes the state of the private sector in Yemen during the ongoing war and explores its potential to contribute to the country's peace requirements. It presents challenges entrepreneurs face and the potential contribution of these in sectors that are central to the construction and sustainability of peace. It highlights the fact that their actions and capacity to offer jobs and revenue to the Yemeni population are constrained by the fragmentation of authority and the resultant lack of transparency. It also demonstrates that the focus on regional and international aid has left many entrepreneurs feeling abandoned and helpless.

Online available

CARPO Brief 18: The Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Abdulkarim Qassim, Loay Amin, Mareike Transfeld and Ewa Strzelecka

The current political and economic conditions in Yemen make it difficult for CSOs to continue functioning on an effective level, while a lack of human and organizational capacity are hampering project results. Nevertheless, Yemeni CSOs contribute to peace requirements in various sectors and remain an important actor in the Yemeni civic sphere. In a context in which conflict parties are not willing to compromise and media contributes to escalating violence, actors that uphold the principles of human rights, political participation and peace are most likely to be found in the realm of civil society. For civil society to be able to contribute to peacebuilding and future reconstruction efforts, now is the time for international organizations to support CSOs and invest seriously into their human and organizational capacity building.

Online available

CARPO Brief 17: The Role of Youth in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Maged al-Kholidy, Yazeed al-Jeddawy and Kate Nevens

Despite its major transformative potential, local level youth work is often overlooked by mainstream international discourses on national level peace processes and violent conflict. This Brief sheds light on young peoples' activism before and during the war, the challenges they are currently facing, their visions for the future of Yemen and the kind of support they need. The contributions of young men and women to the economy, politics, culture and society, security and justice, education and the environment show how youth are laying the groundwork for peace and social cohesion in their communities.

Online available

Brief 16: The Role of the Media in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Fatima Saleh, Scott Preston and Mareike Transfeld

The increased political capture of the Yemeni media since 2014 has reinforced diverging political discourses and has contributed to polarization across society and to political fragmentation. Practitioners face steep challenges in composing professional stories. Journalists are subject to harassment, intimidation, abduction and violence. Yet, Yemeni journalists remain hopeful of the prospect of media reform and are eager to detail the prerequisites for proactive change. Encouraging the development of independent news outlets, independent funding and capacity-building activities could enable the Yemeni media to contribute to better mutual understanding, de-escalation and the requirements for peace.

Online available

CARPO Brief 14: The Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Iman al-Gawfi, Bilkis Zabara and Stacey Philbrick Yadav

Yemeni women are laying foundations for sustainable peace through everyday practices that have the capacity to help transform the landscape of women's rights in the post-war period. Wider recognition of women's paid and unpaid work in wartime, and the conditions that enable it, could improve the social cohesion, economic stability, and human security necessary for sustainable peace. Based on research conducted in the summer and fall of 2019, this CARPO/GDRSC Brief reviews variations in women's experience of conflict and participation in everyday peacebuilding in different parts of the country, advocates for an entitlement-based approach that recognizes women's agency, supports women's diverse aims, and works to leverage their existing contributions in support of sustainable peace.

Online available

3.8 Rethinking Yemen's Economy (RYE)

3.8.1 Summary

The Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative aims to contribute to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, (economic) stabilization and sustainable development in Yemen by building consensus in crucial policy areas through engaging and promoting informed Yemeni voices (the 'Development Champions') from all backgrounds in the public discourse on development, economy and post-conflict reconstruction in Yemen and by positively influencing local, regional and international development agendas. The project is implemented by CARPO, DeepRoot Consulting and the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies. It is funded in equal parts by the European Union and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Yemen.

In 2020–21, most of the events planned for this year – except the Development Champions Forum, which took place in Amman in January – could not be implemented due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In order to maintain momentum among the Development Champions, continue to provide in-depth research and pertinent recommendations, and ensure the sustainability of the Development Champions as a group, we adapted our activities to the new situation by:

Implementing several virtual meetings among the Development Champions;

Conducting a series of online briefings for an international audience with participation from among the Development Champions;

Increasing the number of research projects and respective consultations with the Development Champions and other Yemeni experts on the respective topics;

And working on the institutionalization of the Development Champions Forum, amongst others by hiring a Secretary General.

Project Duration

March 2017 – August 2021

Project Partners

- DeepRoot Consulting
- Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies (Sana'a Center)

3.8.2 Events

Development Champions Forum VI (January 2020, Amman)

The Development Champions Forum held its sixth meeting as part of the Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative on January 25–27, 2020, in Amman, Jordan. The Development Champions discussed critical economic priorities for a peace agreement, the priorities of the electricity sector in Yemen, and ways to improve the efficiency of local governance. The Development Champions highlighted that the sustainability of a peace agreement in Yemen depends on access to resources and macroeconomic stability. They stressed that these factors will support or undermine peace during the fragile post-conflict transition phase and therefore they must be addressed head-on during negotiations. The Forum also examined the current and pre-war state of the electricity sector, identifying key emerging challenges and exploring practical options for interventions in this sector. Discussing local governance, the Champions highlighted the importance of local councils in holding communities together and in governing at the local level, despite their weaknesses. They also surveyed the challenges faced by local authorities in the new wartime realities, and proposed solutions and recommendations to address these.

As an outcome of this Forum, a policy brief exploring economic priorities in the peace agreement as well as white papers on the electricity sector and local governance in Yemen were produced (see below).

G2K-RYE Webinar on 'Economic Dimensions of the Conflict in Yemen' (04 June 2020)

This webinar, co-implemented with The Gulf/2000 project at Columbia University, focused on the economic dimensions of the conflict in Yemen. Two representatives of the Development Champions, Jeehan Abdulghaffar and Mohammed Shihab, as well as Rafat al-Akhali of one of RYE's co-implementing partners, DeepRoot Consulting, presented on the impact of the war on the economy, challenges of the business community during the war and economic priorities for sustainable peace in Yemen. Amongst others, the speakers emphasized the need to create conditions for sustainable development and peacebuilding by combining emergency humanitarian relief efforts with development aid, empowering local actors and investing in human capital; to take the necessary measures to ensure that national monetary policies become more viable and effective; and to ensure that a peace agreement in Yemen is sustainable by taking into account the economic drivers of the war and addressing them in the peace-making process.

Virtual Briefing to the Netherlands Embassy to Yemen (01 October 2020)

This virtual briefing to the Netherlands Embassy was held to introduce the RYE initiative to the incoming Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, HE Peter-Derek Hof, and to present some of the findings and recommendations of the Development Champions Forum and respective research conducted by the implementing partners to the team at the Netherlands Embassy. Presentations focused on the impact of the war on SMEs, fuel and local power dynamics and power & electricity. Amongst others, the speakers emphasized the need for economic policy reforms to improve the operating environment of SMEs and create better access to affordable financing for SMEs and to use the opportunities created by the global COVID-19 pandemic to build back better in the Yemeni power and electricity sector.

RYE/Brussels MENA Briefing on 'The Economic Dimensions of the Conflict in Yemen' (06 October 2020)

The Brussels MENA Briefings are in-depth, invite-only roundtable discussions on topics of current significance in the MENA region, co-hosted by CARPO and the Stimson Europe and held in Brussels on the first week of every second month. Beginning of October 2020, RYE was a co-host at this Briefing. The speakers of this briefing were Laila Tawfik Anaam, Development Champion and co-founder and managing director of the Yemen Loan Guarantee Program at the Social Fund for Development in Yemen, and Rafat al-Akhali, founder and managing director of DeepRoot Consulting, implementing partner at RYE. CARPO President Marie-Christine Heinze moderated the session.

The speakers explained that approximately 40% of Yemeni households have lost their primary source of income in both the private and public sectors. Fisheries and agricultural entrepreneurs in particular had been hit hard by the devastating effects of the war. In addition to that it was outlined that the banking sector has effectively collapsed and that the monetary system has become dysfunctional. Both speakers referred to the severe consequences caused by the split of the Central Bank of Yemen, which has led to conflicting monetary policies. It was highlighted that those government agencies that provided regular income for both public servants as well as recipients of social welfare have either halted or interrupted their services.

Laila Anaam shed light on the grim prospects for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Yemen, which are heavily impacted by closures of and restrictions at sea and airports as well as land border crossings, which make any form of cross-border trade extremely difficult and cost-intensive. Mobility within Yemen has been reduced massively, it was pointed out, because of the country's infrastructure – i.e. roads, bridges, tunnels, etc. – being destroyed during the war and because of the high number of checkpoints and

lines of conflict that need to be crossed. Basic needs of businesses, such as electricity, pose serious challenges for entrepreneurs, it was explained. They are dependent on (private) generators which too often cannot operate due to fuel shortages in the country. What SMEs in Yemen direly need, according to Laila Anaam, is a legal framework which enables them to operate at sea and airports and border crossings, an overall easing of taxation and the establishment of supporting microfinance institutions with lending capital. It was reiterated that the agricultural sector (fishery, livestock, etc.) should be prioritized in this effort as this would help to address food insecurity.

In general, the war should be seen through the lens of economy, Rafat al-Akhali argued. He explained that the conflict is a battle for the “commanding heights” of the country’s economic resources and institutions. He also highlighted that there are currently no real economic incentives for any party to stop the war. It is hence important, it was established, that any peace agreement for Yemen entail a clear roadmap for economic stability. The ongoing UN-led peace efforts, it was argued, fall short of addressing the economic drivers of the conflict. What needs to be put on the agenda, Rafat al-Akhali urged, is the need to re-establish one Central Bank, ensure the resumption of the payment of public sector salaries, define a way to reach an agreement on how to allocate natural resources revenues, and to clearly outline the path towards reconstruction and economic recovery. While this is a major task, the speaker recalled precedents and blueprints of similar approaches in the past, namely the Dayton Accords and their focus on the Central Bank board and governor in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Accra Agreement which entailed a Governance Reform Commission and a Contract and Monopolies Commission, and the case of Angola, where economic power-sharing in the Cabinda Province was part of the conflict settlement strategies.

It was recommended by both speakers that for the European Union to play a role in conflict-resolution in Yemen, these economic factors not only serve as important issues to raise, but as points of departure for European initiatives to support the Yemeni process through diplomacy, aid, investment, capacity-building and efforts for reconstruction and reconciliation.

Development Champions Forum VII (January 2021, implemented virtually)

The Development Champions Forum held its seventh meeting as part of the Rethinking Yemen’s Economy initiative on 25–27 January 2021. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, this DCF was implemented virtually. The Development Champions discussed the local economic environment and improving productivity as well as the topic of public debt. As an outcome of this Forum, Policy Brief 23 Local Economic Councils. A Tool to Improve Business

Productivity in Yemen was published on 06 September 2021 and a further policy brief on public debt is forthcoming.

Media Call with the Development Champions on 'Yemen's Economy and Paths to Peace Six Years On' (22 February 2021, held virtually)

This off-the-record media call brought three Development Champions, Jamila Ali Rajaa, Ali al-Hibshi and Mohammed Shihab, together with international media to discuss Yemen's economic decline six years into the conflict and the war's impact on Yemen's population. The discussion was moderated by Osama Al-Rawhani. The Development Champions presented the most pressing challenges to the Yemeni economy including the drivers behind the deterioration of the economic situation, as well as the impact of the war on the Yemeni people, in particular Yemeni women. The Development Champions emphasized the need for economic issues to be addressed as part of the UN-led peace process and future political agreements.

Consultative Meeting with the IMF (17 May 2021, held virtually)

On 17 May 2021, the Development Champions Forum held a consultative meeting with the International Monetary Fund, at the request of the IMF prior to their meetings and dialogue with the Yemeni government between 24 May and 3 June 2021. The discussion was productive and focused on two main points: a) existing challenges and assessing the economic and humanitarian situation; and b) the potential support of the International Monetary Fund for the macroeconomic stability policies. The Fund's officials presented a brief overview of their work and the aim of the consultations and dialogue with Yemeni organizations, experts and the Yemeni government to understand and evaluate the current economic and humanitarian conditions and how the IMF can provide future support on the short-and-medium-term prospects. The DCF team briefed the IMF on RYE program and subsequently discussed the challenges as well as the opportunities of the current realities and developments on the ground. The DCF highlighted the importance of working with official authorities on the issue of foreign debt. The Development Champions also noted the concerns associated with the rapid decline of the local currency and the importance of supporting its stability against the dollar, as it is pivotal to alleviating the suffering of the people. The DCF team also stressed the importance of supporting the vital role of the private sector as it is the largest operator in providing goods as well as jobs and emphasized the importance of maintaining a suitable environment and conditions for this sector to cultivate its full potential. The DCF noted that there is a need to take effective measures and build constructive programs to improve governance. The DCF offered to support the International Monetary Fund in bridging the gap between the conflicting sides through active dialogues to support a

convergence of views, particularly in the socioeconomic area. In closing, the IMF team expressed their desire to continue the conversation with the Forum and to benefit from its experiences and resources.

Briefing with the US Special Envoy to Yemen (16 July 2021, held virtually)

On Friday, 16 July 2021, representatives of the DCF held a virtual briefing with US Special Envoy to Yemen Mr. Tim Lenderking and his team to discuss the importance of economic issues, their relevance to the peace process and as a fundamental post-conflict stabilization factor. During the meeting, the Champions emphasized the need to prioritize self-sustaining economic growth in Yemen over its dependence on humanitarian aid and the need to find solutions to economic grievances to ensure durable and sustainable relief by providing support and empowering respective efforts of Yemeni communities, the private sector and other local institutions. Accordingly, they recommended that the US focus its efforts on macroeconomic stabilization and on fostering local capacities and initiatives, thus contributing to keeping hope alive. The Champions also highlighted challenges to the peace process, particularly the weaponization of the economy and the financial system by both parties to the conflict, which is a key driver for prolonging the conflict and incentivizing the war economy. In order to address this, the DCF called for a stronger international focus, including of the US and the UN Special Envoys, on economic stabilization, amongst others by engaging more Yemenis and by building on the work that Yemenis are already doing. On his part, Special Envoy Tim Lenderking noted that the economic factors in the current situation are real and need to be addressed, amongst others by recognizing economic grievances and economic drivers of the conflict. He also emphasized the need of the conversation to become more inclusive. The Special Envoy and the DCF agreed to continue the constructive conversation.

Technical Consultations between the OECD and the Development Champions (16 September and 27 October 2021, held virtually)

On 16 September and 27 October 2021, three virtual technical consultations were held between the OECD and the Development Champions to support the OECD's EU-funded 'Promoting Economic Resilience in Yemen' project, discussing the following topics: the economic and financial context: challenges and the way forward; public governance: public budgeting with a specific focus on anti-corruption; and public-private dialogue. These meetings with the Development Champions were attended by more than fifteen OECD staff in total and were intended to inform the drafting of capacity-building activities to be implemented within the OECD project.

Three technical consultation meeting between the Development Champions and US stakeholders (7–9 December 2021, held virtually)

Three virtual technical consultation meetings organized by the DCF Secretary General in coordination with the team of the US Special Envoy were held with the Development Champions between 7–9 December 2021, centering on the following topics: public governance; Yemeni Riyal depreciation; and medium to long-term growth opportunities. The meetings were intended to inform the US strategy towards Yemen and were attended by staff of the US Special Envoy, the US Embassy to Yemen and USAID. Furthermore, the DCF Secretary General facilitated and coordinated a one-on-one meeting between the US Special Envoy on Yemen and former Governor of CBY Aden and Development Champion, Mohammed Zemam (see [Twitter post](#)).

3.8.3 Publications

All RYE publications are available in English and Arabic.

Rethinking Yemen’s Economy Policy Brief 18: Developing Human Capital

This Policy Brief summarizes discussions regarding Yemen’s human capital at a ‘Rethinking Yemen’s Economy’ workshop held in Amman, Jordan, on August 24–25, 2019. The workshop participants agreed that many of the obstacles to improving Yemen’s human capital were present prior to the current conflict. This Policy Brief thus recommends: countrywide population surveys; more funding of development projects over emergency humanitarian assistance; education reforms; and the targeting of sectors with high human capital returns. Crucially, policymakers should not wait for the end of the conflict to implement these recommendations.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen’s Economy Policy Brief 19: Developing Yemen’s Fishing Industry

This policy brief summarizes discussions regarding Yemen’s fishing industry at a ‘Rethinking Yemen’s Economy’ workshop held in al-Mukalla, Yemen, on November 26–28, 2019. The workshop participants, among them numerous stakeholders in the fishing industry from across Yemen, agreed that given the inability of the Ministry of Fish Wealth to carry out its basic institutional functions due to the ongoing conflict, it is crucial that the ministry’s executive privileges for short-term policy making and regulation be temporarily delegated to local councils and that they be empowered to regulate the industry

during the conflict. The participants also identified longer-term policies for the government and international stakeholders to revitalize the industry and enhance its capabilities.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy White Paper 06: Microfinance in Yemen. An Overview of Challenges and Opportunities

This White Paper explores the historic development of Yemen's microfinance industry and its players, as well as the impacts of the ongoing conflict. This analysis is followed by recommendations that address four specific areas – capacity building, financing, program design and research – to help create a more conducive operating environment for microfinance overall. The objective is to better place the industry to achieve its socioeconomic aims in the near term and contribute to Yemen's recovery post conflict.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy Policy Brief 20: Economic Priorities for a Sustainable Peace Agreement in Yemen

The sustainability of a peace agreement in Yemen will, amongst others, depend on two critical insights: First, in a conflict that is largely over access to resources, the issues of distribution and control of those resources can make or break peace. Second, where peace agreements lack provisions that create overall economic stability, warfare can resume during the fragile implementation period. At the sixth Development Champions Forum in Amman, Jordan, from 25 to 27 January 2020, the Development Champions therefore focused on identifying urgent macroeconomic, fiscal, and monetary issues that pose a direct threat to the successful implementation of any peace agreement in Yemen. This Policy Brief summarizes their key recommendations on economic provisions that need to be included in the peace agreement.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy Flash Report 01: Deterioration of the Foreign Exchange Rate of the Yemeni Rial

The Development Champions Forum held multiple online discussions in the period from 20–24 June 2020 to discuss the reasons behind the recent deterioration in the foreign exchange rate of the Yemeni rial. The Champions also discussed possible immediate interventions that can be applied by the concerned parties to curb the rial's depreciation against foreign currencies. This Flash Report presents a summary of those discussions and the resulting recommendations.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy White Paper 07: Yemen's Accelerating Economic Woes during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Since early 2015, Yemen has been almost completely dependent on three external sources to secure foreign currency inflows and stimulate economic activity: foreign humanitarian aid, Saudi financial support to the internationally recognized government, and – by far the most significant – remittances from Yemeni expatriates, most working in Saudi Arabia. All three of these foreign currency sources have dramatically declined in 2020 because of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The current acute shortage of foreign currency has profound implications for the value of Yemen's domestic currency, and the country's ability to finance fuel and basic commodity imports. This is likely to lead to the rapid intensification of the humanitarian crisis. This White Paper presents policy recommendations to address this situation for relevant national and international stakeholders.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy Policy Brief 21: Impacts of the War on the Telecommunications Sector in Yemen

The telecommunications and information technology sector in Yemen is the second largest source of public revenue after the petroleum sector, and contributes important work opportunities, whether directly or indirectly, through its connections to other sectors of the national economy. Some of the most challenges of the sector are the unsuitability of the legal and institutional regulatory environments; fragmentation of public entities in the sector; the lack of separation between political, regulatory and operational roles within the sector; and the reliance on a weak and fragile infrastructure to provide these services. This Policy Brief identifies urgent as well as medium to long-term policies and programs to address these and other challenges identified in the paper.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy Policy Brief 22: Solar-Powered Irrigation in Yemen: Opportunities, Challenges and Policies

Yemen is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world. Its agricultural sector is the dominant user of groundwater resources, accounting for around 90 percent of total consumption. Due to the current crisis, fuel required for pumps has become scarce and very expensive; as a result, solar energy has begun to play a role in the extraction and supply of groundwater for irrigation. However, there is concern about possible negative consequences of this new technology. This Policy Brief examines the current trend of solar-powered irrigation system (SPIS) use in Sana'a Basin, identifying the pros and cons of

this approach. It proposes governance and policy recommendations for overall water management and for future studies and regulation of SPIS-driven groundwater use.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy White Paper 08/Policy Brief 24: Priorities for the Recovery and Reform of the Electricity Sector in Yemen

Poor electricity services in Yemen, even before the war, have been one of the key barriers to sustainable economic development and basic service provision (e.g., water supply, health care, education). This paper assesses the power supply system status prior to the war and subsequently discusses the impact of the war on electricity sector performance, followed by an identification of the key barriers faced by the sector. It concludes with the identification of the top priorities for restoring electricity sector services and reforming the sector after the war.

Online available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy Policy Brief 23: Local Economic Councils: A Tool to Improve Business Productivity in Yemen

To help address local economic challenges, the Development Champions discussed the possibility of establishing Local Economic Councils. According to their analysis, between the community-level local development committees and the Supreme Economic Council on the national level, a space exists for a governorate-level body to drive development by guiding investment to serve local needs and strengthen ties between the governorates and the private sector.

Online Available

Rethinking Yemen's Economy White Paper 09: Improving Relations Between Central State Institutions and Local Authorities

Local councils are responsible for spearheading development projects and providing basic public services to Yemen's population of more than 30 million people. The councils are particularly important in rural areas, where about 70 percent of Yemen's population lives. In July 2018, the Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative published a White Paper that explored how the collapse of Yemen's economy and the fragmentation of central government institutions during the war affected local councils. This new White Paper builds on those findings by examining how local governance has evolved in the intervening years, with a focus on the relationship between local authorities and the central governments in Sana'a and Aden.

Online available

3.8.4 Videos and Animations

Videos

Corruption in Yemen (08.01.2020)

Corruption, or the abuse of power for private gain, has been deeply entrenched in the Yemeni political economy for decades. Over the course of the ongoing conflict, however, state capture in Yemen has become far more complex, and new patronage networks have emerged with interests that have extended across national borders and crossed the frontlines of the war themselves, indicating collusion among supposed adversaries. As greater numbers and a wider variety of actors profit from illicit activity in the war economy, vested economic interests in continued conflict become more entrenched. Given the multifaceted pervasiveness of corruption in Yemen, any anti-corruption agenda must aim to understand the complex configuration of patronage networks in Yemen, to be introduced gradually, and to get the buy-in of as wide a group of Yemenis as possible.

[View video](#)

Animations

Restructuring Public Finances in Yemen (24.02.2020)

Even before the current conflict, Yemen's public finances suffered from an overdependence on energy exports, one of the lowest tax collection rates in the world, and chronic budget and balance of payments deficits. The ongoing conflict has complicated an already dire situation. Energy exports have almost collapsed, while general economic and state collapse saw a precipitous decline in tax revenues. Public debt has thus risen, while the fracturing of state institutions across frontlines has hobbled public revenue collection as well as fiscal and monetary policy. In this infographic, these challenges are highlighted and urgent and long overdue deep structural reforms to Yemen's collapsing public finances are recommended.

[View animation](#)

Reforming the Business and Investment Climate (24.02.2020)

The surest means of laying the foundations for private sector recovery in Yemen, and indeed recovery for the country overall, is to end the ongoing conflict and reunify public institutions and governance mechanisms. While the conflict is ongoing, however, there are still practical, realistic steps national and international stakeholders can take to support the Yemeni private sector.

Doing so would in turn help spur economic growth and job creation for a destitute population. It would also potentially initiate a cascade of positive developments in Yemen: easing the humanitarian crisis, bolstering socio-economic and political stability, and restarting formal financial cycles, among others.

[View animation](#)

Developing Human Capital (07.04.2020)

Human capital in Yemen has long been at the lowest levels across all indicators due to the successive conflicts in the country and the weak investment in human development. Over five years since the onset of the ongoing war in Yemen, human capital accumulation has continued to regress. This video emphasizes that human capital is the foundation of development and the essence of the economic prosperity of future generations and stresses that continued neglect of investment in human capital will inevitably continue to undermine sustainable development in Yemen.

[View animation](#)

Developing Yemen's Fishing Industry (29.07.2020)

Yemen's fisheries sector holds untapped promise in contributing to the national economy, with a coastline of more than 2,500 kilometers and rich fishing grounds offshore. Yet the sector has long faced many structural challenges that have limited its production and potential contribution to overall economic output, which have been exacerbated during the ongoing conflict. This infographic provides an overview of the industry's most important challenges as well as recommendations about how the sector could be developed now and in the future.

[View animation](#)

Microfinance in Yemen (27.08.2020)

Since its introduction to Yemen in 1997, microfinance has been viewed as a strategic tool to alleviate poverty and reduce unemployment, for it provided a means for the financial inclusion and economic empowerment of small and micro entrepreneurs by expanding financial services to them. However, persistent challenges facing the microfinance industry have stunted its development, reach within the population, and overall socioeconomic impact. To better place the industry to achieve its socioeconomic aims in the near term and contribute to Yemen's recovery post-conflict, the Development Champions Forum puts forth several recommendations in four areas, namely, capacity building, financing, program design, and research.

[View animation](#)

Economic Priorities for a Sustainable Peace Agreement in Yemen (19.10.2020)

The Development Champions Forum stresses that the sustainability of a peace agreement in Yemen will, amongst others, depend on two critical insights: First, in a conflict that is largely over access to resources, the issues of distribution and control of those resources can make or break peace. Second, where peace agreements lack provisions that create overall economic stability, warfare can resume during the fragile implementation period. This infographic summarizes the Development Champions' key recommendations on economic provisions that need to be included in the peace agreement.

[View animation](#)

3.9 Tafahum

3.9.1 Summary

This project started in September 2018 and was set up as a 3-year initiative that sought to develop a roadmap for regional security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula – a region that includes the GCC states, Iran, Iraq and Yemen. The project aimed at generating an overall “understanding” (or tafahum) among regional stakeholders on a joined process towards regional security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP). In the course of this project, workshops and other dialogue fora, resulting in publications, paved the way to constructing ideational pillars for an overall agreement of how to define a regional security architecture. Tafahum was implemented in cooperation with the Gulf Research Center Foundation and funded by the German Federal Foreign Office. As an initial step, security experts from the main regional and extra-regional stakeholders were convened in Vienna end of 2018 to elaborate on their countries’ respective security priorities. Throughout 2019, five working groups assembled experts from the GCC states, Iran, Iraq and Yemen, along with regional experts from Europe. Groups and discussions were assigned per the following themes:

1. Trade and Energy
2. Environmental Issues and Climate Change
3. Security Sector Reform and Counter Terrorism
4. Media Narratives and Discursive Integration
5. Reconstruction Efforts in Yemen, Iraq and Syria

All results produced in the working groups will lay the basis for the development of a roadmap to regional security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula.

As in other projects, the pandemic forced CARPO and the project partners to rethink their activities and to continuously adapt to the developing situation. The German Foreign Ministry’s indispensable support and flexibility allowed for setting up the necessary digital infrastructure to maintain the project’s momentum and to continue in bringing all involved stakeholders together. From a very early stage onward, workshops were held online and face-to-face meetings were replaced by virtual consultations. Whenever the situation allowed for it, hybrid workshops were implemented with a limited number of participants joining on the ground in Bonn and others participating online.

The project was brought to a close in November 2021 after a brief no-cost extension to examine current developments in Iraq and Afghanistan and their repercussions for the WAAP region. It was continued as the Tafahum wa Tabadul Project in December 2021 (see 3.10).

Project Duration

2018–2021

Project Partner

Gulf Research Center Foundation

3.9.2 Events

Tafahum Working Group 5: Developing a ‘Regional Stability Paradigm’ & Enhancing Post-Conflict Reconciliation (February 2020, Córdoba)

The workshop built on the findings of previous discussions that there is a dire need for a regional stability paradigm, that the term ‘reconciliation’ is much less defined compared to the term ‘reconstruction’, and that in any post-conflict context the role of education becomes particularly important for post-conflict reconciliation. Furthermore, the importance of local economic ownership in reconstruction and reconciliation processes for these to be sustainable was highlighted. Against this backdrop, the workshop sought to further specify and operationalize the terms highlighted above in order to pave the way for concrete suggestions of initiatives that can outline avenues of regional collaboration for the sake of sustainable reconstruction and reconciliation.

Virtual roundtables

In May and June 2020, CARPO and GRCF organized two roundtables with participants of different working groups on the immediate repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the WAAP region.

Tafahum Virtual Roundtable: The COVID-19 Pandemic and its Regional Impact (May 2020)

The first virtual roundtable in the Tafahum project focused on the COVID-19 pandemic and the impacts this crisis was having on the dynamics in the region of West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP). A main objective of this meeting was to examine whether the national/regional security discourse has changed in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis including whether there had been some reassessment in terms of the degree of regional interaction. The discussion thus sought to examine the ways in which contingency plans in the region had begun to initiate forms of regional cooperation, leading to stronger engagements and closer coordination beyond the nation state. Another focus was on the question whether “health” had emerged as a new dimension within the security debates taking place within the national or regional context. The roundtable on these questions took place through the

lens of the five different frameworks and themes of the working groups within the Tafahum project. The discussion also served as the start to a series of online meetings to keep the regional dialogue active during the period of the COVID-19 national lockdowns and travel restrictions, which were making physical meetings impossible.

Tafahum Virtual Roundtable: The COVID-19 Pandemic and its Regional Impact and Regional Responses to Future Pandemics (June 2020)

The second virtual roundtable in the Tafahum project continued the discussions on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic with regard to regional dynamics in the region of West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP). The main objective of this roundtable was to examine more closely any prospects for regional interactions that had arisen as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and to evaluate if there were specific aspects that the Tafahum project could incorporate into future project discussions in terms of issues in which greater cooperation at the regional level should be pursued. Following an update of the current situation in each specific country, the meeting highlighted numerous obstacles that exist as the region of West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula struggles to cope with the wider impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

Tafahum Working Group 2: Environmental Issues and Climate Change (September 2020, Bonn)

Reassessing Environmental Challenges in Times of Corona: Health Issues and Water Security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP)

The second workshop in working group 2 was the first hybrid event within the Tafahum context. The focus of the workshop was twofold: On the first day, the researchers, experts and political analysts focused on environmental issues in times of corona and discussed changing priorities and potential synergies. New ideas on how to approach the interconnectivity of environmental and health challenges were discussed and concepts like 'planetary health' introduced to offer more holistic perspectives. The second day took up topics like water scarcity, water pollution and water management as key challenges in the region. Despite the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, these issues remain of utmost importance for most of the countries in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula. The experts discussed inter alia water governance as a potential point of departure for regional cooperation and assessed the role of the EU as an external actor in this field. Besides discussing the actual workshop topics, all participants – be it on the ground in Bonn or virtually through the video conferencing platform – expressed their enthusiasm to continue the debates within the Tafahum project and appreciated the new dynamic introduced by the hybrid workshop format.

Tafahum Working Group 1: 'Trade and Energy Cooperation' (October 2020, Bonn)

From Shared Challenges to Joint Ventures: How the Energy Market and Entrepreneurial Initiatives Have Been Impacted by and Emerge from the COVID-19 Pandemic

The second workshop in the Tafahum Working Group 1, which was held as a hybrid event, focused on the socioeconomic implications in times of the COVID-19 pandemic in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP). It brought together a group of academic researchers, energy experts and analysts as well as practitioners from the spheres of entrepreneurship and start-up initiatives. The objective of the workshop was to discuss in what way and to what extent the transboundary health crisis can also enhance regional cooperation efforts in the economic sector and energy market. Main findings of the workshop included the persistence of structural barriers, the prevailing and manifold adverse effects of the COVID-19 crisis and the maintenance of a 'hyperlocalized' economy that impedes collaboration both among regional countries and external actors. Especially young professionals face enormous difficulties to start and run a business in the private sector. So far, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has not acted as a catalyst to fundamentally transform the regional economic ecosystem. In fact, quite the opposite has occurred as, despite some prospering niches, especially in the digital sphere, young entrepreneurial activity has been severely hit by the crisis.

2nd Tafahum Annual Conference (December 2020)

After concluding the second year of Tafahum and dealing with the manifold challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, representatives of the five working groups were brought together for the second Tafahum Annual Conference, which was held virtually this time. In plenary sessions as well as in break-out groups, the participants discussed the current status of regional security in the WAAP region, challenges of regional economic development, and conditions for developing regional civil society networks. Based on these discussions, the participants outlined the way forward for the project, discussed how different levels of interaction can be better connected and how the project can contribute to a more holistic security framework for the WAAP region.

Tafahum Working Group 4: Developing a Web-based Exchange Platform and a Code of Conduct for Media Professionals (March 2021, Bonn)

In Tafahum Working Group 4 on "Media Narratives and Discursive Integration in WAAP", it was discussed during the first meeting in June 2019, how media and public debates play a significant role in shaping political and public narratives and perceptions. And while this holds true for all parts of the world,

the region's very own characteristics were outlined. At the second workshop in October 2019, the dire need to improve media literacy of media producers and consumers was discussed alongside the possibility of establishing a regulatory body that could oversee an overall code of conduct for media outlets and producers in the region. Furthermore, the demand of a platform for exchange between media actors across the region was raised. Based on these deliberations, CARPO and GRCF dedicated the third workshop of this working group to producing concrete ideas on: a) how to establish a web-based exchange platform for media professionals in the region; b) which key principles could constitute a regional code of conduct for media outlets and professionals.

Tafahum Working Group 3: Promoting the Role of Women in Security-Related Roles (May 2021, Bonn)

The two previous working group discussions on "Counter-Terrorism and Security Sector Reform" highlighted in particular the lack of participation by women both within the security sector and within security debates as a whole. This has wide-ranging repercussions for the overall policy process on regional security in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP) as women find themselves both excluded from many critical security-related debates and have limited impact on the design, conceptualization and ultimate implementation of essential policy initiatives. In order to counter existing trends, the working group put forward a number of ideas that could better elevate and integrate women in the areas of prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations and peacebuilding. The final working group meeting pursued to conceptualize these suggestions further with the objective of developing several very concrete proposals for how the role of women in security-related roles can be advanced on a regional level.

Tafahum Working Groups 1 & 2: Towards a Green Recovery and Sustainable Cooperation in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (June 2021, Bonn)

The first joint workshop in the Tafahum Project combined previous two rounds of discussions of the Working Groups 1 & 2 by focusing on the question of how a green recovery approach and a regional sustainable cooperation in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP) could look like. It brought together a diverse group of researchers, entrepreneurs, consultants, environmental scientists and activists. The workshop took up previous discussions on terminological difficulties with regards to the meaning of 'sustainability', emphasized the lack of knowledge transfer in the field of environmental science, and outlined the important but marginalized role 'green entrepreneurship' and SMEs play for sustainable transformation in the region. Against this backdrop, the content of the workshop focused on four objectives, namely, (a) unpacking

the concept of a 'green recovery' and to investigate whether it could serve as basis for a holistic approach to promote regional sustainable cooperation; (b) discussing in what way environmental science and green entrepreneurship are key drivers for regional cooperation; (c) fostering interconnectedness between environmental science and 'green entrepreneurship'; and (d) sketching out potential sustainable cooperative framework schemes in the WAAP and proposing concrete actions towards sustainable transformation.

Tafahum Working Group 5: Coordinating National and Local Engagements and Enhancing Civic Education and Capacity-Building Programs (August 2021, Bonn)

During the previous two workshops of the working group on "Reconstruction and Reconciliation Efforts in Syria, Yemen and Iraq", it was established that more attention must be paid to the notions of reconciliation, conflict-sensitive education, local engagements, a regional 'stability paradigm' and the need to discuss impacts on state-society relations (or the 'social contract) in a post-conflict phase. After all, Syria, Yemen and Iraq are three of the most contested contexts with severe effects for WAAP. Therefore, participants of this working group engaged in deliberations on how regional actors could join forces in furthering reconstruction and reconciliation efforts. In the final workshop of this working group, the participants looked at how to coordinate national and local engagements of external actors (states & organizations) in reconciliation efforts in Syria, Yemen and Iraq, and discussed how – in the framework of this engagement – civic education and capacity-building programs can be best set up and implemented.

3rd Tafahum Annual conference (September 2021, Berlin)

The third annual conference of the Tafahum project took place in Berlin and gathered participants from the project to take stock on its outcomes and deliberate on the way forward. After an opening session to assess the strategic environment in the WAAP region in 2021 and evaluate whether current efforts at de-escalation were sustainable enough to maintain momentum for constructive regional interactions, the conference provided a platform to deliver the key findings of the Tafahum project including the initial outlines of a potential roadmap for regional security. The meeting then proceeded to take a deeper look at the components of expanding mechanisms for greater people-to-people engagement, enhancing the cooperation among research centers and state entities to address questions of economic and ecologic sustainability and health resilience, and to evaluate how a better political climate can be fostered among the actors in WAAP. The conference concluded with a session on conceptualizing the way forward in light of current developments in the region and how a second Tafahum project phase can contribute to

developing a holistic framework for the WAAP region. One overarching conclusion from the discussion was that a multi-track approach is vital to building on agreed issues to create momentum for more constructive engagements and pragmatic approaches for regional dialogue.

Tafahum Ad-hoc Workshop: Building on the ‘Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership’ (October 2021, Bonn)

On 28th August 2021, Iraq’s (then) Prime Minister Mustafa al-Kadhimi was the host of the ‘Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership’. Heads of state and foreign ministers of Iraq’s immediate and extended neighbors came together for what was hoped to be a starting point for political de-escalation and dialogue in an otherwise conflict-laden region. While the conference was seen as a positive and promising first step among political leaders and regional observers alike, there is an underlying understanding that many more efforts are needed to turn this ‘moment of dialogue’ into an enduring ‘dialogue momentum’. In the framework of the Tafahum project, CARPO and GRCF have explored since 2018 manifold avenues for a regional process towards cooperation, integration and security in various fields. The ad-hoc workshop aimed to collectively brainstorm, which potential immediate steps could be undertaken or, at least, suggested and proposed to build on the ‘Baghdad Conference for Cooperation and Partnership’.

Tafahum Ad-hoc Workshop: The ‘Afghanistan Crisis’ and its Potential Geopolitical Impacts (November 2021, Bonn)

Afghanistan has been rocked by tectonic shifts in 2021 and has witnessed the full collapse of the post-2001 order with a full takeover of the country by the Taliban. The withdrawal of the U.S. forces came as a surprise even to those who viewed it inevitable. The lack of meaningful coordination neither with allies inside Afghanistan, nor with European or other regional allies led to global astonishment, giving fuel to the ongoing discussion of a post-U.S. Middle East. To unpack some of the expected geopolitical impacts and implications, CARPO and GRCF held an ad-hoc hybrid workshop, convening virtually and in-person long-time companions of the Tafahum project as well as some new scholars who look at the WAAP region in their work. The idea was to learn from distinguished experts how the domestic dynamics in Afghanistan can currently be assessed, what can be expected in the immediate future, and which dynamics between external actors (both regional and extra-regional) can be foreseen.

3.10 Tafahum wa Tabadul – Enhancing Multi-Track Dialogue and Cooperation in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula

3.10.1 Summary

Building on the Tafahum project, which was implemented between 2018–2021, CARPO and GRCF have once again partnered up to implement the project “Tafahum wa Tabadul – Enhancing Multi-Track Dialogue and Cooperation in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula”. The aim is to generate further understanding (tafahum) among regional stakeholders and to foster cooperation (tabadul) on common interests in the region. The project started in December 2021, is designed as a 3-year initiative and continues to be funded by the German Federal Foreign Office. Officials on the political level (track 1/1.5) will be engaged with the aim of generating a political climate that is more conducive to regional cooperation and to develop a regional ‘Tafahum for Peaceful Coexistence’. Stakeholders on the experts level (track 2) will include economists, environmental scientists and health specialists, who will be brought together to collectively examine the energy-climate-health nexus – a concept that entails economic and ecologic sustainability, as well as regional health resilience. On the societal level (track 3), CARPO and GRCF aim to foster people-to-people mobility in the region through exchange activities in the fields of academia and civic education. With its multi-track approach, this project engages policymakers, economic and scientific circles, as well as civil society in all target countries. While each track will be engaged separately, links and fora for interaction and engagement between them will be established, as both their interdependence and need for interconnectivity is viewed relevant and essential.

Project Duration

2021–2024

Project Partner

Gulf Research Center Foundation

3.11 Teaching and Advising on Post-Conflict Reconstruction

3.11.1 Summary

CARPO was a partner in this project, which was implemented by the Institute for Oriental and Asian Studies at the University of Bonn (lead partner) together with the Gender-Development Research & Studies Center (GDRSC) at the University of Sana'a. The project, which ended at the end of December 2021, was funded by the German Academic Exchange Service in the framework of its Transformation Partnership. The project's objective was to contribute to post-conflict reconstruction in Yemen, amongst others by developing and teaching a syllabus on post-conflict reconstruction for the master course on gender and development taught at GDRSC. Due to the Corona pandemic, the envisaged Spring School, workshop and conference could not take place. These were replaced with German-Yemeni research projects, which resulted in a CARPO Brief (published in December 2021) and a CARPO Study (forthcoming).

Project Duration

May 2019 – December 2021

Project Partners

- Institute for Oriental and Asian Studies at the University of Bonn
- Gender-Development Research & Studies Center at the University of Sana'a

3.11.2 Events

Co-teaching a master course on post-conflict reconstruction at GDRSC (July 2020 – January 2021, held virtually)

Between mid-July 2020 and mid-February 2021, we co-taught the master course on post-conflict reconstruction, which we had developed in the previous year, together with four German and four Yemeni teachers. Due to Corona, the course took mainly place virtually (via Google Classrooms), although some sessions taught by the Yemeni teachers of the course were taught physically at Sana'a University. The course was attended by 21 students (sixteen female, five male). Based on the syllabus developed in the first project year, the following topics were taught in the framework of the course itself, which took place between 13 July and 14 September:

- Introduction to context and terminology: The context of international intervention and the 'Liberal Peace'; peacebuilding, state building and post-conflict reconstruction; local ownership and peacebuilding from below; legitimacy;

- Political Dimension: Political authority over the reconstruction process; Building administrative and governance capacities;
- Economic Dimension: Restarting the economy (job provision, infrastructure, private sector support, etc.);
- Developmental Dimension: Moving from humanitarian aid to sustainable development; Provision of basic services: food security, health and education;
- Security & Justice Dimension: Restoring internal security, including DDR; transitional justice; establishment of a credible and functioning judicial system;
- Gender Dimension: Women as significant entry points;
- Transitional Justice and Reconciliation;
- Sustainability and Political Ecology.

Each topic was split into two sessions (except the first two topics, which were taught jointly over the course of 4 sessions), the first of which took place on a Wednesday, the second on a Monday, leaving time for longer assignments over the weekend. These longer assignments included a 500-word essay and also sometimes additional group work to be presented at the next session on Monday. All in all, the students thus wrote seven essays on the topics listed above, with each essay being graded by the teacher responsible for the topic on the basis of previously agreed upon criteria. Based on these grades and those of a final test to which all teachers contributed questions, two students failed the course, the rest passed with marks between 65 and 95.9 points.

Subsequent to this, the students were split into four groups for 'problem-oriented project work' (POPW). Under the supervision of one teacher, each group chose a different topic from among those taught in the course and developed a small research project around this topic, ending in short papers. The project work was presented to the rest of the course twice, once mid-term and once at the end, subsequent to which the papers were graded. Additionally, each student was also examined by two teachers, the group supervisor and the supervisor of another group. The topics selected were:

1. Women economic empowerment challenges in post-conflict Yemen
2. Dealing with trauma among child soldiers
3. The impact of the conflict on development in Yemen from a gender perspective
4. Women and the private sector in post-conflict situations

Virtual Seminar on Teaching in Higher Education (between 15 and 24 November 2021)

In November 2021, the Yemeni and the German teaching staff involved in this project participated in a seven-day training course on teaching in higher education, delivered by Dr. Andrea Warnecke of Leiden University. The training provided a comprehensive introduction to course design, student engagement, and modes of instruction and assessment in Higher Education. Based on a mix of short introductory presentations, group discussions and exercises, participants had the opportunity to discuss and revise their own course syllabi and to explore new conceptual developments and techniques for learning and teaching in the social sciences and humanities. The training was divided into three sections that build on each other:

1. Introduction to course design
 - Roles and expectations of teachers and students in Higher Education
 - Teaching and learning in the social sciences
 - Student-centred course design
 - Writing learning objectives using Bloom's Taxonomy
 - Employing templates for course development
2. Course design through constructive alignment
 - Aligning objectives, learning outcomes, and modes of assessment
 - Lectures or seminars? Balancing student expectations and improving learning outcomes
 - Formative and summative feedback
3. Planning a unit of instruction and enhancing student engagement
 - Introduction to active learning and threshold concepts
 - Employing active and blended learning techniques
 - Classroom assessment techniques (CATs)
 - Formative and summative feedback

3.11.3 Publications

CARPO Brief 21: The Disaster of Yemen's Flash Floods. Impact of and Local Responses to the Torrential Rains and Flooding in 2020

by Khalid al-Akwa and Tobias Zumbrägel

Between March and September 2020, and again in May through July 2021, Yemen experienced periods of torrential rain that resulted in flash flooding. Flash floods are and will continue to be a recurrent natural phenomenon

with destructive consequences in Yemen, which has not yet received broader attention. This Brief thus provides an overall understanding of the social and economic impact and current management of Yemen's flash floods to improve disaster prevention and mitigation. It stresses the urgency of creating an independent environmental advisory body, comprised of a range of stakeholders and experts, to coordinate environmental reconstruction work and enhance tangible climate action into future strategies and interventions of national governance management and international humanitarian assistance.

This Brief was published as No. 03 of CARPO's Sustainability Series.

Online available

4 Overview Publications 2020/21

To make our work available to a broader public, contribute to academic discussions, engage in public debates and influence policy-making processes, CARPO offers a range of publication formats. These publications may result from ongoing projects, summarize project activities or are stand-alone texts dealing with topics and fields in which CARPO is active.

CARPO Briefs

CARPO Briefs offer concise and target group-oriented analyses with clear-cut policy advice. They address decision-makers in politics, economics, and society as well as the interested public. This series focuses on specific topics and offers extensive background and action-oriented knowledge.

CARPO Reports

CARPO Reports comprise policy-oriented studies. They offer in-depth analyses of specific topics, provide crucial background knowledge and end with policy recommendations for pertinent stakeholders.

CARPO Studies

CARPO Studies offer a forum for thorough historical and contextual knowledge on the modern Orient. As an interdisciplinary and innovative series, CARPO Studies sets new impulses and opens up new perspectives for an audience interested in the region.

Other

This includes further CARPO publications beyond the categories of Briefs, Reports and Studies, generally resulting from project cooperation.

CARPO Sustainability Series

In 2020, CARPO launched its Sustainability Series with CARPO Study 09 “The Looming Climate Peril. Sustainable Strategies and Environmental Activism in the Middle East and North Africa” by our researcher Tobias Zumbrägel. The CARPO Sustainability Series aims to contribute to the slowly growing but still quite marginal research on sustainability in the Middle East and North Africa. As this region’s high vulnerability to the severe effects of climate change and global warming represents one of the greatest challenges of this century, it is imperative to tackle this field from a holistic perspective. Sustainability comprises aspects of social (e.g. justice, equality, participation, state-society relations), environmental (e.g. clean energy, pollution, waste, recycling, biodiversity) and economic sustainability (e.g. business engagement, training, education, diversification). Cross-cutting issues are highly diverse and interconnect

a vast array of disciplines such as anthropology, politics, economics, sociology, environmental studies or history. Accordingly, this series will publish analyses in the form of CARPO Briefs, Reports or Studies by academics and practitioners from various fields to provide multidisciplinary analysis on key themes of sustainability.

07.12.2021

The Disaster of Yemen's Flash Floods. Impact of and Local Responses to the Torrential Rains and Flooding in 2020

by Khalid al-Akwa and Tobias Zumbärgel

Between March and September 2020, and again in May through July 2021, Yemen experienced periods of torrential rain that resulted in flash flooding. Flash floods are and will continue to be a recurrent natural phenomenon with destructive consequences in Yemen, which has not yet received broader attention. This Brief thus provides an overall understanding of the social and economic impact and current management of Yemen's flash floods to improve disaster prevention and mitigation. It stresses the urgency of creating an independent environmental advisory body, comprised of a range of stakeholders and experts, to coordinate environmental reconstruction work and enhance tangible climate action into future strategies and interventions of national governance management and international humanitarian assistance.

Online available

September 2021

Improving Relations Between Central State Institutions and Local Authorities

by Abdulghani al-Iryani, Casey Coombs and Salah Ali Salah

Local councils are responsible for spearheading development projects and providing basic public services to Yemen's population of more than 30 million people. The councils are particularly important in rural areas, where about 70 percent of Yemen's population lives. In July 2018, the Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative published a White Paper that explored how the collapse of Yemen's economy and the fragmentation of central government institutions during the war affected local councils. This new White Paper builds on those findings by examining how local governance has evolved in the intervening years, with a focus on the relationship between local authorities and the central governments in Sana'a and Aden.

Online available

06.09.2021

Local Economic Councils: A Tool to Improve Business Productivity in Yemen

From 25–27 January 2021, the seventh Development Champions Forum, held virtually, focused on the dire business environment in Yemen. To help address local economic challenges, the Development Champions discussed the possibility of establishing Local Economic Councils. According to their analysis, between the community-level local development committees and the Supreme Economic Council on the national level, a space exists for a governorate-level body to drive development by guiding investment to serve local needs and strengthen ties between the governorates and the private sector.

Online available

May 2021

Priorities for the Recovery and Reform of the Electricity Sector in Yemen

by Akram M. Almohamadi

Poor electricity services in Yemen, even before the war, have been one of the key barriers to sustainable economic development and basic service provision (e.g., water supply, health care, education). This paper assesses the power supply system status prior to the war and subsequently discusses the impact of the war on electricity sector performance, followed by an identification of the key barriers faced by the sector. It concludes with the identification of the top priorities for restoring electricity sector services and reforming the sector after the war.

Online available

29.04.2021

Solar-Powered Irrigation in Yemen: Opportunities, Challenges and Policies

by MUSAED M. AKLAN and HELEN LACKNER

Yemen is one of the most water-scarce countries in the world. Its agricultural sector is the dominant user of groundwater resources, accounting for around 90 percent of total consumption. Due to the current crisis, fuel required for pumps has become scarce and very expensive; as a result, solar energy has begun to play a role in the extraction and supply of groundwater for irrigation. However, there is concern about possible negative consequences of this new technology. This Policy Brief examines the current trend of solar-powered irrigation system (SPIS) use in Sana'a Basin, identifying the pros and cons of

this approach. It proposes governance and policy recommendations for overall water management and for future studies and regulation of SPIS-driven groundwater use.

Online available

15.04.2021

Local Security Governance in Yemen in Times of War

by Mareike Transfeld, Mohamed al-Iriani, Maged Sultan and Marie-Christine Heinze

After six years of war, state institutions in Yemen have fragmented along multiple fault lines. The security sector is no exception. Given their role as central nodes of the country's security governance structure, this Policy Report explores governorate-level Security Committees in three governorates that have been particularly affected by violence and institutional fragmentation: Ta'iz, al-Hudayda and Aden. Next to seeking to understand the institutional set-up and functions of the Committees, questions guiding this Report are how the Committees have evolved in the context of state fragmentation and what, if any, capacities they have to play a potential role in local-level mediation (for instance, regarding humanitarian access) or transitional security governance arrangements.

Online available

25.03.2021

'Broken People Can't Heal a Nation.' The Role of Arts in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Yazeed al-Jeddawy, Maged al-Kholidy and Kate Nevens

This Report looks at how the arts and peacebuilding have historically intersected in Yemen, and how traditional arts are alive today and are being used to promote peace and war. It demonstrates the variety of ways in which the arts promote and educate on the values of peace, equality and cultural diversity while also being a tool for documenting life during war, telling untold stories and preserving collective memory. It also highlights the use of art for advocating against violence and human rights violations, for supporting the psychosocial wellbeing of traumatized people, and for rebuilding relationships in communities torn apart by the war. The Report concludes with recommendations for a number of different ways in which the arts can make a direct and indirect contribution to peacebuilding in Yemen.

Online available

01.03.2021

Reconfigurations in West Asia and North Africa. CARPO Research Forum 2020 – Conference Report

by Mirjam Schmidt, Julia Gurol and Tobias Zumbrägel

The first CARPO Research Forum, which took place in November 2020, addressed the reconfigurations and challenges the WANA region is currently grappling with by selecting three major themes at the global, regional and local levels: It discussed the reconfigurations of external powers in the region with a particular focus on a rising China, dealt with the looming climate peril and the arduous path of the region towards sustainable development, and examined the social contract, looking at regional protest waves since the ‘Arab Spring’. Bringing together practitioners and academics, it provided an insight into the interplay between the global, regional and local levels in a highly heterogeneous region, thereby pointing towards future paths for development. This Conference Report summarizes the main take-aways of the Research Forum and highlights avenues for future discussion.

Online available

20.01.2021

Post COVID-19: A Potential for Green Recovery in the Arab Gulf States

by Aisha Al-Sarihi

The novel coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the GCC’s focus on environmental sustainability projects, as shoring up economies and protecting human health have become top priorities for governmental countermeasures. This Brief argues that associating COVID-19 economic recovery packages with measures aimed to safeguard the environment and tackle climate change, towards a so-called ‘green recovery’, will not only ensure long-term resilience and sustainability of economies as countries recover from the pandemic, but also boost economic activity, generate income and create jobs.

Online available

11.01.2021

Impacts of the War on the Telecommunications Sector in Yemen

by Mansoor al-Bashiri

The telecommunications and information technology sector in Yemen is the second largest source of public revenue after the petroleum sector, and

contributes important work opportunities, whether directly or indirectly, through its connections to other sectors of the national economy. Some of the most important challenges of the sector are the unsuitability of the legal and institutional regulatory environments; fragmentation of public entities in the sector; the lack of separation between political, regulatory and operational roles within the sector; and the reliance on a weak and fragile infrastructure to provide these services. This Policy Brief identifies urgent as well as medium to long-term policies and programs to address these and other challenges identified in the paper.

Online available

October 2020

RYE White Paper 7: Yemen's Accelerating Economic Woes during the COVID-19 Pandemic

by Sana'a Center Economic Unit

Since early 2015, Yemen has been almost completely dependent on three external sources to secure foreign currency inflows and stimulate economic activity: foreign humanitarian aid, Saudi financial support to the internationally recognized government, and – by far the most significant – remittances from Yemeni expatriates, most working in Saudi Arabia. All three of these foreign currency sources have dramatically declined in 2020 because of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The current acute shortage of foreign currency has profound implications for the value of Yemen's domestic currency, and the country's ability to finance fuel and basic commodity imports. This is likely to lead to the rapid intensification of the humanitarian crisis. This White Paper presents policy recommendations to address this situation for relevant national and international stakeholders.

Online available

17.06.2020

CARPO Study 09: The Looming Climate Peril. Sustainable Strategies and Environmental Activism in the Middle East and North Africa

by Tobias Zumbärgel

Taking the viewpoint of 'political ecology', this first issue of the newly created CARPO Sustainability Series highlights the social and political implications of sustainable transformation across the broader Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. Overall, it aims to achieve four goals: (a) to provide

a comprehensive overview of existing research and avenues of thought; (b) to supply a cross-sectoral analysis across the MENA region, rather than in-depth single case studies; (c) to uncover broader implications and dialectic relationships between sustainability and political power constellations; and (d) to sketch out some potential future developments and dynamics over the coming years.

Online available

02.06.2020

RYE Policy Brief 20: Economic Priorities for a Sustainable Peace Agreement in Yemen

The sustainability of a peace agreement in Yemen will, amongst others, depend on two critical insights: First, in a conflict that is largely over access to resources, the issues of distribution and control of those resources can make or break peace. Second, where peace agreements lack provisions that create overall economic stability, warfare can resume during the fragile implementation period. At the sixth Development Champions Forum in Amman, Jordan, from 25 to 27 January 2020, the Development Champions therefore focused on identifying urgent macroeconomic, fiscal, and monetary issues that pose a direct threat to the successful implementation of any peace agreement in Yemen. This Policy Brief summarizes their key recommendations on economic provisions that need to be included in the peace agreement.

Online available

18.05.2020

CARPO Brief 19: The Role of the Private Sector in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Tarek Barakat, Ali al-Jarbani and Laurent Bonnefoy

This Brief analyzes the state of the private sector in Yemen during the ongoing war and explores its potential to contribute to the country's peace requirements. It presents challenges entrepreneurs face and the potential contribution of these in sectors that are central to the construction and sustainability of peace. It highlights the fact that their actions and capacity to offer jobs and revenue to the Yemeni population are constrained by the fragmentation of authority and the resultant lack of transparency. It also demonstrates that the focus on regional and international aid has left many entrepreneurs feeling abandoned and helpless.

Online available

04.05.202

CARPO Brief 18: The Role of Civil Society in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Abdulkarim Qassim, Loay Amin, Mareike Transfeld and Ewa Strzelecka

The current political and economic conditions in Yemen make it difficult for CSOs to continue functioning on an effective level, while a lack of human and organizational capacity are hampering project results. Nevertheless, Yemeni CSOs contribute to peace requirements in various sectors and remain an important actor in the Yemeni civic sphere. In a context in which conflict parties are not willing to compromise and media contributes to escalating violence, actors that uphold the principles of human rights, political participation and peace are most likely to be found in the realm of civil society. For civil society to be able to contribute to peacebuilding and future reconstruction efforts, now is the time for international organizations to support CSOs and invest seriously into their human and organizational capacity building.

Online available

April 2020

RYE White Paper 6: Microfinance in Yemen. An Overview of Challenges and Opportunities

by Moneef al-Shaibani

This White Paper explores the historic development of Yemen's microfinance industry and its players, as well as the impacts of the ongoing conflict. This analysis is followed by recommendations that address four specific areas – capacity building, financing, program design and research – to help create a more conducive operating environment for microfinance overall. The objective is to better place the industry to achieve its socioeconomic aims in the near term and contribute to Yemen's recovery post conflict.

Online available

27.04.2020

CARPO Brief 17: The Role of Youth in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Maged al-Kholidy, Yazeed al-Jeddawy and Kate Nevens

Despite its major transformative potential, local level youth work is often overlooked by mainstream international discourses on national level peace processes and violent conflict. This Brief sheds light on young peoples' activism

before and during the war, the challenges they are currently facing, their visions for the future of Yemen and the kind of support they need. The contributions of young men and women to the economy, politics, culture and society, security and justice, education and the environment show how youth are laying the groundwork for peace and social cohesion in their communities.

Online available

17.04.2020

CARPO Brief 16: The Role of the Media in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Fatima Saleh, Scott Preston and Mareike Transfeld

The increased political capture of the Yemeni media since 2014 has reinforced diverging political discourses and has contributed to polarization across society and to political fragmentation. Practitioners face steep challenges in composing professional stories. Journalists are subject to harassment, intimidation, abduction and violence. Yet, Yemeni journalists remain hopeful of the prospect of media reform and are eager to detail the prerequisites for proactive change. Encouraging the development of independent news outlets, independent funding and capacity-building activities could enable the Yemeni media to contribute to better mutual understanding, de-escalation and the requirements for peace.

Online available

06.04.2020

CARPO Brief 15: China's Strategy in the Persian Gulf. A Balancing Act between Riyadh and Tehran [in German]

by Julia Gurol and Jacopo Scita

This Brief discusses the repercussions of geopolitical developments on China's strategy in the Persian Gulf. It is argued that China is pursuing strategic hedging by attempting a risky political balancing act in order to prepare for a possible escalation. This Brief is a slightly edited German translation of the authors' contribution 'China's Persian Gulf strategy: Keep Tehran and Riyadh content' on the IranSource Blog of the Atlantic Council, which was first published on 24 January 2020.

Online available

01.04.2020

RYE Policy Brief 19: Developing Yemen's Fishing Industry

This policy brief summarizes discussions regarding Yemen's fishing industry at a 'Rethinking Yemen's Economy' workshop held in al-Mukalla, Yemen, on November 26–28, 2019. The workshop participants, among them numerous stakeholders in the fishing industry from across Yemen, agreed that given the inability of the Ministry of Fish Wealth to carry out its basic institutional functions due to the ongoing conflict, it is crucial that the ministry's executive privileges for short-term policy making and regulation be temporarily delegated to local councils and that they be empowered to regulate the industry during the conflict. The participants also identified longer-term policies for the government and international stakeholders to revitalize the industry and enhance its capabilities.

Online available

27.02.2020

CARPO Brief 14: The Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Yemen

by Iman al-Gawfi, Bilkis Zabara and Stacey Philbrick Yadav

Yemeni women are laying foundations for sustainable peace through everyday practices that have the capacity to help transform the landscape of women's rights in the post-war period. Wider recognition of women's paid and unpaid work in wartime, and the conditions that enable it, could improve the social cohesion, economic stability, and human security necessary for sustainable peace. Based on research conducted in the summer and fall of 2019, this CARPO/GDRSC Brief reviews variations in women's experience of conflict and participation in everyday peacebuilding in different parts of the country, advocates for an entitlement-based approach that recognizes women's agency, supports women's diverse aims, and works to leverage their existing contributions in support of sustainable peace.

Online available

20.01.2020

CARPO Study 8: Bar'a as an Expression of Liminality Ritual Performance, Identity and Conflict Prevention in the Highlands of Yemen

by Ulrike Stohrer

This Study focuses on the performative genre bar'a, which is one of the most important means of nonverbal communication between social groups in Yemen. As such, this Study deals with a cultural practice of the tribal population in the Yemeni highlands that also has important significance for Yemeni society as a whole by serving as an expression of tribal, regional and also national identity. Moreover, the practice is a cultural tool that enables tribesmen to deal with unsafe and potentially conflict-bearing situations in a stabilizing manner. It is used as a ritual for integration and strengthening collective identity, as well as as a means of keeping peace and preventing conflicts.

Online available

16.01.2020

RYE Policy Brief 18: Developing Human Capital

This Policy Brief summarizes discussions regarding Yemen's human capital at a 'Rethinking Yemen's Economy' workshop held in Amman, Jordan, on August 24–25, 2019. The workshop participants agreed that many of the obstacles to improving Yemen's human capital were present prior to the current conflict. This Policy Brief thus recommends: countrywide population surveys; more funding of development projects over emergency humanitarian assistance; education reforms; and the targeting of sectors with high human capital returns. Crucially, policymakers should not wait for the end of the conflict to implement these recommendations.

Online available

5 CARPO Events

5.1 Brussels MENA Briefings

The Brussels MENA Briefings are bimonthly, in-depth roundtable discussions on topics of current significance in the MENA region, co-hosted by CARPO and Stimson Europe, and held in Brussels on the first week of every second month. The attendance is by invitation only. The event series started in March 2020 and was supposed to be a closed meeting for the Brussels policy community on the ground in Brussels. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, it was turned into a series of online discussions for the time being.

25.11.2021

Iraq, Beyond the Election – Internal and External Implications

On 25 November 2021, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and Stimson Europe hosted the thirteenth “Brussels MENA Briefing” – a series of after-work briefings on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – on “Iraq, Beyond the Election: Internal and External Implications”. Speakers included Ali Al-Mawlawi, who works as an independent analyst and researcher and specializes on Iraq’s political economy, Marsin Al-Shamary, who is a Research Fellow at the Middle East Initiative (MEI), and Hussein Al-Waeli, who works as an accredited journalist at the European Union. The discussion was moderated by Kawa Hassan, Senior Fellow and Director of the Middle East and North Africa division and Executive Director of Stimson Europe.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/the-brussels-mena-briefing-iraq-beyond-the-election-internal-and-external-implications/>

16.06.2021

The Gulf Cooperation Council at 40 – Opportunities and Challenges for the EU

On 16 June 2021, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and Stimson Europe hosted their twelfth “Brussels MENA Briefing” – a series of after-work briefings on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – on “The Gulf Cooperation Council at 40: Challenges and Opportunities for the European Union (EU)” Speakers included Najla al-Qassem, Director Global Affairs Division, B’huth Dubai Public Policy Research Center,

and Sebastian Sons, Researcher at CARPO. The discussion was moderated by Wael Abdulshafi, Research Analyst at Stimson Europe.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/the-brussels-mena-briefing-the-gulf-cooperation-council-at-40-opportunities-and-challenges-for-the-eu/>

14.04.2021

Egypt in the Eastern Mediterranean

On 14 April 2021, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and Stimson Europe hosted the eleventh “Brussels MENA Briefing” – a series of after-work briefings on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – on “Egypt in the Eastern Mediterranean”. Speakers included Dr. Ahmed Kandil, Senior Research Fellow and Head of the Energy Studies Program at the al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, and Hafsa Halawa, independent consultant, Visiting Fellow at the Middle East and North Africa Program of the European Council on Foreign Relations and Non-resident Fellow at the Middle East Institute. The discussion was moderated by Desirée Custers, Research Assistant of the Middle East and North Africa Program at the Stimson Centre.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/brussels-mena-briefing-egypt-in-the-eastern-mediterranean/>

17.03.2021

Lebanon at a Crossroads: Looming State Collapse and Prospects for External Engagement

On 17 March 2021, Stimson Europe and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) hosted their tenth Brussels MENA Briefing titled “Lebanon at Crossroads: Looming State Collapse and Prospects for External Engagement”, on the political, economic, and social crisis in Lebanon. This was the first Briefing hosted by the new Middle East and North Africa Program launched by Stimson Europe in March 2021, and located at Stimson’s new permanent presence in Brussels, Belgium. The Brussels MENA Briefings are a continuation of a series of discussion previously conducted by the East-West Institute (EWI). The Briefing started with an in-depth analysis of the current situation in Lebanon, with one speaker emphasizing the lack of progress in the investigation into the Beirut blast of August 4, 2020. This unprecedented, massive explosion led to at least 200 deaths and was caused by a large amount of ammonium nitrate stored in a port warehouse without proper

safety measures. The speaker highlighted that the judge leading the investigation was dropped from the case in February 2021, after he had charged the caretaker prime-minister and three former ministers with negligence. The opaque investigation is seen as symptomatic of the country's current predicament, namely lack of accountability of the ruling elite.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/brussels-mena-briefing-lebanon-at-a-crossroads-looming-state-collapse-and-prospects-for-external-engagement/>

01.12.2020

Kuwait and the post-Sheikh Sabah Era

On 1 December 2020, the EastWest Institute (EWI) and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) hosted the ninth "Brussels MENA Briefing" – a series of after-work briefings on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – on "Kuwait and the post-Sheikh Sabah Era". Speakers included Vice Admiral (ret.) Ahmad Al-Mulla, advisor to the Kuwaiti Ministry of Defense, and Dr. Courtney Freer, assistant professorial research fellow at the Middle East Center of the London School of Economics. Well-known experts on the Persian Gulf region and members of the European policy community virtually attended this briefing, which was held under the Chatham House Rule.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/kuwait-and-the-post-sheikh-sabah-era/>

17.11.2020

The Biden Administration's Middle East Policy and Transatlantic Relations

On 17 November 2020, the EastWest Institute (EWI) and Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) hosted their eighth "Brussels MENA Briefing" – a series of after-work briefings on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – on the recent election of Joe Biden as U.S. president-elect and the changes his administration could bring to both the United States' own Middle East policy, as well as its transatlantic relations with the European Union (EU) vis-à-vis the Middle East. Speakers included Cameron Munter, former U.S. ambassador and former president of the EastWest Institute, and James Moran, associate senior fellow at the Center for European Policy Studies (CEPS). The discussion was moderated by Wael Abdul-Shafi, EWI MENA program associate.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/the-biden-administrations-middle-east-policy-and-transatlantic-relations/>

22.10.2020

The Economic Dimensions of the Conflict in Yemen

The seventh edition of the Brussels MENA Briefing, co-hosted by the EastWest Institute (EWI) and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO), in partnership with the Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative, was dedicated to the economic impact of the ongoing conflict in Yemen – a war that started in 2014/15 and has since turned the country into the world's worst humanitarian crisis according to the UN. The Rethinking Yemen's Economy initiative aims to contribute to peacebuilding and conflict prevention, economic stabilization and sustainable development in Yemen by building consensus in crucial policy areas through engaging and promoting informed Yemeni voices from all backgrounds (the „Development Champions“) in public discourse on development, economy and post-conflict reconstruction in Yemen, and by positively influencing local, regional and international development agendas. It is implemented by CARPO, DeepRoot Consulting and the Sana'a Center for Strategic Studies and is generously funded by the European Union and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Yemen.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/the-economic-dimensions-of-the-conflict-in-yemen/>

08.09.2020

Jordanian Foreign Policy in Light of Regional Geopolitical Shifts

On 8 September 2020, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and the EastWest Institute (EWI) hosted their sixth "Brussels MENA Briefing" – a series of after-work briefings on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region – on the topic of "Jordanian Foreign Policy in Light of Regional Geopolitical Shifts." Speakers included Dr. Amer Al Sabaileh, professor at the University of Jordan and well-known security and political analyst, and Dr. Edmund Ratka, designated head of the Amman Office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The discussion was moderated by Wael Abdul-Shafi, EWI MENA program associate.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/jordanian-foreign-policy-in-light-of-regional-geopolitical-shifts/>

07.07.2020

How to Rescue Sudan's Transition Process

On 7 July 2020, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and the EastWest Institute (EWI) hosted their fifth "Brussels MENA Briefing" – a series of after-work briefings on the MENA region – focusing on how to rescue Sudan's transition process, as well as the role the international community can play in Sudan's political transition. Speakers included Yasir Zaidan, lecturer of international affairs and security studies at the National University of Sudan, and Dr. Annette Weber, senior fellow at the Africa and Middle East division of the German Institute for International and Security Studies (SWP) in Berlin. EWI's Vice President of the MENA program, Kawa Hassan, served as moderator.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/how-to-rescue-sudans-transition-process/>

09.06.2020

New Iraqi Government in Place: Challenges and Opportunities for Iraq in its Neighborhood

On 9 June 2020, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and the EastWest Institute (EWI) hosted their fourth "Brussels MENA Briefing" – a series of afterwork briefings on the MENA region – focusing on challenges facing the new Iraqi government, as well as the role the European Union (EU) can play in supporting the new government in Baghdad. Speakers included Sajad Jiyad, visiting fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations (ECFR) and former managing director of the Al-Bayan Center for Planning and Studies based in Baghdad, and Daniela Verena Huber, head of the Mediterranean and Middle East Program of the Istituto Affari Internazionali (IAI). EWI's Vice President of the MENA program, Kawa Hassan, served as moderator.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/new-iraqi-government-in-place-challenges-and-opportunities-for-iraq-in-its-neighborhood/>

05.05.2020

The Status Quo of the Libya Conflict: Is the Berlin Process Obsolete?

On 5 May 2020, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and the EastWest Institute (EWI) hosted their third "Brussels MENA

Briefing,” a series of after-work briefings on the MENA region, on the state of affairs of the ongoing Libyan Civil War. Speakers included Anas El Gomati, founder and director of the Sadeq Institute, and Kristina Kausch, senior resident fellow at the German Marshall Fund of the United States. CARPO’s CEO Adnan Tabatabai served as moderator.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/the-status-quo-of-the-libya-conflict-is-the-berlin-process-obsolete/>

08.04.2020

Post-Sultan Qaboos Oman: Transition Opportunities and Challenges

On 8 April 2020, the EastWest Institute (EWI) and the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO), hosted the second “Brussels MENA Briefing,” a series of after-work briefings on the MENA region, this time focusing on Oman in the post-Sultan Qaboos era. Invited speakers were Dr. Yousuf Hamed al Balushi, CEO of Smart Investment Gateway and Dr. Cinzia Bianco, Visiting Fellow on Europe and the Gulf at the European Council on Foreign Relations and Senior Analyst at Gulf States Analytics. The Briefing was held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and moderated by Kawa Hassan, EWI’s Vice President of the Middle East and North Africa program.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/en/post-sultan-qaboos-oman-transition-opportunities-and-challenges-news-april-14-2020/>

11.03.2020

Iran After Parliamentary Elections

CARPO’s inaugural “Brussels MENA Briefing” focuses on Iran’s parliamentary elections and the resulting domestic implications and consequences for Iranian foreign relations.

On 3 March 2020, the Center for Applied Research in Partnership with the Orient (CARPO) and the EastWest Institute (EWI), launched its “Brussels MENA Briefing” series with the topic of the recent parliamentary elections in Iran. Dr. Azadeh Zamirirad from the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP) and Adnan Tabatabai from CARPO led the discussion, with EWI’s Wael Abdul-Shafi serving as moderator.

For a summary see: <https://carpo-bonn.org/en/iran-after-parliamentary-elections/>

6 CARPO Team

6.1 Staff

Dr. Marie-Christine Heinze, President

Marie-Christine Heinze holds a master in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Political Science, and International and European Law from the University of Bonn and a master in Peace and Security Studies from the University of Hamburg. Her PhD thesis on material culture and socio-political change focusing on the dagger (*janbiya*) in Yemen in the field of social anthropology at the University of Bielefeld was completed with summa cum laude in 2015. Since 2008, she has also regularly worked as a consultant on development, peacebuilding and political change in Yemen.

Focus & Topics: Yemen; political transformation; civil-military relations and security studies; historical background and collective memory; identifications and mobilization: religion, ethnicity, and gender; civil society and societal politics; conflict prevention, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction

Selected Publications

- & Mareike Transfeld, Mohamed al-Iriani, Maged Sultan (April 2021): *Local Security Governance in Yemen in Times of War*, YPC/CARPO Policy Report. Online available.
- & Stacey Philbrick Yadav (08.06.2020): 'For durable peace in Yemen, inclusion must mean more than simply a voice for civil actors', in: *Responsible Statecraft*. Online available.
- Mareike Transfeld (March 2019): *Understanding Peace Requirements in Yemen. Needs and Roles for Civil Society, Women, Youth, the Media and the Private Sector*, CARPO Report 06. Online available.
- (ed.) (2018): *Yemen and the Search for Stability. Power, Politics and Society After the Arab Spring*, London. Further information.
- & Sophie Stevens (July 2018): *Women as Peacebuilders in Yemen*, SDD/YPC. Online available.

Adnan Tabatabai, Chief Executive Officer

Adnan is CEO and co-founder of CARPO. He obtained his MSc in Middle East Politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London. As an Iran analyst, he is consulted by European policymakers and businesses on Iran-related affairs. Through his work at CARPO, Tabatabai has designed and

facilitated track II and civil-society dialogue formats between Iran and Saudi Arabia since 2015. He is furthermore involved in a variety of projects at CARPO on regional security in the Persian Gulf region. Tabatabai is author of the book *Morgen in Iran* (Oct. 2016, Edition Körber-Stiftung). He is regularly featured in international media with commentary and analysis on developments in Iran and the Middle East.

Focus & Topics: Iran, State-society relations, political transformation, power dynamics, civil society and societal politics, Civil-military relations and Security studies, intercultural dialogue, track II diplomacy

Selected Publications

- (November 2019): 'European-Iranian interaction in the quest to save the nuclear agreement', in: *One Year after the Re-Imposition of Sanctions, Peace and Security*, Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung. [Online available](#).
- & Christian Koch (July 2019): *Tafahum – An Ideational Fundament on which to Build a Security Roadmap for West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula*, CARPO Brief 13. [Online available](#).
- (June 2019): 'Warum Trumps Iran-Politik scheitern wird', in *SPIEGEL+*. [Online available](#) (in German only).
- (February 2019): *A Strained Alliance – Transatlantic Views on the Middle East*, CARPO Brief 12. [Online available](#).
- (January 2019): *Iran: Back to Crisis Mode*, IAI. [Online available](#).

Jan Hanrath, Chief Executive Officer

Jan Hanrath, Dipl.-Soz.-Wiss., is CEO and co-founder of CARPO. He studied political science, European law and psychology (focus on intercultural communication) at the University Duisburg-Essen. From 2008 to 2014 he was researcher at the Institute for Development and Peace (INEF) at the University Duisburg-Essen and focused inter alia on the transport of conflicts in migrations processes as well as on German Middle East policies. Currently he writes his PhD thesis on German public diplomacy in the Middle East. He is involved in various projects and coordinates the daily operations at CARPO's head office. In the past years he has worked as a researcher and coordinator in projects inter alia on Iran-Saudi dialogue, economic development in Yemen, migration and conflict, political transformation in the Middle East, and academic exchange.

Focus & Topics: German Middle East policies, public diplomacy, peace and conflict research, political transformation and mobilization, diaspora and diaspora politics, intercultural dynamics, migration and integration, civil society and societal politics

Selected Publications

- (December 2018): *Knowledge in Dialogue – The Role of Academic Exchange in Mitigating Conflict between Iran and Saudi Arabia*, CARPO Brief 11. Online available.
- & Wael Abdul-Shafi (September 2017): *Environmental Challenges in a Conflictive Environment – Iranian and Saudi Perspectives on the Risks of Climate Change and Ecological Deterioration*, CARPO Brief 08. Online available.
- (2012): *Transnationale Migrantengruppen und der Transport von Konflikten. Das Beispiel Türken und Kurden in Berlin*, INEF-Report 105. Online available.
- & Claus Leggewie (2012): 'Revolution 2.0? The role of digital media in political mobilisation and protest', in: T. Debiel, J. Hippler, M. Roth, and C. Ulbert, (eds.): *Global Trends 2013. Peace – Development – Environment*, Bonn, pp. 37–51. Online available.

Thomas Pietzsch, Executive Assistant

Thomas is an M.A. student at the Department of Islamic Studies and Near East Languages at the Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies (IOA) at the University in Bonn. As CARPO's Executive Assistant he is an indispensable pillar of the organization's administrative structure and point of contact between the Executive Board and the rest of the team. Previously, he worked as project assistant for the DAAD-funded project on 'Academic Approaches to Peacebuilding and State Building in Yemen' at the IOA of which CARPO is also a partner, as a student assistant for a project on Middle Eastern travelogues to Europe and as a teacher of German language for refugee children.

Dr. Julia Gurol, Associate Fellow

Julia Gurol is a postdoctoral researcher and lecturer at the Chair for International Relations at Freiburg University. Her dissertation dealt with European-Chinese security relations in the Middle East. Julia's areas of expertise are transregional authoritarian practices, infrastructure studies, strategic questions of foreign and security policy, political transformation as well as peace and conflict studies; her regional foci are China and the Middle East (with a particular focus on the Gulf region). She has previously worked in a project on arms export control at the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). Furthermore, she is a trained crossmedial journalist and has published in several German media, such as *WirtschaftsWoche*, *Handelsblatt* and *WDR*.

Julia holds a PhD from the University of Freiburg, an MA in Political Science from the University of Bonn and a BA degree in Politics, Sociology and Media Studies from the University of Düsseldorf.

Focus & Topics: EU-China relations, Chinese foreign and security policy, European Middle East policy, China's role in the Middle East, global power shifts, transformation of irregular armed actors, social movements

Selected Publications

- & Jacopo Scita (2020): China's Balancing Act in the Gulf Relies on Ties to Iran and Arab States, The Arab Gulf States Institute Washington. Online available.
- & Jacopo Scita (2020): 'China's Persian Gulf Strategy: Keep Teheran and Riyadh Content', in: MENASource, Atlantic Council. Online available.
- (2020): 'Competitive, cooperative or complementary? The roles of the EU and China in the security architecture of the Middle East', in: Chinese Journal of Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, Vol. 14, No. 1.
- & Parisa Shahmohammadi (2019): *Projecting Power Westwards. China's Maritime Strategy in the Arabian Sea and its Potential Ramifications for the Region*, CARPO Study 07. Online available.
- & Parisa Shahmohammadi (2019): *Turning Interdependence into Complementary Action: EU-China Relations and the Quest to Save the Nuclear Agreement*, CARPO Report 07. Online available.

Julia Pickhardt, Project Manager/Researcher (until June 2021)

Julia joined CARPO in January 2020 as project manager/researcher and works on the Iran-Saudi Dialogue Initiative. Before joining CARPO, Julia worked in the mediation program of swisspeace and supported different mediation initiatives among others in the context of Syria in addition to working on 'Multitrack Approaches in Peace Processes'. As associated researcher of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF), she currently conducts her PhD on "Peace-making actors' agency in multitrack peace negotiations". In the past, she also interned with different organisations such as Geneva Call, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) and the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt (PRIF).

She holds a Master of Conflict and Development Studies from the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies Geneva as well as a Bachelor in Arabic/Islamic Sciences and Politics from the Martin-Luther University Halle-Wittenberg.

Focus & Topics: Peace Mediation, Multitrack Approaches to Peace Processes, Syria, Civil Society actors in peace processes, International Relations in the Middle East

Selected Publications

- & Julia Palmiano Federer, Philipp Lustenberger, Christian Altpeter, Katrina Abatis (December 2019): *Beyond the Tracks? Reflections on Multitrack Approaches to Peace Processes*, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, the Center for Security Studies ETH Zurich, Folke Bernadotte Academy and swisspeace. Online available.

Dr. Sebastian Sons, Researcher

Sebastian Sons joined CARPO as a researcher in March 2021. Prior to that he served as an advisor for the Regional Programme “Cooperation with Arab Donors” (CAD) of the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. He holds a Ph.D. from the Humboldt University Berlin with a thesis on media discourses on labor migration from Pakistan to Saudi Arabia.

He studied Islamic Studies, History and Political Sciences in Berlin and Damascus. Prior to that, he was trained as journalist in print, TV and radio media at the Berlin School for Journalists (Berliner Journalisten-Schule). After finishing his studies, he worked as Head of Research and Editor-in-Chief of the academic magazine *Orient* at the German Orient-Institute from 2009-2014 and as a project researcher at the Program Near East and North Africa at the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP) in Berlin. From 2018-2019, he was Senior Researcher at CARPO.

As a political analyst, he is consulted by German and international political institutions as well as by international journalists to provide expertise on Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states. Among many other articles and analyses on Saudi Arabia, he published the book *Built on Sand: Saudi Arabia – A problematic Ally* (in German) in 2016. He has been traveling to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council frequently since 2009.

Focus & Topics: Social and political developments in the societies of the Gulf Cooperation Council; foreign policy of Saudi Arabia and social transformation; South-Asian migration to the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council; political and economic engagement of the Gulf states in Africa; development policy of Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait

Selected Publications

- & Cinzia Bianco (2021): “Domestic Economic Plans and Visions in the GCC and Opportunities for Cooperation with Europe”, in: Colombo, Silvia, Abdul Ghafar, Adel (ed.): *The European Union and the Gulf Cooperation Council. Towards a New Path*, Palgrave MacMillan. Online available.

- (2020): *“Arbeitsmigration nach Saudi-Arabien und ihre Wahrnehmung in Pakistan: Akteur*innen und Strategien der öffentlichen Sichtbarmachung”*, Ph.D. Thesis, CrossAsia. Online available.
- (2018): *“In Dire Need for a New Social Contract: Saudi Arabia’s Socioeconomic and Political Challenges in Times of Changing Energy Dynamics”*, in: Westphal, Kirsten and David Jalilvand (eds.): *The Political and Economic Challenges of Energy in the Middle East and North Africa*, Routledge, 125–143. Online available.
- & René Rieger (2017): *“Saudi Arabia’s Regional Policy Since 2011”* in: Mason, Robert (ed.): *Reassessing Order and Disorder in the Middle East*, Rowman & Littlefield, 61–86. Online available.
- (2016): *“Auf Sand gebaut. Saudi-Arabien – Ein problematischer Verbündeter”*, Propyläen. Online available.

Dr. Tobias Zumbrägel, Researcher

Tobias Zumbrägel studied Political Science, Islamic Studies and History at the Universities of Cologne, Tübingen and Cairo (Egypt). He holds a master in the joint program “Comparative & Middle East Politics and Society” (CMEPS) from the Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen and the American University in Cairo (AUC) (2013–2015). In 2015 he received a Bucerius Pre-Doctoral Grant by the ZEIT foundation and between 2016 and 2020, he was a research associate and PhD candidate at the Friedrich-Alexander University of Erlangen-Nürnberg. During this time, he conducted extensive field research in the Arab Gulf States and was a visiting fellow at the Faisal Center for Research and Islamic Studies (KFCRIS) and the Department for Gulf Studies at the Qatar University.

Focus & Topics: Climate policy in the Arab world, digitalization and social change, authoritarian durability and persistence, international relations and security studies in West Asia and the Arabian Peninsula (WAAP), political legitimation and legitimacy in non-democratic regimes.

Selected Publications

- (June 2020): *The Looming Climate Peril. Sustainable Strategies and Environmental Activism in the Middle East and North Africa*, CARPO Sustainability Study 01. Online available.
- (2020): *Beyond greenwashing: Sustaining power through sustainability in the Arab Gulf monarchies*, in: *Orient* 61:1, pp. 28–35.
- (forthcoming) *‘Kingdom of gravity: Autocratic promotion and diffusion in Saudi Arabia’*, in: M. Kneuer and T. Demmelhuber (eds.): *Authoritarian Gravity Centres: A Cross-Regional Study of Authoritarian Promotion and Diffusion*, London.

- (2019) 'Being green or being seen green? Strategies of eco regime resilience in Qatar?', in: H. Pouran and H. Hakimian (eds.): *Environmental Challenges in the MENA Region The Long Road from Conflict to Cooperation*, Chicago, pp. 49–71.
- & M. Kneuer, T. Demmelhuber and R. Peresson (2019): 'Playing the regional card: Why and how authoritarian gravity centres exploit regional organizations', in: *Third World Quarterly* 40/3, pp. 451–70.

Mirjam Schmidt, Project Officer

Mirjam Schmidt is a Project Officer in the "Iraq and its Neighbours" Project. Before joining CARPO she worked at the Federal Agency for Civic Education (Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung) and the International Office Department "European & International Networks" of the University of Bonn. She holds an M.A. in Asian Studies with a focus on Religious Studies from the University of Bonn after finishing her B.A. in International Relations at the Rhein Waal University of Applied Science.

Focus & Topics: Dynamics between religion and the state, Iraq's foreign policy, Iraq-EU relations, gender and inclusion

Selected Publications

- & Gurol, J.; Zumbärgel, T. (March 2021): *Reconfigurations in West Asia and North Africa. CARPO Research Forum 2020 – Conference Report*, CARPO Study 10. [Online available.](#)

Meryam Ben Bouaicha, Project Assistant (until July 2020)

Meryam Ben Bouaicha is studying Asian Studies with a focus on Arabic Studies and Translation at the University of Bonn for a Master's degree. Before that she studied Oriental Studies at the University of Bochum. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Asian Studies with a focus on Arabic language at the University of Bonn. She was previously working on the basic lines of modern Koranic hermeneutics.

Mateus Beckert, Project Assistant (until September 2020)

Mateus currently studies in a dual-subject bachelor program at the University of Bonn. His study program focuses on Islamic studies and Middle Eastern languages and, secondly, political and social science. Alongside his studies, he works at the Dean's Office of the Philosophical Faculty of the University of Bonn as a student assistant.

Franziska Frosch, Project Assistant (until September 2020)

Franziska is an MA student of modern languages and cultures of the Middle East at the Oriental Institute of University Cologne. She holds a Bachelor in Asian Studies with a focus on Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic from Vienna and Bonn University. After further Arabic studies at Saifi Institute in Beirut, she gained experience in a full-time internship at Center for International Security Studies (CISG). Franziska is a member of the Kölner Forum für Internationale Beziehungen und Sicherheitspolitik.

Rebekka Muth, Project Assistant (until December 2021)

Rebekka Muth is a M.A. student of Near and Middle Eastern Studies and Arabic at SOAS University (School of Oriental and African Studies) in London. Her research interest lies in cultural relations and development cooperation between Germany, Egypt, and the Gulf states. Prior to that, she worked as regional project coordinator with the CrossCulture programme at ifa (Institute for Foreign Cultural Relations). She holds a B.A. in International Relations and Communication Science from the University of Erfurt and University of Cairo.

Sina Winkel, Project Officer

Sina Winkel studies Geography M.Sc. in Development & Globalization with a focus in Medical Geography at the University of Bonn. During her bachelor's degree, she dedicated her research to mental health issues in relation to environmental changes and humanitarian aid. In 2019 she completed a full-time internship within the Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) in Kyrgyzstan.

6.2 Advisory Board

In 2020, our Advisory Board members Dr. Gudrun Harrer and Prof. Dr. Stephan Conermann left their positions at the end of their term in August. We are extremely grateful for the support they have provided us with and will continue to see them as part of our wider CARPO family. We are happy that Ambassador Marc Otte decided to extend his position on our Advisory Board for another term honored and delighted that Jane Kinninmont and Dr. Stacey Philbrick Yadav have agreed to support us in the coming years.

Jane Kinninmont

Jane Kinninmont specializes in policy-relevant research on conflict and security, with a particular focus on the Middle East. Her main job is as Director of Impact at the European Leadership Network, a network of senior leaders, current and former officials, young leaders and experts from across Europe, who work collaboratively to debate and identify ways to improve European defense, security and foreign policy. She writes for a wide range of publications and is a regular contributor to the broadcast media. Previously, Jane worked as Head of Program for The Elders, whom she advised on their work on Middle East conflicts. From 2011–2018 Jane was Senior Research Fellow, and later Deputy Head of the Middle East and North Africa program at Chatham House, where she directed a research projects on the dynamics of change in the GCC states, and the implications of those changes for the GCC's relations with Iran, Iraq and Yemen.

Ambassador Marc Otte

Ambassador Marc Otte is a Belgian diplomat. He has served in Washington DC and Kinshasa, RDC and was Consul General in Los Angeles as well as Ambassador to Israel. He was also Director for Strategic Affairs and Disarmament and Director for Policy Planning at the Belgian MFA. From 1999 to 2003, he was an advisor for security and defense policy to the High Representative for EU Foreign and Security Policy and from 2003 to 2011, EU Special Representative for the Middle East Peace Process. From 2013–2017, he was Director General of the Royal Institute for International Relations/Egmont. He is currently Belgian Special Envoy for Syria and Vice President of the European Institute for Peace (EIP). He has written numerous articles and contributed to books on European defense and security policy, as well as on the Middle East.

Dr. Stacey Philbrick Yadav

Dr. Stacey Philbrick Yadav is associate professor and chair of the Department of Political Science at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, New York. For close to two decades, she has written about the politics of Yemen, with a focus on opposition activism both within and outside of partisan frameworks. Her work includes *Islamists and the State: Legitimacy and Institutions in Yemen and Lebanon* (2013), and articles in the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *Middle East Journal*, *Middle East Law and Governance*, and others. She serves on the steering committee for the Project on Middle East Political Science (POMEPS), where she has edited a collected issue on the war in Yemen, and on the executive board of the American Institute for Yemeni Studies. Stacey is the co-author (with Iman al-Gawfi and Bilkis Zabara) of CAR-PO Brief 14 on The Role of Women in Peacebuilding in Yemen.

6.3 Associate Fellows

Tamer Badawi

Tamer Badawi is an independent analyst and writer. He received an MA in International Relations and European Studies from the Central European University in Budapest and a BA in Persian Studies from Alexandria University, Egypt. Between 2017 and 2018 he joined the Al Sharq Forum in Istanbul as a Research Fellow. After that, in 2019, he joined the School of Transnational Governance in the European University Institute (EUI) in Florence as a Policy Leader Fellow. Since Tamer departed from the EUI, he has been working as an independent analyst.

He is currently focused on politics and security in Iraq, particularly on paramilitary groups and their coalition-building, media presence, and burgeoning presence in non-military spheres. On the macro level, his current research includes the regional dimensions of relations between Iran and Turkey, mainly in Iraq. Tamer previously conducted extensive research on post-2011 relations between Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood movement and Iran.

He has written analyses in English and Arabic for various platforms such as the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace's Sada Journal, Al-Monitor, the Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI), the Atlantic Council, Aljazeera Center for Studies, and MEDirections.

Focus & topics: Paramilitarism, regional security, political Islam

Selected publications

- (June 2020): The popular mobilisation units as a relief agency: can the Coronavirus pandemic accelerate institutional transformation?, Policy Briefs, 2020/24, Middle East Directions (MED).
- (March 2019): Mismatched Expectations: Iran and the Muslim Brotherhood After the Arab Uprisings, Carnegie Middle East Center.

Lalla Amina Drhimeur

Lalla Amina Drhimeur is a Prime YOUTH Researcher on "Nativism, Islamophobia and Islamism in the Age of Populism" at Sciences Po Lyon. This project, which has received funding from the European Research Council, analyses the current political, social, and economic context of the European Union, which is confronted by two substantial crises, namely the global financial crisis and the refugee crisis. These crises have led to the escalation of fear and prejudice among the youth who are specifically vulnerable to discourses that culturalize

and stigmatize the “other”. In general, Amina’s research explores the evolution of political Islam, democratization process and power reconfigurations in North Africa and the Middle East.

In addition to her research in political Islam, she is furthermore interested in exploring democratization processes and power reconfigurations mainly in South America and North Africa.

Focus & Topics: Political Islam, democratization processes, authoritarianism, party politics, comparative politics

Selected Publications

- (October 2020): *Diasporas Mobilization and Politics in Morocco, Report, ERC AdG PRIME Youth, Casablanca. DOI: 10.5281/ZENODO.4133442.*
- (August 2020): *The Interactions between the Turkish and Moroccan State Actors and Governments, Report, ERC AdG PRIME Youth, Casablanca. DOI: 10.5281/ZENODO.3979255.* (May 2018): *The Party of Justice and Development’s Pragmatic Politics, Baker Institute for Public Policy, Brief. Online available.*
- & Esen Kırdış (2016): ‘The rise of populism? Comparing incumbent pro-Islamic parties in Turkey and Morocco’, in: *Turkish Studies*, 17/4, pp. 599–617.

Sarah Dusend

Sarah Dusend holds a master in Near and Middle Eastern Studies, Political Science and French Language and Literature from the University of Bonn. She studied Arabic and Persian at the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales in Paris as well as Arabic in Damascus. After completing her M.A. she was the coordinator of the Bonn Center for Asian Studies (2009–2013) as well as the Bonn Graduate School for Oriental and Asian Studies (2013–2015). Currently, she is a research fellow at the Department of Islamic Studies and Near East Languages at the Institute of Oriental and Asian Studies (IOA) at the University in Bonn, working on her PhD project funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Her thesis deals with three pilgrimage reports by Qajar women at the end of the 19th century.

In addition to her research in the fields of women’s studies and travel writing in the Iranian and Arab world as well as mobility and pilgrimage in Islam, she is furthermore interested in Afghan and Pakistani contemporary historiography and identity politics.

Focus & Topics: Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iran, gender, travel writing, mobility, historiography, identity politics

Selected Publications

- (2013): 'Pilgern nach Mekka – zur Reisewirklichkeit einer qajarischen Prinzessin und den Funktionen ihres Pilgerberichtes Rūznāme-ye safar-e 'atabāt va-Mekkeh.' in: S. Conermann and B. Agai (eds.): *Wenn einer eine Reise tut, hat er was zu erzählen“ Präfiguration – Konfiguration – Refiguration in muslimischen Reiseberichten vom Ende des 18. bis zum Beginn des 20. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin, pp. 75–118.
- (2010): *'Solidarische Vernetzung, gesellschaftlicher Fortschritt und die Rolle der Frau: Die Debatten und Ergebnisse des Kongresses der Orientalischen Frauen in Teheran 1932'*, Berlin.

Dr. Abdulsalam al-Rubaidi (until December 2021)

Dr. Abdulsalam al-Rubaidi holds a PhD in Near and Middle Eastern Studies from the University of Bonn, Germany, and a master in Arabic Language and Literature from Sana'a University, Yemen. He is a lecturer at the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Faculty of Education at al-Baydha' University, and a lecturer at the Gender Development Research and Studies Center (GDRSC) at Sana'a University, Yemen. He is also a founding member of the Academic Forum Muhammad Ali Luqman.

Abdulsalam worked as a teacher of the humanities (religion, history and Arabic language) in a number of private schools and universities in Sana'a from 2005 to 2009. From 2012 to 2014, he was a researcher at the Yemen Polling Center (YPC) in Sana'a in the Volkswagen Foundation-funded project on 'Framing the Revolution in Yemen' with the University of Bonn. He is currently the editor of the Arabic publications at al-Madaniya Magazine and the Yemen Policy Center. Abdulsalam has published extensively on cultural and social issues in Yemen in both Arabic and English language.

Focus & Topics: Arabic linguistics and literature, Sufism, political and religious discourses in Yemen, identification processes and social change in Yemen

Selected Publications

- (2020): *Identity Constructions in Contemporary Yemeni Novels*, Studien des Bonner Zentrums für Transkulturelle Narratologie 13, Berlin. [More info.](#)
- (November 2018): *Imagining an Alternative Homeland. Humanism in Contemporary Yemeni Novels*, CARPO Study 06. [Online available.](#)
- (2018): 'Skepticism among emerging public intellectuals in post-revolution Yemen', in: M. Heinze (ed.): *Yemen and the Search for Stability. Power, Politics and Society after the Arab Spring*, London, pp. 27–46. [Further information.](#)

- & Laurent Bonnefoy (2017): 'The reconfiguration of identities in the context of the current war in Yemen: The contemporary Sunni Islamist field', in: *Majallat Idhafat* 38/39, pp. 50–67.
- (2016): 'The concept of *shabāb* in Yemen. Some remarks', in: *Jemen-Report* 47, pp. 122–25.

Dr. Andrea Warnecke

Andrea Warnecke has recently completed her PhD at the European University Institute (EUI), Florence, Department of Political and Social Sciences. Her thesis focuses on the evolution of the post-war peacebuilding practices of a range of international development, humanitarian, and peacekeeping organisations over the past two decades. In particular, the thesis accounts for the persistent depoliticization of external peacebuilding practices by analysing the role of international organisations in post-conflict governance as characterised by tensions between impartiality and political agency.

Prior to undertaking her PhD research, Andrea earned a Master's degree in History, English Literature, and Media Studies from the University of Bochum, Germany. From 2006 to 2011, she worked as a (Senior) Researcher at Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). During this time, she acquired and conducted a number of projects, which inter alia received funding under the 7th EU Research Framework Programme, from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, and the Gerda Henkel Foundation, in the fields of involuntary migration, diaspora politics, and peacebuilding and development.

Focus & Topics: Post-war peacebuilding, peacemaking and mediation, international organisations, crises governance, critical security studies, peacekeeping, sociology of violence, conflict and migration, diaspora politics

Selected Publications

- (2020): Can Intergovernmental Organizations Be Peacebuilders in Intra-State War? *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*.
- (July 2018): *Between a Rock and a Hard Place. Recognizing the Primacy of Politics in UN Peacebuilding*, CARPO Study 04. [Online available](#).
- (2015): *Ethiopian Diasporas in Germany. Commitment to Social and Economic Development in Ethiopia*, BMZ consultancy report, Bonn.
- & C. Schmitz-Pranghe (2011): 'Diasporaengagement für Entwicklung und Frieden. Handlungsspielräume und Kapazitäten der äthiopischen Diaspora in Deutschland', in: T. Baraulina and A. Riester (eds.): *Potenziale afrikanischer Migration in Deutschland und den Herkunftsländern*, Eschborn, pp. 183–215.

- & D. Tänzler, R. Vollmer (2010): *Climate Change, Migration and Conflict. Receiving Communities under Pressure?*, German Marshall Fund of the United States Policy paper, Washington DC.

Dr. Sarah Wessel

Sarah Wessel is a political scientist and cultural anthropologist with a focus on the Arab world and relations with Europe. She did her doctorate at the Faculty of Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Hamburg on *The Making of Political Representation: Processes of Claim-Making and Receiving During the Egyptian Transformations (2011-2014)*. In her multi-year field research, she examined the political and cultural transformation processes in the Arab region with a focus on Egypt after the uprisings in 2010/2011. The study is an empirical and theoretical contribution to the topic of political representation at the interface of research on democracy and authoritarianism, global governance and critical middle eastern studies. The work was awarded the dissertation prize of the German Middle East Studies Association for Contemporary Research and Documentation (DAVO) 2019.

From 2013 to 2015 she worked as a research assistant at the Orient Institute Beirut (OIB) and represented the Cairo office. 2017–19 she was a research assistant and curator of the research and exhibition project “*Cinderella, Sindbad & Sinuhe: Arabic-German Storytelling Traditions*” of the Egyptian Museum Berlin and Papyrus Collection, State Museums of Berlin (SMB), in cooperation with the Arab German Young Academy (AGYA). Since 2019 she has been working as a scientific officer at the Berlin Center for Global Engagement (BCGE) of the Berlin University Alliance (BUA).

Focus & Topics: Relations between Europe and the Arab region with particular focus on Germany and Egypt, Global Governance and Critical Middle Eastern Studies, political representation, gender, Science and Cultural Diplomacy, Ethical Internationalization.

Selected Publications

- & Verena Lepper (2019): *Cinderella, Sindbad & Sinuhe: Arab-German Storytelling Traditions*, Berlin.
- (2018): ‘The “third hand” in Egypt. Legitimation and the international dimension in political transformations’, in: *Middle East Law and Governance 10*, Leiden, pp. 341–374.
- (2016): *Grey-Scales. Negotiating the Civil State in Post-Revolutionary Egypt*, CARPO Study 03. [Online available.](#)
- (2013): ‘Political representation and legitimacy in Egypt. The making and the reception of claims during the parliamentary elections 2011’, in: C. Steuer (ed.): *Les Élections de la Révolution (2011–12)*. Cairo. [Online available.](#)

6.4 Alumni

Dr. Jasmin Khosravie-Gödert, Head of Research and Programs (until September 2018)

Dr. Jasmin Khosravie is a co-founder of CARPO and was a board member from 2014 until 2018. During this time, she was CARPO's Head of Programs & Research and supported CARPO's conceptual and strategic development. While holding her position at CARPO, Jasmin was also a post-doc fellow and lecturer in Near and Middle Eastern Studies at University of Bonn. In October 2018, she joined the Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb).

Şafak Baş, Associate Fellow (until 2019)

Şafak Baş, MA, studied political science and Near and Middle Eastern studies at the Ruprecht-Karls University in Heidelberg as well as Persian at the Dekhoda Lexicon Institute in Tehran. After completing his studies, he worked as a policy analyst at the European Stability Initiative in Berlin and Istanbul (2012–13) and as a freelance journalist in Istanbul and Tehran (2013–14). Currently, Şafak is a PhD student at the Center for Middle Eastern and North African Politics at the Otto-Suhr Institute of Political Science at Free University Berlin.

Dr. Ulrike Stohrer, Associate Fellow (until 2020)

Ulrike Stohrer, social anthropologist, studied Social Anthropology, History, Theatre-, Film- and Media Sciences, Musicology, and Modern Standard Arabic at the University of Frankfurt/Main. Additionally, she completed training in classical singing at the conservatory of Frankfurt/Main. Her dissertation *Bar'a. Rituelle Performance, Identität und Kulturpolitik im Jemen* deals with a cultural practice in Yemen and its relevance for tribal, regional, and national identities. Ulrike also does research on material culture, traditional architecture, clothing and consumption.

From 2007 to 2009, she implemented a pilot project at the Institute for Near Eastern Archeology at the University of Frankfurt/Main in the field of applied anthropology on intercultural communication and local identities at an archaeological site in Tell Chuera/Syria. Since 2004, she regularly lectures at the universities of Frankfurt, Heidelberg, and Marburg. She also works as a teacher for Arabic and as an independent corrector and lector.

Prof. Dr. Stephan Conermann, Advisory Board (until August 2020)

Prof. Dr. Stephan Conermann is Director of the Department of Near Eastern History and Languages at the University of Bonn, where he has been Professor of Islamic Studies since 2003. He is also Vice President for International Affairs at the University of Bonn and founding member of the Center for Religion and Society at the university. With research interests in the fields of transformation processes in Muslim societies in the era of European colonialism and imperialism, Muslim historiography and identification processes and Islam in Germany – amongst others – he has published extensively on the history of the modern ‘Orient’ as well as on resulting European – Middle East relations today. He is also series editor of „Bonner Islamstudien“ (BIS), „Bonner Asienstudien“ (BAS), „Bonner islamwissenschaftliche Hefte“ (BiH), „Narratologia Aliena“ und „Mamluk Studies“.

Dr. Gudrun Harrer, Advisory Board (until August 2020)

Dr. Gudrun Harrer is Senior Editor of Austria’s national daily newspaper “Der Standard” where she previously served as the foreign editor. She holds an MA in Islamic and Arabic Studies and a PhD in International Relation Studies, with a doctoral thesis on the Iraqi nuclear program. She is a lecturer on modern history and politics of the Middle East at the University of Vienna, and at the Diplomatic Academy of Vienna. In 2006, she was Special Envoy of the Austrian EU Presidency to Iraq and Chargé d’Affaires of the Austrian Embassy in Baghdad. Gudrun Harrer was awarded the prestigious “Bruno Kreisky Award for the political book” for her publications on the Middle East, among others for “Dismantling the Nuclear Programme: The Inspections of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Iraq 1991–1998” (Routledge 2014) and “Nahöstlicher Irrgarten: Analysen abseits des Mainstreams” (Kremayr & Scheriau 2014). She is member of the board of the Austrian Orient Society (ÖÖW) and of the Austrian Institute for International Affairs (OIIP).

Mareike Transfeld, Associate Fellow (until October 2020)

Mareike Transfeld holds a master in Political Science, Islamic Studies and Modern History with a specialization on the Middle East from the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. She is currently Director of the Yemen Policy Center in Berlin and a PhD Student at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies. Previously, she was a research fellow at the German Institute for Security and Foreign Affairs in Berlin, and headed the Research Department of the Yemen Polling Center (YPC) in Sana’a.

In her PhD thesis, Mareike explores the boundaries of the Yemeni state as experienced by Yemeni youth through a digital anthropology of a community on Facebook. This topic ties together her interests in state-society relations, youth activism and digital media. Previously, she did research on opposition parties and elite change. As consultant for YPC, Transfeld has designed numerous projects on the livelihoods of Yemeni youth and the political and economic conditions for youth activism. She has conducted field research in Yemen, Malaysia, Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon.

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