Money2020 Middle East Launches RiseUp to Champion Women Shaping the Future of Finance

Bringing Money20/20's award-winning programme for women in fintech to the region for the first time



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RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA, September 14, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Riyadh, Saudi Arabia – 13 Sept, 2026: Money20/20 Middle East, taking place from 14–16 September 2026 at the Riyadh Exhibition & Convention Centre (RECC) in Malham, will launch RiseUp in the Middle East for the first time, bringing Money20/20's award-winning global programme for women in fintech and financial services to the region. The launch comes as Saudi Arabia accelerates its digital transformation and strengthens its position as a global hub for financial innovation, bringing together leaders, innovators, regulators and investors shaping the future of finance.

The launch of RiseUp at Money20/20 Middle East marks a major milestone for Money20/20's global programme dedicated to advancing women in fintech and financial services. This inaugural regional cohort brings RiseUp's mission of access, visibility and opportunity to Saudi Arabia, empowering senior women leaders across one of the world's fastest-growing innovation markets.

Since the programme's launch in 2018, RiseUp has supported more than 600 women globally, with 85% feeling more prepared for promotion, over 70% moving into more senior roles, 95% reporting that the RiseUp community helped them progress their careers, and an exceptional

99% recommending the programme to their peers. RiseUp alumni represent global organisations including Visa, Deutsche Bank, Adyen, Revolut, Uber, JPMorgan Chase, EY, Accenture, Booking.com, Standard Bank, and more, forming one of the most influential women-in-fintech networks worldwide.

This inaugural Middle East edition of RiseUp will host 30 senior women leaders invited to join the Middle East cohort. Participants represent leading organisations including Verto, Network Global, Visa, Sharaka Capital, Safqah, Samsung Electronics, TikTok, and more.
“Launching RiseUp in Saudi Arabia is more than a program milestone, it's a powerful demonstration of what becomes possible when women are given real access, real visibility, and real support to lead," said Scarlett Sieber, Chief Strategy & Growth Officer of Money20/20. "The Middle East is one of the most exciting innovation markets in the world, with momentum that is reshaping the global fintech landscape. This region is undergoing extraordinary transformation, and we're creating pathways for women who are building, scaling, and redefining the future of finance to accelerate their impact in this dynamic ecosystem. I look forward to meeting these extraordinary women in person in Riyadh."

“Money20/20 Middle East is about creating a platform that reflects both the scale of change taking place across the region’s financial ecosystem and the people driving that change. Launching RiseUp as part of this year’s edition gives us an important opportunity to recognise and strengthen the role of women who are already helping shape the future of finance across Saudi Arabia and the wider region. By connecting this cohort with an international community of leaders, investors and innovators, we want to create relationships and opportunities that extend well beyond the three days of the show,” said Annabelle Mander, Executive Vice President, Tahaluf.
RiseUp aligns closely with the broader themes of Money20/20 Middle East 2026; including digital financial inclusion, AI driven transformation, cross border collaboration, and the future of payments, ensuring participants engage with the most pressing conversations shaping the future of finance.
As part of Money20/20 Middle East, RiseUp will run a curated programme of sessions in Riyadh, tailored to the unique opportunities and challenges facing women in the region. The programme goes beyond curated content or networking; it is about transformation, confidence, capability building and taking a seat at the table where decisions are made.
Across two days, the cohort will join a global community of women leaders across continents who are rewriting the rules, challenging the status quo, and proving that when women rise, entire industries rise with them.

Program Highlights
- Women Who Are Driving AI Innovation in the Middle East: A session spotlighting women shaping the region’s AI landscape and leading technological transformation.
- The Compass Within: Women Driven Leadership for the Middle East: Moderated by Mary Ann Francis, Executive Consultant, Global Payments & Strategic Initiatives. This session brings together inspiring women leaders who are redefining leadership on their own terms, navigating

cultural expectations, forging new paths, and leading with authenticity and purpose.

- Empowered by Design: Women Leading the Fintech Revolution: Moderated by Joy Adams, COO, Digital Assets, Deutsche Bank and RiseUp alumna. This session spotlights real stories of impact: women gaining financial independence, entrepreneurs accessing capital, and communities transformed through digital financial inclusion. This is not just about technology, it is about dignity, opportunity, and the power of financial access to change lives.

As part of the RiseUp programme at Money20/20 Middle East, Haifa Al Obaid, Senior Expert at the Saudi Industrial Development Fund (SIDF), will speak on the session 'The Compass Within: Women-Driven Leadership for the Middle East,' bringing a critical regional perspective to the conversation.

Haifa Al Obaid, Senior Expert, Credit Relationship Department, SIDF, "Saudi women are receiving strong support from the government, with continued commitment from HRH Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, which has helped expand leadership and career opportunities across sectors. The key challenge is organisational consistency: if workplace leadership doesn't prioritise women's empowerment, women may not receive the resources and support they need to succeed. RiseUp is a wonderful opportunity to connect with top women leaders from inside and outside the region. It highlights why increasing the presence and visibility of women leaders is so important."

The launch of RiseUp at Money20/20 Middle East is the first step in a long-term regional strategy. As Riyadh continues to emerge as a convening point for global fintech collaboration, Money20/20 aims to scale RiseUp across the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), deepen partnerships with regional organisations, and build a pipeline of women leaders shaping the future of fintech.

Susan Elmesslamy, Founder of ZTS, RiseUp Asia Alumni 2024, and workshop leader at RiseUp Middle East 2026, shares her perspective on the program's expansion: "RiseUp didn't just expand my network, it gave me confidence that changed how I show up in my career. The RiseUp Network is a fallback family—you know they're there when you need them, and that support is everything. Bringing RiseUp to the Middle East is going to be transformative, not just for the women in the program, but for how the world sees this region. It brings visibility and enhances collaboration on a scale we haven't seen before."

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About Money20/20

Launched by industry insiders in 2012, Money20/20 has rapidly become the heartbeat of the global fintech ecosystem. Over the last decade, the most innovative, fast-moving ideas and companies have driven their growth on our platform. Mastercard, Airwallex, J.P. Morgan, SHIELD, GCash, Stripe, Google, Visa, Adyen, and more make transformational deals and raise their global profile with us. Money20/20 attracts leaders from the world's greatest banks, payments companies, VC firms, regulators, and media platforms — convening to cut industry shaping deals, build world changing partnerships, and unlock future defining opportunities in Riyadh (September 14–16, 2026), Las Vegas (October 18–21, 2026), Amsterdam (June 8–10, 2027), Miami (March 16-18, 2027), Bangkok (April 27–29, 2027) and Melbourne (February 15 – 17, 2028).

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