

Sara Samir Ashour

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Objective

A detail oriented and quality conscious Trade Policy Analyst with more than eleven years of experience in trade, public policy, development and research. Keen to enrich my experience in trade and development issues whilst leaving a positive footprint and bringing about constructive change to my workplace.

Education

Ph.D. Agriculture Economics

Faculty of Life Sciences, Universität Humboldt Zu Berlin

- Dissertation entitled “Trade and Food Security Nexus: Can Trade Facilitation Mitigate Future Food Crises in Jordan?”

Jan 2023 – Dec 2025

M.A. Development and Governance, Grade: 1.9

Institut für Politikwissenschaft, Universität Duisburg-Essen, Germany.

- Dissertation entitled “Using Insights About Human Behavior to Improve Public Policy Making: Case Studies of Policy Programs within Energy Field in Established Democracies and Their Implications for Developing Countries.”

Oct 2014 – Oct 2015

G-20 Global Leaders Fellowship

Korea Development Institute (KDI), Seoul, South Korea.

Sep - Nov 2012

B.A. Political Science, Very good with Rank of Honor

Faculty of Economics and Political Science (Major: Political Science - Minor: Statistics), Cairo University, Egypt.

Sep 2006 – Sep 2010

- Dissertation entitled “Creativity and Political Reality: the role of Political Satire in shaping Political Culture in the Egyptian Society”

Professional Experience

Agriculture Policy Expert

Strengthening Market Transparency and Enhancing Food Security Project, Food and Agriculture Organization

Data collection and analysis on agricultural policies, consumer and export subsidies, and government role with regards to the basic agriculture commodities in the Egyptian Market.

June-Aug 2023

Trade Expert

Trade Facilitation and Policy for Business Department, International Trade Center (Geneve)

Conducting an assessment of the current electronic Certificate of Origin process and developing recommendations towards the introduction of full paperless Certification of Origin services.

Oct-Dec 2022

Project Associate

International Labour Organization, Decent Work for Women in Egypt and Tunisia Project & Promoting Gender Responsive Workplaces in Egypt Project

- Assist in planning projects’ activities and monitoring the progress of the projects activities by reviewing, verifying and analyzing technical and financial progress reports.
- Assist in the programming and control of projects resources, prepare budget estimates and expenditure forecasts.
- Organizing, attending and participating in stakeholder meetings/trainings.
- Documenting and following up on important action and decisions taken during meetings.

Aug 2019-July 2021

MENA Region Advisor

University of St. Gallen, Trade Policy Alert Initiative.

Conducting research and integrating several economic and commercial policy updates within more than 20 MENA countries within the initiative’s database.

May 2019 – April 2020



Trade Advisor

March – June 2018

Embassy of Denmark, Trade Council of Denmark in Egypt.

Offering tailored advice within the following fields:

- Public affairs: stakeholder management and access to key decision-makers,
- Market intelligence: monitoring business opportunities, competitor analysis, trends and market potential,
- Identifying possible Egyptian partners and joint ventures,
- Organizing programs for visits: seminars, meetings, and road shows for clients/authorities,
- Export promotion events for Danish companies.

Freelance Researcher

Dec 2015 – Feb 2016

N Gage Consulting

Establishing Investment promotion country reports for several East African countries (ex. Kenya – South Africa - Ethiopia – Zambia).

Intern

Feb - April 2015

German Development Institute/ DIE, Sustainable Economic and Social Development Department

Assisting the Department in all matters needed, covering the Egypt Economic Development Conference, and drafting a paper on Egypt Economic Development Conference entitled “What comes after the Adrenaline rush: Egypt’s Economic Development plan show or real substance?” as one of the requirements for my MA degree.

Trade Policy Analyst

April 2012 – Aug 2022

Ministry of Foreign Trade and Industry, Trade Agreement and Foreign Trade Sector.

(Aug 2021- Aug 2022): Central Department for Rules of Origin.

(March–July 2019): Central Department for World Trade Organization’s Affairs: preparing the Egyptian position concerning some of the trade in goods issues, specifically non-preferential rules of origin, trade related investment measures, and some of the e-commerce topics concerning digitizable goods.

(Oct 2015 – March 2019): Central Department for Rules of Origin.

- Negotiating Rules of Origin for bilateral and regional trade agreements (ex. Regional Convention on Pan-Euro-Med Convention, African Tripartite, Continental Free Trade Agreements, and FTAs with Eurasian Economic Commission and the UK) and preparing relevant national position.
- Following up on the implementation of the rules of origin within the on-going trade agreements (ex. Agadir – Turkey & Egypt FTA – EU & Egypt FTA) and monitoring any difficulties in the verification process with affiliated national bodies.
- Providing legal interpretation to customs authority and economic operators for the signed rules of origin protocols in case of dispute.
- Synchronizing rules of origin within national legislations with commitments in international trade agreements.
- Raising awareness among economic operators on the proper implementation of the in-force rules of origin protocols.
- Drafting user-manuals comparing rules of origin within the in-force protocols.

(Oct 2015- Jan 2017): Arab-Mediterranean Free Trade Area (Agadir) Agreement Unit.

Working within the Egyptian focal point team and coordinating between foreign and local stakeholders within different areas of the agreement. Specifically, participated in:

- Drafting of the Agadir dispute settlement protocol,
- Drafting the rules and procedures for the Agadir Business Council,
- Revising some Sectorial studies among Agadir countries,
- Participating in Member states’ evaluation of the Agadir process in 2016,



- Participating in the meetings of Agadir Customs Council.

(April 2012 – April 2014): Trade Promotion Officer at Russian and Eastern Europe Department: Responsible for Russian Trade profile and coming up with new ideas on how to consolidate trade and industrial relations with some Eastern European countries.

Freelance Writer

Dec 2011 - April 2012

Atlantic Council's Egypt Source Blog.

Commenting on political and development issues post the 2011 revolution.

Research Assistant

July 2011 - Jan 2012

George Washington University (Cairo field research).

Supporting Professor Nathan Brown during his field research visits to Egypt after the 2011 revolution. Main tasks were to manage all administrative issues, interview setting with relevant figures, research the interview topics, provide insights post interviews, and translate if needed

Seminars and Courses

- “Economic Modeling with GAMS Software.” Justus Liebig Universität Giessen, 17-21 July 2023, Giessen.
- “*Applied Computable General Equilibrium Modeling.*” Humboldt Zu Berlin Universität, 10-14 October 2022, online.
- “*FAO Regional Training Course on Facilitating Trade for Food Security.*” Delivered by experts from FAO, ITC, WTO and other International Organizations, 30 May – 3 June, Rabat.
- “*Introduction to Blockchain for Trade.*” ITC SME Trade Academy, June 2021, online.
- “*Trade and Gender linkages, with optional module on MERCOSUR.*” UNCTAD, 23 March- 17 May 2020, online.
- “*Adding Value to the Origin of Products Through Geographical Indications.*” ITC SME Trade Academy, February 2020, online.
- “*Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Non-Discrimination,*” ILO E-learning courses, October 2019, online.
- “*Women and Procurement,*” ITC SME Trade Academy, October 2019, online.
- Executive Seminar on “*Trade Negotiation in an Era of Uncertainty,*” European University Institute: Academy of Global Governance, 15-17 April 2019, Florence.
- “*Workshop on Digitalization of Certificate of Origin,*” International Trade Center, December 2018, Casablanca.
- “*Workshop on Digital Certificates of Origin for Agadir Member States,*” Agadir Unit and European Union, December 2018, Casablanca.
- Executive Seminar on “*Services in the Global Economy: Analytical tools and Policy Frontiers,*” European University Institute: Academy of Global Governance, 11-13 July 2018, Florence.
- “*Tunisian Experience in applying Full Accumulation,*” Agadir Technical Unit and Tunisian Customs Authority, 2017, Tunis.
- “*Debate Workshop- How to Formulate and Structure an Argumentation.*” DAAD Kairo Akademie. Cairo University: Faculty of Economics and Political Science. Saturday, 26th of November 2016, Cairo.
- “*Writing for Publication Workshop,*” American Political Science Association. Cairo University: Faculty of Economics and Political Science, 17-19 October 2016, Cairo.
- Course on “*How to Define Potential Trade Markets,*” Foreign Trade Training Center, 2013, Cairo.
- Course on “*Legal Drafting,*” US-AID, 2012, Cairo.

Scholarships and Awards

- Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst (DAAD) Ph.D. Fellowship within the Regional Centre for Sustainable Adaptation to Global Change in the Middle East (SAGE Centre), 2022 – 2025.
- UN Certificate of Excellent Contribution to the Policy Hackathon on Trade in times of crisis amongst 10 other participants world-wide, 2020.
- DAAD Public Policy and Good Governance Masters Scholarship, 2014- 2015.
- Bachelor’s Rank of Honor, Faculty of Economics and Political Science, 2010.

Language and IT Skills

- Languages: Arabic: Mother tongue, English: Excellent written and oral (TOEFL IBT: 95/120), German: Very good written and oral (B2.1), French: Very good oral, good written, Russian: Basic.
- IT Skills: Certified ILO preparer on Integrated Resource Information System (IRIS) for organization's procurement and finance processes, Excellent user of MS Word, MS Power point, MS Excel good, MS Teams and Zoom.

Membership in Committees and Working Groups

- Member of the FAO's Regional Network of Expert on Agriculture Trade (RNE-AT) since January 2022.
- Member in the ILO's Local Oversight Review Committee (LORC) for office procurements above USD 20,000 (January 2020 – August 2021).
- Member of the Trade Expertes Network since Nov 2019.
- Member in the Pan-Euro-Mediterranean Rules of Origin Working Group since January 2016.
- Member of the African Tripartite Rules of Origin Working Group (May 2017-April 2019).

Panelist experience

- "Can Trade Facilitate Mitigate Future Food Crises in the NENA region," IAMO Forum 2023, 21 June 2023.
- "Food Security in the Mediterranean: new solutions for troubling times," MEDAWeek 22, *ASCAME and Union For the Mediterranean*, 16 November 2022.
- "Supporting the Internationalization of SMEs in the Post Pandemic Recovery Effort: Countries' Contributions Through Trade Facilitation," *World Trade Organization's Public Forum*, 28 September 2022.
- "Increased Intra-African Trade to Support Sustainable and Inclusive Recovery: Devising and Applying a Gender Lens to the AfCFTA Protocol on Women," *World Trade Organization's Public Forum*, 28 September 2022.
- "Promoting Food Security and Healthy Diets for All – Making trade work for food security and nutrition in the Near East and North Africa," *FAO Regional Conference for the Near East (NERC-36)- Senior Officers Meeting*, 11 January 2022.
- Trade Facilitation for SMEs, *UNESCAP Webinar Series on Next Generation Trade Facilitation*, 14 December 2021.
- "Global Trading Agreements and Opportunities that Africans can take up," *Africa Trade Conference* organized by Regal Africa Group, 11 November 2021.
- "How Can the Media Play Their Part in Growing Intra-Africa Trade," Pan African Businesswomen's Association's AfCFTA Media Fellowship, 27 March 2021.
- "Expert working group (EWG) Meeting to validate the draft study on Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) Compliance in the SADC region," *UNECA African Trade Policy Centre*, 5 October 2020.

Publications

- "Lessons Learned from Covid-19 Stress Test: Filling the Gaps in Rules of Origin Provisions," *Global Trade and Customs Journal*, Volume 16, Issue 1, Jan 2021.
- "Shared Value Creation and Social Entrepreneurship: One Model Cut From The Same Cloth?" A paper proposal presented at the "Doing Good with Business? – Corporate Social Responsibility, Social Entrepreneurship, and Fair Trade" Conference, Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Bochum, Nov. 2016.
- "Can participatory development cause sustainable development in Egyptian slums?" An academic poster presented at the *14th Competition of the GIZ Initiative "Between Lecture Hall and Project Work"*, Berlin, July 2015.
- "Social Entrepreneurship as a Promising Developmental Path in Post Revolutionary Phase." A paper published at *G-20 Korea Global Leaders Fellowship Half Annual Research publication*. Korea: Korea Development Institute, Fall 2012.
- Some articles published on *Egypt Source Website*:
 - From Rivalry to Riot: What went wrong in Port Said, February 17, 2012.
 - Revolutionary Children: Egypt's Last Best Hope, March 9, 2012.
 - Behind Political Games, Egypt's Big Picture Looks Increasingly Bleak, April 20, 2012.



References

Furnished upon request.