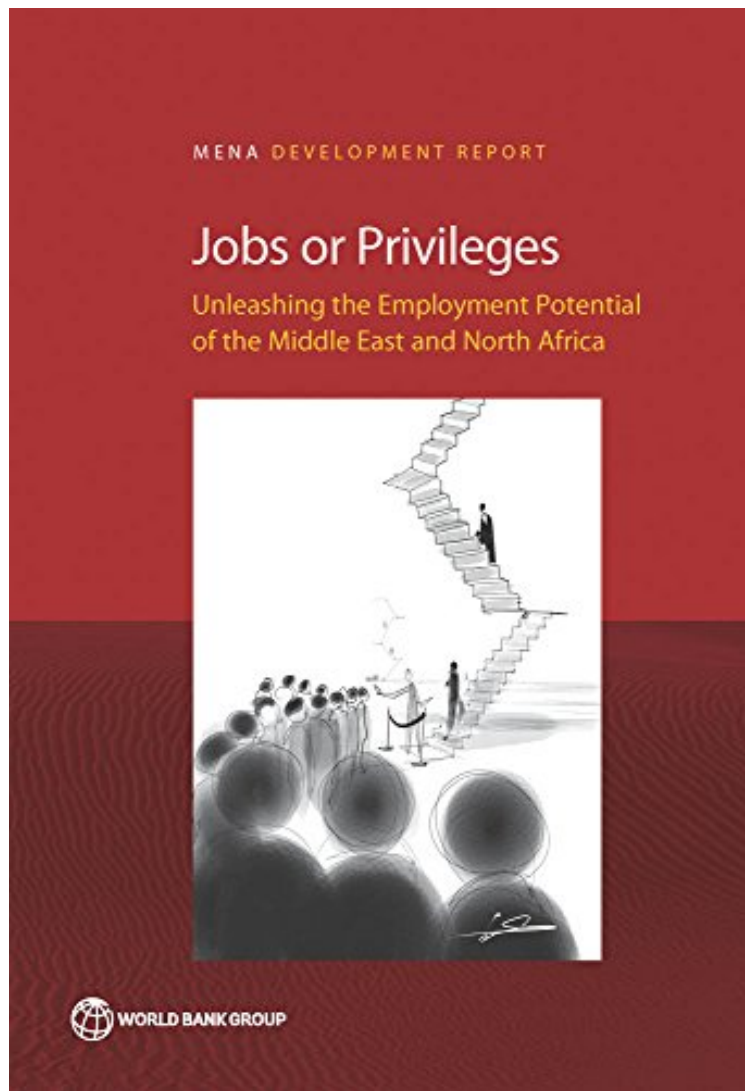


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Jobs or Privileges: Unleashing the Employment Potential of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA Development Report)

Hania Sahnoun, Philip Keefer, Marc Schiffbauer, Abdoulaye Sy, Sahar Hussain
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Hania Sahnoun, Philip Keefer, Marc Schiffbauer, Abdoulaye Sy, Sahar Hussain : Jobs or Privileges: Unleashing the Employment Potential of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA Development Report) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Jobs or Privileges: Unleashing the Employment Potential of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA Development Report):

The report *Jobs or Privileges: Unleashing the Employment Potential of the Middle East and North Africa* shows that policies that lower competition and create an uneven playing field are common and constrain private sector job creation. These policies take different forms across countries and sectors but share several common features: They limit free entry in the domestic market, exclude certain firms from government programs, increase regulatory burden and uncertainty on the majority of firms, insulate certain firms and sectors from foreign competition, and create incentives that discourage domestic firms from competing in international markets. *Jobs or Privileges* demonstrates that these policies are often captured by a few privileged firms with deep political connections and persist despite their cost to society. As such, MENA countries face a critical choice as they strive to generate greater private sector growth and more jobs: promote competition, provide equal opportunities for all entrepreneurs, and dismantle the current system of privileges for connected firms or risk perpetuating the current equilibrium of low job creation. However, the millions of workers, consumers, and the majority of entrepreneurs who bear the brunt of that cost are often unaware of the adverse effects of such policies on the jobs and economic opportunities to which they aspire. This lack of information and awareness limits the scope for the internal debate and policy dialogue necessary for reform.