MENA2050 & IMEC:
A Civil Society Program for Regional Transformation

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How the Seven Pillars of the MENA2050 Vision Can Be Operationalized Through IMEC

IMEC (India–Middle East–Europe Economic Corridor) is often viewed as an infrastructure and logistics initiative, but its deeper potential aligns directly with the MENA2050 vision: a platform for integration, stability, and prosperity driven by people and institutions, not only by governments. This document outlines how each of the seven pillars of the MENA2050 vision can be developed into a civil-society centered implementation program within IMEC. MENA2050 Shared Vision, developed jointly by Professor Shlomo Hasson and Mr. Marwan Ali, outlines a visionary roadmap for a peaceful, prosperous, and interconnected Middle East and North Africa by 2050. Its seven strategic pillars, governance, connectivity, economic integration, human capital, sustainability, cultural cohesion, and peacebuilding, now offer a powerful foundation for a civil-society driven program inside the broader IMEC.

As IMEC evolves from concept to implementation, it provides a unique platform to mobilize civil society across borders. By engaging youth, women, professionals, academic institutions, cultural actors, and local communities, civil society can help transform IMEC from an infrastructure corridor into a corridor of cooperation, trust, and shared prosperity.

Linking the Seven Pillars to IMEC's Civil Society Agenda

1. Ethical Governance and Regional Dialogue

Civil society can support IMEC by strengthening transparency, accountability, and public trust. Through the *MENA Dialogue Hub*, NGOs, universities, think tanks, and business leaders will help monitor IMEC implementation, promote ethical governance, and foster cross-border problem-solving.

2. Connectivity and Regional Architecture

Civil society planners, engineers, academics, and local communities will contribute to participatory recovery planning, resilience mapping, and climate-sensitive reconstruction, especially in IMEC's pilot nodes such as the **El-Arish–Gaza–Sderot axis**. Their involvement ensures that infrastructure serves *people*, not only markets.

3. Economic Integration and Shared Industries

Entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, cooperatives, community organizations, and innovation hubs can accelerate inclusive growth by supporting regional value chains, social enterprises, and startup networks. Civil society becomes a bridge between IMEC's physical infrastructure and job creation.

4. Human Capital and Talent Development

IMEC can foster mobility schemes, women empowerment initiatives, vocational training, and a *regional talent pipeline* linking universities and industries across Asia, the Gulf, the Levant, and Europe. Civil society ensures access, equity, and long-term skill development.

5. Energy, Climate, and Environmental Stewardship

Local communities, environmental NGOs, and academic research centers play a key role in advancing IMEC's green transition, water cooperation, renewable energy corridors, and climate adaptation, while monitoring environmental impacts through mitigation and sustainable practices.

6. Cultural Exchange and Social Cohesion

Civil society can transform IMEC into a platform for cultural diplomacy, linking artists, educators, youth movements, interfaith leaders, and heritage organizations to

promote mutual understanding, historical awareness, and the shared Abrahamic traditions that unite the region.

7. Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention

Civil society organizations, mediators, legal experts, and human-rights advocates can help institutionalize conflict-resolution mechanisms, early-warning networks, and cross-border cooperation, ensuring IMEC contributes to stability rather than deepening rivalries.

A People-Centric IMEC

When woven together, these seven pillars form the backbone of a **regional civil society program** that advances IMEC's promise of connectivity, cooperation, and peace. The program proposes :

- A MENA2050 Civil Society Network for IMEC
- Annual regional youth, academic, and innovation forums
- Collaborative environmental and climate resilience initiatives
- Participatory planning for IMEC infrastructure nodes
- A permanent ethics and governance observatory
- Shared cultural programs and digital heritage platforms
- A regional peace and mediation academy

Conclusion

IMEC is more than a transport and digital corridor; it is an opportunity to build a **social corridor** grounded in trust, dignity, and shared purpose. By activating civil society across all seven pillars of MENA2050, this initiative embeds human development, cultural engagement, and ethical governance at the heart of regional integration.

A people-centered IMEC can become a stabilizing force in a fragile region, transforming connectivity into cooperation and cooperation into lasting peace.