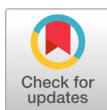



Governance and Society Review (GSR)

Volume 4 Issue 2, Fall 2025

ISSN_(P): 2959-1619, ISSN_(E): 2959-1627

Homepage: <https://journals.umt.edu.pk/index.php/gsr>



- Title:** Arab Solutions to Arab Problems: A Critical Appraisal
- Author (s):** Zekeri Momoh
- Affiliation (s):** The Indo-Pacific Studies Center (IPSC), Australia
- DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.32350/gsr.42.01>
- History:** Received: July 18, 2025, Revised: September 15, 2025, Accepted: October 14, 2025, Published: December 01, 2025
- Citation:** Momoh, Z. (2025). Determinants of community-based health insurance enrolment in Africa: Reflections from rural Nigeria. *Governance and Society Review*, 4(2), 01–27. <https://doi.org/10.32350/gsr.42.01>
- Copyright:** © The Authors
- Licensing:**  This article is open access and is distributed under the terms of [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)
- Conflict of Interest:** Author(s) declared no conflict of interest



A publication of The School of Governance and Society
University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Pakistan

Arab Solutions to Arab Problems: A Critical Appraisal

Zekeri Momoh* 

Regional Research Associate (RRA), Indo Pacific Studies Center, Australia

Abstract

This study seeks to answer the following research questions: What internal and external factors contribute to the persistent conflicts in Arab states, and to what extent can indigenous regional efforts lead to sustainable peace? Data for this study were collected from secondary sources, while content analysis was used for the analysis. The concept of "Arab solutions to Arab problems" is situated within the context of the growing regionalist argument among Arab states to resolve conflicts and other internal challenges without foreign assistance. This approach in finding solutions to the Arab problems is situated within the realist political strategy rooted in sovereignty, survival and power competition. It is argued that socio-economic and political inequality, long standing animosity among competing groups over state resources and power among others have influenced conflict. Furthermore, the influence of external factors often intersects with internal dynamics such as geopolitical interests, foreign interventions, economic pressures, and ideological exports, strategically leading to internal division among the competing groups within Arab nations. Lastly, this study recommends, among others things, that given the present conflict situation in many Arab nations, Arab solutions remain a determining factor in solving Arab problems.

Keywords: Arab conflict, economy, imperialism, political inequality, region

Introduction

Arab nations during the colonial period undertook a wide range of economic and political reforms that are geared towards the development of the Middle East. These political and economic reforms range from conscious efforts by Arab nations to embrace modern programmes, promote regional cooperation, improve oil revenue and economic diversification. It is pertinent to note that these efforts could not provide Arab nations the needed economic development desired by them.

*Corresponding Author: momohzekeri@gmail.com

However, the aftermath of the independence of several Arab nations around the mid-20th century makes a paradigm shift from earlier developmental strategies to state led-developmental strategies. One of the Arab nations that adopted the state led-developmental strategies was Egypt under President Gamal Abdel Nasser who nationalized most of the foreign owner enterprises and began intensive infrastructural development that would aid industrialization of Egypt. One such effort was the construction of the Aswan High Dam along the River Nile to aid the generation hydroelectric power, and boost agricultural productivity along the Nile basin.

Moreover, the goal of President Gamal Abdel Nasser's policies was geared towards ensuring self-sufficiency, and reduction in Egypt's reliance on foreign assistance (Owen & Pamuk, [1998](#)). Nevertheless, the discovery of oil in the Middle East set another pace for development in the Arab world. The economies of many oil producing countries such as Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Kuwait have been using their oil revenue to invest in the development of critical infrastructure such as education, health and urban development projects (Luciani, [1990](#)). It is important to note however, that Kuwait was able to establish a sovereign wealth fund, known as Kuwait Investment Authority in 1953 and the Abu Dhabi Investment Authority in 1976, which provided the platform for global long-term invest and economic stability.

In addition, the Arab nations equally adopted regional economic cooperation as strategy for economic growth and development through the establishment of the Arab League in 1945 with the core mandate of promoting regional economic integration and political stability (Amin, [1982](#)). Also, the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was established in 1981 as a regional initiative to unify tariffs, standardize regulations, and facilitate labour mobility among Arab member states.

In 1997, 18 Arab nations including Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates Yemen and Syria (whose membership was suspended from the Arab League in 2011, but is listed among the Greater Arab Free Trade Area) came together under GAFTA with the objective to eliminate trade barriers and tariffs in a bid to encourage intra-regional trade and promote economic ties among Arab nations (Elbadawi & Samy, [2015](#)). This has encouraged the private sector to invest

across borders, leading to improved supply chains and diversified markets.

In recent years, there has been a paradigm shift by Arab nations toward economic diversification due to oil price volatility at the international market. For instance, Saudi Arabia has adopted long-term development plans such as Vision 2030, which is the goal of diversifying its economy towards other sectors such as tourism development, technological advancement, and renewable energy development (Hertog, [2020](#)). Similarly, the United Arab Emirates has become a regional hub in the Arab world in the area of finance, logistics, and tourism development. For instance, in 2020, the UAE organized the Expo 2020 and undertook significant infrastructure projects.

The Arab world faces interrelated political, economic, and social challenges with significant consequences. With a population exceeding 436 million, the region accounts for 32% of global armed conflicts. This situation leads to instability and displacement (United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], [2021](#)). The Syrian war has displaced more than 13 million people, while Yemen's crisis has left 24.1 million people, or 80% of its population, dependent on aid (United Nations Global Humanitarian Overview, [2019](#)). These conflicts have destroyed infrastructure, weakened governance, and encouraged the rise of extremist groups. Economically, Arab states deal with serious weaknesses. Youth unemployment was reported at 26% in 2022, the highest in the world compared to the global average of 14% (World Bank, [2022](#)). This contributes to poverty, crime, and waves of irregular migration.

Many Arab nations are experiencing severe crises. In Lebanon, the financial collapse has pushed 80% of citizens below the poverty line, leading to mass emigration and social unrest (International Monetary Fund [IMF], [2023](#)). Iraq has 2.5 million internally displaced persons and struggles with sectarian divisions that weaken national unity. Gulf states, despite their wealth, rely heavily on oil; revenues from oil account for 70 to 90% of government budgets (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], [2021](#)), making them vulnerable to fluctuations in global energy prices. Across the region, climate change worsens vulnerabilities. The Arab world holds only 1% of global renewable water resources but has nearly 5% of the population (Food and Agriculture Organization, [2023](#)). This situation contributes to food insecurity and cross-border tensions. Together, these issues have caused widespread instability,

slowed economic growth, weakened state legitimacy, and worsened humanitarian crises. This calls for urgent reforms and cooperation among nations.

However, despite these efforts, the Arab nations have continued to grapple with challenges such as foreign interference in various Arab nation's domestic affairs, political instability arising from terrorism, economic inequality, oil price volatility at the international market and poverty, among others. Despite these challenges, Arab nations have continued to pursue developmental strategies that will enhance their economic growth through investment in critical infrastructure, human capital development, regional collaborations and economic as well as political reforms that will promote sustainable economic growth and development.

Today, economic development in the Arab world has been influenced by a complex interplay of domestic political structures, natural resource endowments, regional conflicts, and globalization dynamics. From a Political Science perspective, these factors are deeply rooted in the nature of governance and state institutions that define how economic resources are distributed and managed. Many Arab states operate under authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regimes, where political power is centralized and economic decisions are tied to regime stability and patronage systems (Luciani, [2005](#)). Consequently, political legitimacy in many Arab economies is derived less from representation and more from state-sponsored welfare and resource distribution.

Regional conflicts and rivalries have also exerted a profound impact on development trajectories. Civil wars, interstate tensions, and ideological divisions such as those between Gulf monarchies and republican regimes have diverted resources from economic diversification to defense spending, contributing to instability and economic stagnation (Hanieh, [2013](#)). These internal and regional conflicts limit the capacity of Arab governments to engage in long-term development planning and reduce foreign investor confidence.

From an International Political Economy (IPE) standpoint, the Arab world's economic development is shaped by its integration into the global capitalist system, particularly through its dependence on oil exports. This dependency situates Arab economies in a peripheral position within the

global division of labor, where they primarily export raw materials and import manufactured goods and technology (Ayubi, [1995](#)). Dependency and world-systems theories highlight how this structure perpetuates asymmetrical relationships between Arab oil exporters and industrialized economies, reinforcing external dependency and limiting structural transformation (Wallerstein, [2004](#)).

Furthermore, globalization has deepened the Arab world's exposure to international market forces, financial liberalization, and the influence of multinational corporations. While globalization has facilitated technology transfer and economic openness, it has also amplified income inequality and social discontent, especially in non-oil economies (Cammett et al., [2015](#)). The political economy of globalization thus reflects both opportunity and constraint in enhancing integration with global markets while challenging traditional state-led development models.

On the whole, situating Arab economic development within Political Science and IPE frameworks reveals the synergy between domestic governance and global economic structures. The interaction between state control, oil dependency, regional instability, and globalization underscores how political choices and international forces jointly shape economic outcomes in the Arab world.

Literature Review

There is a growing literature on the successes and limitations of development in the Arab world in the literature. For instance, studies conducted by El-Anis ([2020](#)) have shown that oil producing countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE have achieved relative high Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita as a result of hydrocarbon. This shows that economic growth in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE are largely influenced by oil revenues. The implication of the above finding is that the dependence of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE on oil has exposed these countries to the unabated oil price volatility at the international market.

However, an empirical study conducted by Hvidt ([2019](#)) has shown that Arab nations that relied on oil revenue often invest little of such revenue derived from oil in economic diversification. However, the Saudi Arabian Vision 2030 has debunked the claim by Hvidt's ([2019](#)) study as there is a paradigm shift from existing neglect by oil producing nations in investing less in economic diversification. Thus, there is a growing relationship

between resource-based development and economic diversification using Saudi Arabia as a case study.

Again, studies have shown that there is a relationship between human capital and labour market dynamics. Thus, human capital is key in enhancing sustainable development. For instance, Kabbani and Kamel (2021) in their study of a cross-sectional analysis of labor markets in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have shown that there is a disparity between educational outputs and labor market demands. They further discovered that high rate of unemployment, especially among university graduates has impeded development. On the contrary, countries such as the United Arab Emirate and Qatar have prioritized education as a critical sector for government reforms, but relied heavily on foreign experts for their technical and skilled jobs (ILO, 2022). This shows that there is a mismatch between education and development in the United Arab Emirates and Qatar since the graduates from both countries depend on foreign experts for their developmental needs.

World Bank report (2021) has shown that quality of institutions are key factors in influencing economic performance. The report identified UAE and Jordan as Arab nations with better governance metrics and that they are presently experiencing higher levels of foreign direct investment and innovation. Conversely, Arab countries such as Syria, Yemen, and Iraq that are affected by political instability, have witnessed regressed economic development indicators (Devarajan & Mottaghi, 2020).

In a related development, Bruckner and Ciccone's (2019) study has shown that conflicts have had a profound impact on economic stability and growth in Syria. They further argued that countries experiencing civil conflicts witnessed a 2.5% annual decrease in GDP growth compared to peaceful counterparts. For instance, the conflict in Syria, has led to a drastic decline in human capital, infrastructure, and production capacity.

Furthermore, studies have shown that many Arab nations have adopted trade liberalization policies to stimulate economic growth. But empirical data from the IMF (2021) shows that countries such as Morocco and Jordan, which have signed trade agreements with the European Union and United States, have experienced modest growth in exports and industrial production. However, challenges such as regulatory inefficiencies and lack of technological readiness continue to impede competitiveness.

Empirical analysis by the World Economic Forum ([2023](#)) revealed that increasing female labor force participation could boost regional GDP by an estimated 27%. Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia have recently undertaken reforms to integrate more women into the workforce, with preliminary data showing positive economic implications (AlFaris & AlSheikh, [2022](#)). This further shows that gender dynamics play a critical role in development

The above review of empirical research on Arab nations in the Middle East demonstrates that while natural resources have driven short-term economic gains, sustainable development depends on institutional quality, diversification, human capital investment, and inclusive governance. It is against this background that this study seeks to probe into the drivers of violent conflicts within Arab states and its implications for sustainable peace and development in the region within the framework of political analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The slogan “Arab solutions to Arab problems” encapsulates the desire among Arab states to address regional crises through indigenous mechanisms rather than external intervention. This principle gained traction during the post–Arab Spring period and has guided regional responses to conflicts in Libya, Yemen, and Syria. However, its outcomes have been uneven, revealing the complexity of Arab political dynamics. To explain this phenomenon, this study adopts Realism, a dominant theory in International Relations that prioritizes state interest, power, and survival in an anarchic international system (Morgenthau, [1948](#); Waltz, [1979](#)). By situating Arab behavior within realist assumptions, this essay argues that “Arab solutions to Arab problems” primarily represents a strategy of power politics rather than a genuine framework for collective regional cooperation.

Realism posits that the international system is characterized by anarchy, where no central authority exists to enforce order. States, therefore, act in pursuit of their national interest, defined largely in terms of power and security (Waltz, [1979](#)). From this standpoint, “Arab solutions to Arab problems” can be understood as an expression of state sovereignty and a mechanism of regional power balancing. For example, the Saudi-led intervention in Bahrain in 2011 under the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) framework was justified as an “Arab solution,” yet its underlying motive

was to prevent Iranian influence and suppress potential regime change that could threaten monarchical stability (Gause, [2014a](#)). Similarly, the Arab League's endorsement of Arab military intervention in Libya in 2011, and the subsequent split over Syria, reflected competition among major Arab states such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Egypt, each seeking to advance its strategic position rather than pursuing collective welfare (Lynch, [2016](#)).

In realist terms, these actions demonstrate that power and security calculations dominate regional initiatives, while cooperation occurs only when it aligns with national interests. The principle of “Arab solutions” thus operates within a realist logic of self-help, where each state uses regional rhetoric to legitimize its pursuit of dominance. The realist theory also sheds light on the persistent fragmentation within the Arab world. Despite shared language and culture, Arab states rarely achieve unified responses to crises. This fragmentation can be explained by the balance of power system, in which states compete to prevent any one actor from achieving regional hegemony (Mearsheimer, [2001](#)).

For instance, the Qatar–Saudi Arabia rift between 2014 and 2021 demonstrated how conflicting visions of regional order undermined attempts at collective Arab problem-solving. Each state supported opposing factions in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, effectively transforming Arab conflicts into arenas of inter-Arab rivalry (Hinnebusch, [2014](#)). Even the Arab League, often presented as the institutional embodiment of “Arab solutions,” has been weakened by power asymmetries and divergent interests among its members (Barnett & Solingen, [2007](#)). Thus, from a realist standpoint, the failure of Arab collective mechanisms stems not from institutional weakness alone but from the primacy of state interests and the absence of trust among regional actors. Each state's priority is regime survival and relative gain, not regional solidarity.

Another dimension of realism evident in the “Arab solutions” discourse is the strategic management of external powers. While Arab leaders rhetorically reject Western interference, in practice, many rely on alliances with the United States, France, or Russia to secure their regimes (Telhami, [2001](#)). This pragmatic approach reflects realist balancing behavior, where weaker states align with powerful actors to offset threats. For example, during the Syrian civil war, several Arab states supported Western-backed coalitions while simultaneously invoking the need for “Arab-led” approaches. Such contradictions underscore realism's claim that moral

principles are often secondary to pragmatic calculations of power (Morgenthau, [1948](#)). “Arab solutions,” therefore, function as a legitimizing discourse, allowing states to project autonomy while safeguarding their strategic alliances.

While realism provides a convincing explanation for the state-centric and power-driven character of Arab politics, it also reveals the limitations of the “Arab solutions” paradigm. The theory explains why regional cooperation often breaks down because it conflicts with the logic of self-help and relative gains (Waltz, [1979](#)). However, realism underestimates the role of identity, norms, and institutions, which sometimes shape Arab states’ behavior beyond material interests. For example, shared Arab identity and pan-Islamic sentiments occasionally foster symbolic cooperation even when strategic benefits are unclear. Nonetheless, realism remains the most consistent explanatory framework for understanding why the slogan of “Arab solutions” often masks power struggles, regime security concerns, and hegemonic ambitions. It explains why states such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE champion regional autonomy while simultaneously acting unilaterally to protect their own geopolitical interests.

In conclusion, “Arab solutions to Arab problems” reflects a realist political strategy rooted in sovereignty, survival, and power competition rather than genuine collective problem-solving. The principle has been invoked to legitimize interventions, consolidate influence, and counter external threats. Although couched in the language of Arab unity, the practice of regional diplomacy remains dominated by self-interest, balance-of-power dynamics, and security concerns. Realism thus offers a powerful lens for understanding both the rhetoric and reality of Arab politics where cooperation is temporary, alliances are fluid, and power ultimately defines the boundaries of regional action.

Internal Drivers of Violent Conflict in Select Middle Eastern and Gulf Countries

In the literature of Middle East and Arab Studies, violent conflicts across Arab states are attributed to the complexity of the interplay of internal grievances and external influences ranging from sectarianism, authoritarianism, foreign interventions, economic marginalization, and identity politics. Although each country has its unique context, certain cross-cutting issues continue to destabilize the region. It is pertinent to note

also that these violent conflicts vary in nature and intensity but are often driven by similar underlying factors across the region.

One of the drivers of violent conflict in the Arab world is the existence of authoritarian regimes that are politically repressive against their citizens. Today, many Arab states are governed by authoritarian regimes with limited political pluralism. The suppression of political dissent, lack of free elections, and restricted civil liberties have historically triggered mass protests and, in some cases, violent uprisings. For instance, the 2011 Arab Spring revolts in Tunisia, Egypt, Syria, and Libya were sparked by decades of authoritarian rule and unresponsive governance (Lynch, [2012](#)).

Similarly, in Bahrain, the 2011 uprising led the Shi'a majority agitation for reforms from the Sunni monarchy. Also, the Bahrain government crackdown on its citizens with support from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) remains one of the causes of political instability in Bahrain as well as the restriction on political freedom and exclusion of Shi'a groups from the mainstream governance (Gengler, [2015](#); Ulrichsen, [2013](#)).

In Saudi Arabia, an authoritarian monarchical system of governance has imposed political restrictions on citizens' political participation. One of the drivers of violent conflict in Saudi Arabia has been sectarian tensions in the Eastern Province part of the country especially among the Shi'a population. Also, the influence of regional conflicts especially in Yemen have played a major role in conflict escalations in Saudi Arabia. Nevertheless, the rising incidence of unemployed youth and agitations for economic and political reforms in Saudi Arabia constitutes a driver of conflict in the country (Gause, [2014b](#); Hertog, [2010](#)).

Besides, high level of economic marginalization and youth unemployment have been identified as some of the drivers of violent conflicts in the Arab world. Studies have shown that high levels of unemployment, especially among youth, combined with poor economic opportunities and widespread poverty, have fueled frustration and radicalization. Arab countries such as Tunisia and Egypt experienced youth-led revolts fueled by socio-economic exclusion (Achy, [2011](#)). In oil-rich countries such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon among others, wealth disparities and corruption have further intensified public grievances and protest.

The Yemen violent conflicts have been caused by power struggle between the Houthi movement (Zaydi Shi'a) and the internationally recognized government. There is also regional proxy war between Iran (supporting Houthis) and Saudi Arabia (supporting the government). The root causes of this violent conflict have been attributed to socioeconomic marginalization of northern Yemen (Hill, [2017](#); Salisbury, [2015](#)). Moreover, ethnic and sectarian divides in many Arab states have equally become a driver for violent conflict. For instance, sectarian and ethnic tensions are significant drivers of conflict in countries such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon. Studies have shown that the marginalization of Sunni Arabs after the 2003 U.S. invasion in Iraq, contributed to insurgency and later, the rise of ISIS (Dodge, [2013](#)). Similarly, the Syrian civil war was also triggered by sectarian dimensions, pitting Alawites, Sunnis, Kurds, and others against one another (Phillips, [2015](#)).

In Syria, the repressive authoritarian regime of Bashar al-Assad during the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings was faced with massive protest by the Syrians. Other causes of violent conflict include sectarian conflict between Sunni majority and the Alawite-dominated regime. Also, foreign intervention by Russia, Iran, Turkey, and the United States as well as rising extremist groups like ISIS due to the power vacuum in Syria have equally triggered violent conflict (Phillips, [2016](#)). The situation in Afghanistan is similar to Syria where, for decades, foreign intervention by the United States and Russia triggered political instability in the country. Also, the insurgency in Afghanistan by the Taliban and the presence of ISIS-K has further triggered political instability in the country (Barfield, [2010](#)). Moreover, the ethnic divisions among Afghan population, weak political institutions and rising level of poverty have further triggered violent conflicts in Afghanistan (Giustozzi, [2018](#)).

Nevertheless, one of the drivers of violent conflict in Iran has been attributed to internal dissent over political repression, economic hardship, and religious restrictions. Other drivers of violent conflict are centered on grievances among ethnic minority Iranians, especially Kurds, Balochs and Arabs. Again, the rising political tension with the West especially with the United States and regional rivals such Saudi Arabia, over nuclear ambitions and regional influence, has become an issue of concern in the region (Milani, [2009](#); Vakil, [2022](#)). In Oman, one of the causes of political instability that lasted from 2011 to 2021 have been attributed to rising

incidence of unemployment among the youth and poor political reform that provided the needed platform for inclusive governance as well as agitation for improved economic opportunities and wealth creation (Giustozzi, [2018](#); Valeri, [2010](#)).

However, Lebanon was also faced with violent conflict rooted in deep sectarian divisions that was institutionalized in the political system. Other causes of violent conflict in Lebanon were influenced by the militarization of Hezbollah, backed by Iran as well as the spillover from the Syrian war and economic collapse in Lebanon (Leenders, [2012](#); Makdisi, [2021](#)). In Iraq, sectarian division between the Sunni and Shi'a aftermath on the basis of marginalization of Sunnis under Shi'a-led governments of the 2003 United States invasion remains a driving factor of violent conflict. Also, important to the drivers of violent conflict in Iraq is the emergence of ISIS due to power vacuum and weak Iraqi state capacity (Al-Ali, [2014](#); Dodge, [2013](#)).

In addition, the nature of Arab state fragility and weak political institutions have also contributed to the rising state of violent conflict in the Arab world. Over the years, weak state institutions and poor governance have left many Arab states unable to effectively deliver basic services or maintain security. For instance, the collapse of central authority in countries such as Libya and Yemen over the years has led to violent power struggles between militias and political factions (Berti, [2016](#)). The fragile nature of many Arab states, such as Libya, Syria, Lebanon and Yemen, makes them more vulnerable to armed insurgencies, terrorism, and criminal networks such as ISIS (Islamic State – Libya Province), Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM), Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS), Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), Ahrar al-Sham / Other Salafi Jihadist groups, Hezbollah, ISIS & Al-Qaeda Affiliates (e.g., Fatah al-Islam), Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) and Houthi Movement (Ansar Allah).

In addition, ideological extremism and radicalization have also contributed to the rising violent conflicts in the Arab world. Today, the spread of extremist ideologies, particularly Salafi-jihadism, has contributed to the rise of violent groups such as Al-Qaeda and ISIS. These groups thrive in environments of instability and often exploit local grievances to gain recruits (Gerges, [2016](#)). It is pertinent to note that radical narratives are also enabled by online platforms and transnational networks.

On the whole, the implications of violent conflicts in the Arab states for Sustainable Peace and Development include massive displacement, both internally and across borders. According to United Nations Refugee Agency ([2023](#)), Arab countries such as Syria, Iraq, and Yemen account for millions of refugees and IDPs. This displacement hinders human development and burdens host communities. Again, violent conflicts have led to the destruction of infrastructure and public services in countries such as Sudan, Libya, Yemen, Iraq and Lebanon among others. Also, violent conflict has led to the destruction of essential infrastructure, including health systems, education, and water supply in Syria, Libya, Sudan and Lebanon just to mention a few. Thus, rebuilding post-conflict states takes decades and strains already limited resources (Barakat & Milton, [2021](#)). Furthermore, violent conflicts have been responsible for economic decline and loss of local and foreign investment. Hence, war-torn economies experience capital flight, reduced foreign direct investment, and disrupted trade. For instance, Syria's economy has shrunk by over 60% since 2011 (World Bank, [2020](#)). In addition, violent conflict has led to erosion of social cohesion within and among Arab states. Today, violent conflicts deepen social and sectarian divides, making reconciliation difficult. Long-standing grievances continue to fuel cycles of revenge and violence, obstructing peacebuilding efforts (Kaldor, [2012](#)).

Foreign Interference and Elite Collaboration in Facilitating Peace and Development in the Arab Region

The influence of foreign powers on the Arab world has historically worked through political, military, and economic interventions, often not without collaboration with domestic elites or comprador bourgeoisies (local ruling classes) within many Arab states who align with foreign interests to maintain power and privilege. This dynamic has frequently undermined peace efforts and development in the region. Over the years, foreign powers, especially Western powers, have supported authoritarian regimes in Arab nations in exchange for military bases, oil access, or geopolitical loyalty. These regimes often prioritize foreign agendas over domestic development needs. For instance, the United States and France have benefited from authoritarian regimes by providing political and military support to such regimes. Some of the Arab nations whose authoritarian leaders have received foreign supports to remain in power despite their repressive nature include leaders in Syria, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Bahrain, helping the

authoritarian leaders in these countries to suppress dissent during the Arab Spring (Gerges, [2016](#)).

Similarly, foreign nations especially from the West have fueled conflicts by backing rival factions, using Arab countries as proxy battlegrounds and engaging through direct military interventions. This has exacerbated political instability and has halted development. For instance, in Saudi Arabia, Yemen, United Arab Emirates and Sudan, the U.S. and United Kingdom have backed the government. However, the Iranian government has supported the Houthi rebels against Israel's attacks on Gaza that has caused one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world (Salisbury, [2015](#)).

Subsequently, some Arab elites have pushed for the normalization of political ties with Israel and Western nations in ways that sideline broader peace initiatives or ignore popular sentiment in the region especially on the Palestine cause. For instance, the Abraham Accords have been criticized on the ground that neglect the plight of Palestine as it was supported by political elites from Gulf regimes (Lynch, [2012](#)). Hence, the normalization of some diplomatic ties and strategic alignments with some western nations such as the United States and Israel has been widely perceived within the Arab world as elite conspiracy against the general sentiments of the Arabs.

Furthermore, foreign intervention and proxy wars remain key in explaining some of the violent conflicts in the Arab world. For decades now, foreign intervention has played a major role in fueling violent conflicts in the Arab world. For instance, the civil wars in Libya, Syria, and Yemen, just to mention a few, have remained unabated due to foreign military intervention and financial support to opposing factions. The contemporary rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran has particularly intensified sectarian conflicts across the Middle East for some years now (Wehrey, [2013](#)). Again, western interventions, such as the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq, and the role of Russia and China in Syria have also contributed to the destabilization of Syria in recent years.

It is pertinent to note that the role of the comprador bourgeoisie in Arab states is often not separated from the unending violent conflict in the region. It can be argued that business and political elites in Arab states benefit from foreign economic and political ties with the west by facilitating foreign influence in the region through profiting from arms deals and foreign aid, lobbying for policies that favour foreign investors and suppress opposition

groups within Arab states to maintain the status quo. For instance, in Lebanon, sectarian elites maintain a corrupt economic order while soliciting Western and Gulf aid, exacerbating inequality and governance failure in the region.

Arab Solution to Arab Problem: A Critical Appraisal

Arab nations have adopted a number of neoliberal economic reforms that have been treated with mixed-feelings owing to what is at stake politically, economically and socially. It can be argued that despite the adoption of neoliberal economic and political reforms in significant numbers of Arab nations such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE among others, the type of development experienced can be described as “dependent development”. This is a type of development in which Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and UAE and other Arab nations would continually dependent on the developed countries especially western nations for their developmental needs.

Today, many Arab nations have adopted Western-style economic and political reforms in a bid to modernize their economies, improve governance, and integrate more deeply into the global system. These adoptions have produced mixed outcomes, depending on national contexts and implementation frameworks. Arab countries such as Egypt, Jordan, and Tunisia undertook economic liberalization policies in the 1990s and 2000s that were inspired by Western neoliberal models.

Again, World Bank and IMF policies are often influenced by Western nations. The implementation of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) by most Arab nations ended up enriching a few elites at the expense of the masses. Again, it was responsible for the widening of social and economic inequality and the weakening of public services delivery. For instance, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, has recommended Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) for Egypt to reduce government subsidies, privatized state-owned enterprises, and deregulated markets (Springborg, [2011](#)). The consequences of Egypt’s implementation of the SAPs led to short-term growth and improved macroeconomic indicators. However, the long term consequences in Egypt include a widened level of social inequality, unemployment, and popular discontent among Egyptians (Kienle, [2003](#)) that triggered the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

. Consequently, Jordan and Tunisia adopted the neoliberal reforms

which supported the enrichment of a few elites and international lenders through the implementation of subsidies removal and reduction in public spending that triggered social and political unrest (Hanieh, [2013](#)). The implication of the adoption of the structural adjustment programmes to the implementing countries in the Arab world is that it often leads to economic dependency and debt diplomacy (Hanieh, [2013](#)).

Moreover, Arab nations such as Morocco and Jordan's adoption of Western-Style Governance and Political Reforms (constitutional reforms and parliamentary elections resembling Western democratic institutions) has arguably not improved governance in the respective countries. These included measures to increase transparency, decentralization, and participation (Yom & Gause, [2012](#)). However, these constitutional reforms and parliamentary elections resembling Western democratic institutions have often been criticized as cosmetic or superficial, maintaining monarchical power structures while offering limited real political transformation. Nonetheless, they have helped maintain regime stability in turbulent regional contexts.

Again, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar have adopted Western-style business environments, with low taxes, free zones, and open Free Market Policies and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Promotion policies. These models, similar to those in Western capitalist economies, have contributed to rapid diversification and turned cities like Dubai and Doha into global business hubs (Hertog, [2010](#)). Nevertheless, the gains from these reforms are beneficial to a small elite class, while large segments of migrant laborers and citizens remain excluded from the full benefits of growth, leading to critiques of inequality and lack of labor rights (Kanna, [2011](#)).

Furthermore, Arab countries such as Saudi Arabia and the UAE have reformed their education systems by integrating Western-style curricula, promoting STEM education, and partnering with American and European universities. In Saudi Arabia and the UAE, universities from the United States exist (Davidson, [2012](#)). The educational reforms in Saudi Arabia and the UAE aim to foster innovation and reduce dependence on oil. The initial outcomes of this educational reform show improved global rankings and academic achievements. However, there are challenges of aligning these western educational models with Arab cultures and job market needs in Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

A critical analysis of Arab nations' experimentation with western political and economic style of reforms has shown that impact of these reforms has not improved the level of development in these nations. One of the major economic challenges facing oil producing countries in the Arab world such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Libya, Algeria, Qatar and Oman include overdependence on oil revenues. Today, significant numbers of oil producing countries especially those in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), rely heavily on oil exports for government revenues and GDP. The implication of the dependence of most Arab nations on oil is that it exposes their economy to international oil price volatility, which can severely impact fiscal budgets and economic stability (Elbadawi & Soto, [2015](#)). Furthermore, the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic has further exposed the vulnerabilities of these Arab oil-dependent economies (IMF, [2021](#)).

Again, the issue of unemployment, especially among the youth in many Arab nations, is another challenging issue that requires urgent attention by most Arab leaders. The Arab region has some of the highest youth unemployment rates in the world, despite relatively high levels of education. Thus, this structural mismatch between education outputs and labour market needs, along with limited private sector job creation, has led to a growing disenfranchised youth population from the mainstream development process in the Arab world (World Bank, [2018](#)).

Moreover, the Arab world is equally faced with the challenges of weak institutional frameworks and governance crisis that have impeded economic growth and development. For instance, corruption, limited level of transparency, and bureaucratic inefficiencies have long plagued public institutions in many Arab countries. These challenges of governance have reduced foreign and local investors' confidence, which is key for economic diversification and sustainable development (Saif, [2009](#)).

Furthermore, violent conflict and political instability has remained major impediments to sustainable economic growth and development as well as political stability in the Arab world. For instance, the ongoing violent conflicts in countries like Syria, Yemen, Sudan, and Gaza strip have had devastating consequences on economies of the affected countries with millions of displaced persons mostly women and children, which has negative consequences on regional trade. Besides, studies have shown that even in more stable countries, political unrest and authoritarian governance

has the capacity to impede long-term investment and hinder economic and political reform implementation (United Nations, [2023](#)).

Today, many Arab nations have limited chances for economic diversification due to failure of neoliberal economic reforms to provide the needed drivers for economic growth and development. While some progress has been made by the UAE and Saudi Arabia through their respective Vision 2030 plans, many Arab economies still lack a robust non-oil sector capable of driving sustainable development (Hertog, [2013](#)). Also important is the issue of how water scarcity and environmental degradation compound economic development challenges in most Arab nations. The Middle East is one of the most water-scarce regions in the world, which affects agriculture, public health, and industrial activity, thereby limiting economic productivity (Food and Agriculture Organization, [2023](#)). Therefore, every sincere effort at addressing these challenges requires comprehensive policy reforms, investments in human capital, enhanced regional cooperation, and long-term commitment to economic diversification and institutional strengthening.

It is against this background that President Ismail Omar Guelleh of Djibouti, in an interview with Asharq Al-Awsat, expressed his hope that Arab summits would lead to recommendations and decisions that would help resolve the critical situations and difficult conditions faced by the Arab world. He emphasized the importance of maintaining unity and solidarity among Arab brothers. He also stated that bringing Syria back into the Arab League could improve security and stability in the war-torn country. He believes that Arab mechanisms should take priority over foreign solutions (Zaki, [2023](#)). Also, Hossam Zaki, Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab League, shared a similar view. He pointed out that regional gatherings offer a chance to mobilize various mechanisms of Arab action to address the serious crisis in Sudan. He warned that leaving crises open to outside interference could weaken Arab national security, stressing that collective Arab action must be the first response (Zaki, [2023](#)).

Moreover, the Jordan's Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi echoed this perspective during the 2025 Munich Security Conference as he revealed that Jordan and other Arab states were working on a joint proposal for rebuilding Gaza. He stated, "we can rebuild Gaza without displacing its people," highlighting that Israelis must also see the need for regional peace to ensure their own security. This proposal shows an Arab-led strategy aimed at

avoiding externally imposed plans that often lack local support (Irish, [2025](#)). Similarly, the Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi echoed this regional vision at the March 2025 Arab Summit. He presented Egypt's \$53 billion plan for Gaza's reconstruction. He urged Arab states to adopt and support it, positioning the plan as a local response to Palestinian suffering and a counter to foreign proposals that are seen as threats to regional stability (Magdy & Jahjouh, [2025](#); Tabikha, [2025](#)).

On the whole, these voices together highlight a consistent message: sustainable solutions to Arab crises need to come from within the region itself. By focusing on Arab-led mediation and reconstruction, leaders aim to protect sovereignty, lessen reliance on outside actors, and build stability through culturally relevant methods. While challenges still exist, such as divisions among Arab states and the weak enforcement capabilities of regional organizations, the increasing focus on "Arab solutions to Arab problems" marks a determined effort to reclaim agency and legitimacy in dealing with regional conflicts.

Conclusion

The idea of "Arab solutions to Arab problems" is used in this study to support the argument that Arab states should take more responsibility for resolving violent conflicts and internal issues without relying too much on foreign help. This reflects a growing agreement among Arab leaders and scholars that lasting peace and stability in the region can only be reached through local methods that consider the historical, cultural, and political realities of Arab societies. Looking at the ongoing conflicts in Arab states shows that both internal and external factors contribute to the situation. Inside these countries, unequal socio-economic and political conditions are major causes of unrest. High unemployment rates, especially among young people, limited political inclusion, and widespread corruption have led to frustration with state institutions. Long-standing tensions among different ethnic, sectarian, and tribal groups have worsened divisions, often leading to violent struggles for state resources and political control. The lack of effective governance and fair wealth distribution has created an environment where grievances can quickly turn into armed conflict. On the outside, conflicts in Arab states are worsened by the interests of foreign powers. Geopolitical competition, military actions, and economic sanctions have extended instability and increased reliance on outside actors. The spread of certain ideologies such as political Islam, pan-Arabism, or other

regional visions has interacted with internal divisions, deepening splits among local groups. These external influences rarely operate alone; they work alongside internal issues, creating a cycle of fragmentation and instability. The main question is whether local regional efforts can lead to lasting peace. Arab-led initiatives have the benefit of cultural legitimacy and a better understanding of local disputes. Regional organizations, traditional mediation methods, and intra-Arab diplomacy are often better equipped to find solutions that outside actors struggle to achieve. However, regional institutions like the Arab League face challenges, including a lack of power enforcement and internal rivalries that prevent effective collective action. Despite these challenges, the regionalist approach tied to "Arab solutions to Arab problems" presents a strong alternative to relying on outside help. It encourages Arab states to improve their institutions, promote inclusive governance, and tackle socio-economic issues while creating ways to lessen the harmful effects of foreign interventions. The success of this approach will depend on whether Arab states can bridge internal divides and focus on cooperation rather than competition. If these conditions are fulfilled, the principle could move from being a theoretical idea to a practical way to resolve conflicts and ensure long-term stability in the Arab world.

Recommendations

Tackling the deep-rooted religious and ethnic divisions fuel conflict and hinder national unity. Arab nations should promote inclusive governance at every level. This will help to ensure fair representation of all sects and ethnic groups in government institutions.

Concentration of power and lack of democratic accountability stifle political and social progress and can be addressed through gradual political reform through the introduction of electoral reforms, independent judiciaries, and term limits for executives.

To address the problem of how external powers often exploit internal divisions, undermining sovereignty and stability, it is important for Arab nations to build stronger alliances like the Arab League or GCC to collectively manage external influence, adopt balanced foreign policies that prioritize national interests over global power alignments and resolving internal divisions that open the door for foreign meddling.

The Arab nations should invest more on critical infrastructure such as

education, health, human capital development among others.

Addressing the problem of high unemployment, unequal wealth distribution, and reliance on oil lead to instability. Diversification of the Arab economy can be done by investing in technology, renewable energy, tourism, and agriculture. Creating education-to-employment pipelines and encouraging entrepreneurship as well as implementing transparent governance in public spending and procurement is important.

The challenges of ethnic, tribal, or religious identity often overshadow national identity and citizenship. Therefore, Arab nations should promote civic nationalism by emphasizing shared national identity over sectarian or ethnic affiliations. Also, ensuring all citizens are treated equally under the law, regardless of identity is necessary.

Author Contribution

Zekeri Momoh: sole author

Conflict of Interest

The author of the manuscript has no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

Data Availability Statement

Data supporting the findings of this study will be made available by the corresponding author upon request.

Funding Details

No funding has been received for this research.

Generative AI Disclosure Statement

The authors did not use any type of generative artificial intelligence software for this research.

References

- Achy, L. (2011). *Youth unemployment in the Middle East and North Africa: Determinants and challenges*. Carnegie Middle East Center.
- Al-Ali, Z. (2014). *The Struggle for Iraq's Future: How Corruption, Incompetence and Sectarianism Have Undermined Democracy*. Yale University Press.
- AlFaris, F., & AlSheikh, M. (2022). The economic impact of women's labor market reforms in Saudi Arabia. *Journal of Middle Eastern Economics*, 14(2), 112–130.
- Amin, G. (1982). *The Arab economy today*. Zed Press.

- Ayubi, N. N. (1995). *Over-stating the Arab state: Politics and society in the Middle East*. I.B. Tauris.
- Barakat, S., & Milton, S. (2021). Post-conflict reconstruction in the Arab world: A regional perspective. *Middle East Development Journal*, 13(2), 167–185.
- Barfield, T. (2010). *Afghanistan: A cultural and political history*. Princeton University Press.
- Barnett, M., & Solingen, E. (2007). Designed to fail or failure of design? The sources and institutional effects of the Arab League. *Regional Politics and Policy*, 37(2), 189–212.
- Berti, B. (2016). *Armed political organizations: From conflict to integration*. Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bruckner, M., & Ciccone, A. (2019). Conflict and economic growth in the Middle East: Empirical evidence. *Economics of Peace and Security Journal*, 13(1), 25–32.
- Cammett, M., Diwan, I., Richards, A., & Waterbury, J. (2015). *A political economy of the Middle East* (4th ed.). Westview Press.
- Davidson, C. (2012). *The Persian Gulf States: Stability and Political Transformation*. Routledge.
- Devarajan, S., & Mottaghi, L. (2020). *Middle East and North Africa economic update: Trading together*. World Bank Group.
- Dodge, T. (2013). *Iraq: From War to a New Authoritarianism*. Routledge.
- El-Anis, I. (2020). Oil dependency and economic diversification in the Gulf: A panel data approach. *Energy Economics Review*, 45(3), 355–369.
- Elbadawi, I., & Soto, R. (2015). Resource rents, political institutions and economic growth. *Economic Systems*, 39(3), 399–423. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecosys.2014.06.002>
- Food and Agriculture Organization. (2023). *Water scarcity and climate change enabling environment analysis for WASH: Middle East and North Africa*. <https://www.fao.org/platforms/water-scarcity/Knowledge/partners-contributions/detail/water-scarcity-and-climate-change-enabling-environment-analysis-for-wash-middle-east->

[and-north-africa/en](#)

- Gause, F. G. (2014a). *Beyond sectarianism: The new Middle East cold war*. Brookings
- Gause, F. G. (2014b). *Saudi Arabia in the new Middle East*. Council on Foreign Relations.
- Gengler, J. (2015). *Group conflict and political mobilization in Bahrain and the Arab Gulf*. Indiana University Press.
- Gerges, F. A. (2016). *ISIS: A history*. Princeton University Press.
- Giustozzi, A. (2018). *The Taliban at War: 2001–2018*. Oxford University Press.
- Hanieh, A. (2013). *Lineages of revolt: Issues of contemporary capitalism in the Middle East*. Haymarket Books.
- Hertog, S. (2010). *Princes, Brokers, and bureaucrats: Oil and the state in Saudi Arabia*. Cornell University Press.
- Hertog, S. (2013). *Saudi Arabia's vision 2030 and the challenge of economic diversification*. Columbia Center on Global Energy Policy.
- Hertog, S. (2020). *Vision 2030 and Saudi Arabia's social contract: Austerity and transformation*. LSE Middle East Centre.
- Hill, G. (2017). *Yemen Endures: Civil war, Saudi adventurism and the future of Arabia*. Oxford University Press.
- Hinnebusch, R. (2014). The politics of identity in Middle East international relations. In L. Fawcett (Ed.), *International relations of the Middle East* (pp. 148–170). Oxford University Press.
- Hvidt, M. (2019). *Economic Diversification in GCC Countries: Past record and future trends*. LSE Kuwait Programme.
- International Monetary Fund. (2023, March 23). *Lebanon: Staff concluding statement of the 2022 Article IV mission*. <https://www.imf.org/en/news/articles/2023/03/23/lebanon-staff-concluding-statement-of-the-2023-article-iv-mission>.
- Irish, J. (2025, February 15). *Arab proposal for Gaza in works, but Jordan can't take more Palestinians, minister says*. Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/arab-proposal-gaza-works->

[jordan-cant-take-more-palestinians-minister-says-2025-02-14/](#)

- Kabbani, N., & Kamel, N. (2021). Youth unemployment in the Middle East: Structural causes and policy responses. Brookings Institution.
- Kaldor, M. (2012). *New and old wars: Organized violence in a global era* (3rd ed.). Polity Press.
- Kanna, A. (2011). *Dubai: The city as corporation*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Kienle, E. (2003). *A grand delusion: Democracy and economic reform in Egypt*. I.B. Tauris.
- Leenders, R. (2012). *Spoils of truce: Corruption and state-building in postwar Lebanon*. Cornell University Press.
- Luciani, G. (1990). *The Arab state*. University of California Press.
- Luciani, G. (2005). Oil and political economy in the international relations of the Middle East. In L. Fawcett (Ed.), *International relations of the Middle East* (pp. 79–101). Oxford University Press.
- Lynch, M. (2012). *The Arab uprising: The unfinished revolutions of the new Middle East*. Public Affairs.
- Lynch, M. (2016). *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East*. PublicAffairs.
- Magdy, S., & Jahjough, M. (2025, March 4). *Arab leaders endorse Egypt's plan to rebuild Gaza as an alternative to Trump's proposal*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/israel-palestinians-hamas-war-news-ceasefire-hostages-03-04-2025-35f1959c28ad3c57a209f5464f2b5411>
- Makdisi, S. (2021). *Lebanon's crisis: Failure of the confessional state*. Carnegie Middle East Center.
- Mearsheimer, J. J. (2001). *The tragedy of great power politics*. W. W. Norton & Company.
- Milani, M. (2009). *Iran's foreign policy in the Post-Soviet Era*. Praeger.
- Morgenthau, H. J. (1948). *Politics among nations: The struggle for power and peace*. Knopf.
- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2021). *Economic diversification in Arab countries*. OECD.

- Owen, R., & Pamuk, Ş. (1998). *A history of Middle East economies in the twentieth century*. Harvard University Press.
- Phillips, C. (2015). *The Sectarianism of the Syrian War: A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy*. Carnegie Endowment.
- Phillips, C. (2016). *The battle for Syria: International rivalry in the New Middle East*. Yale University Press.
- Saif, I. (2009). *The oil boom in the GCC countries, 2002–2008*. Carnegie Middle East Center.
- Salisbury, P. (2015). *Yemen and the Saudi–Iranian ‘Cold War’*. Chatham House.
- Springborg, R. (2011). Egypt’s second try: Economic liberalization and its discontents. *Middle East Policy*, 18(2), 1–14.
- Tabikha, K. (2025, March 4). *Averting another Nakba: Arab leaders stress Palestinians’ right to land, back Egypt’s Gaza plan*. The National News.
<https://www.thenationalnews.com/news/mena/2025/03/04/averting-another-nakba-arab-leaders-stress-palestinians-right-to-their-land/>
- Telhami, S. (2001). *Identity and foreign policy in the Middle East*. Cornell University Press.
- Ulrichsen, K. C. (2013). *The Gulf states in international political economy*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2021). *Arab human development report*. United Nations Development Programme.
- United Nations Global Humanitarian Overview. (2019, December 3). *Global humanitarian overview* 2020.
<https://www.unocha.org/publications/report/world/global-humanitarian-overview-2020-enarfrzh>
- United Nations Refugee Agency. (2023). *Global trends: Forced displacement in 2023*. <https://www.onlinelibrary.iihl.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/2023-UNHCR-Global-Trends-report-%E2%80%93forced-displacement-2023.pdf>
- United Nations. (2023). *Survey of economic and social developments in the Arab Region* 2021–2022.

<https://www.unescwa.org/publications/survey-economic-social-development-arab-region>

- Vakil, S. (2022). *Iran and the Gulf States: Between confrontation and coexistence*. Chatham House.
- Valeri, M. (2010). *Oman: Politics and society in the Qaboos state*. Oxford University Press.
- Wallerstein, I. (2004). *World-systems analysis: An introduction*. Duke University Press.
- Waltz, K. N. (1979). *Theory of international politics*. Addison-Wesley.
- Wehrey, F. (2013). *Sectarian politics in the gulf*. Columbia University Press.
- World Bank. (2018, November 23). *Expectations and aspirations: A new framework for education in the Middle East and North Africa*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/mena/publication/expectations-and-aspirations-a-new-framework-for-education-in-the-middle-east-and-north-africa>
- World Bank. (2020, July 17). *The fallout of war: The regional consequences of the conflict in Syria*. <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/mena/publication/fallout-of-war-in-syria>
- World Bank. (2022). *Jobs in the Middle East and North Africa: Statistics and Trends*. World Bank.
- World Economic Forum. (2023). *Global gender gap report 2023*. WEF Publications.
- Yom, S. L., & Gause, F. G. (2012). Resilient royals: How Arab monarchies hang on. *Journal of Democracy*, 23(4), 74–88. <https://doi.org/10.1353/jod.2012.0062>
- Zaki, H. (2023, May 3). *Arab League summit to seek Arab solutions to Arab problems*. Arab News. <https://www.arabnews.com/node/2297156>