

MENA Conference for Public Administration Research

Manama, Bahrain, April 23–24, 2014

Closing Ceremony

Summary of Sessions

Conference Recommendations

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First day's program

- **Two Plenaries**
 - Opening Session
 - Building a research agenda for the MENA region
- **Six Breakout Sessions**
 - Policy Making
 - Leadership
 - Quality management
 - Ethics and Corruption
 - Innovation in the Public Sector
 - Capacity Building and Local Governance

Opening session

- Dr Raed BenShams (Bahrain Inst. of Public Admin.)
 - Need for Public administration (PA) Research in region
 - **Focus on Practice, Impact and Integration of Research Culture in the Public Sector**
- Peter Grohmann (Resident Representative, UNDP)
 - Surveys show citizens' demand for honest & responsive Govt
 - **Urgency of Public Sector Reform in region**
 - Pledge of continued UNDP support for reform efforts
- Rolet Loretan (DG, International Institute Of Administrative Sciences/IASIA)
 - PA the concern of more than just civil servants, but citizens
 - **IIAS Regional groups foster production of regional knowledge on PA** – time has come for MENA group
 - Decentralization introduces additional complexity, to manage

Opening session

- Prof. Geert Bouckaert (President, International Institute of Administrative Sciences)
 - Effective PA 3Ws: actors, info, policy instruments
 - “Culture of change” needs “change of culture”
 - **Stronger, interacting actors**
 - Responsibility & accountability; Institutional checks and balances; Participation
 - **Informing actors, using performance information**
 - Transparency, Sharing info for debate, creating ownership of objectives
 - **New and renewed policy instruments**
 - Decentralization, Partnerships, Combined instruments (financial stimuli, legal, direct delivery)

Building a research agenda

- Dr S. Sahraoui (Conference Program Chair, BIPA)
 - **Presentation of MENAPAR: network aims to build capacity, publish and share research and resources, define research agenda, bridge gap between academia & practice**
 - Reconfiguring BIPA research plan with MENAPAR
 - Research needs: Organizational behaviour; Strategy & Policy; Competency Frameworks
 - Research services: on-demand research, portals of public data, research methodologies
- Prof. R Fouchet (Directeur, Institut de Mgmt Public et de Gouvernance Territoriale, Aix-Marseille)
 - Mapping of key subject areas, research actors, research topics, and scientific journals in public management
 - **Research topics for MENA: National Governance, Regional Governance and Coordination Models; Human resource management and culture; Services and process management**

Building a research agenda

- Prof. Michiel De Vries (President, International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration)
 - **Does region have a different research agenda or different answers to the same questions?**
 - Public sector, an element of stability in an unstable env.
 - Main problems for society: Inequality, poverty, ethics
 - Contextualize reforms & induce at multiple levels: macro, meso (institutional), micro (individual)
- Prof. Riyad Hamzah (Secretary General, Higher Education Council)
 - National research strategy aligned with BH 2030
 - Research important to: diversifying economy, building human capital and knowledge economy; attracting and retaining talent for KE; & integrating innovation in organizations
 - **Social sciences, economics, and Public policy among five focus areas in Tier-1 group of priority research areas**

Policy Making & Leadership

- Policy Making (Session chair: Khalil Amiri, AGI)
 - Build the capacities of think tanks and develop their links
 - Build parliamentary research services and insitutionalize consultation processes (by executive and parliament)
 - **Establish policies & systems to simplify access to public sector data, including governance data**
 - **Understand better knowledge-to-action pathways**
 - Importance of political context in public sector reform
- Leadership (Chair: Ishaq Amin, BIPA)
 - **Train & develop skills of young leaders in region**
 - **Inter-generational knowledge & exp transfer**
 - Strategic planning and empowerment

Quality Managements & Integrity

- Quality management in public sector (Chair: Tariq Al-Sindi, NAQQAET)
 - Long route to accountability for bad quality in public sector
 - **Focus must be placed on processes, as they ensure good outcomes in long term**
 - Case study: Quality assurance standards have improved quality of higher education in Bahrain
- Ethics and Corruption (Chair: Mohammed Amin, Tamkeen)
 - Promote culture of proactive transparency
 - **Establish standards for information disclosure**
 - **Civil sector ethics codes and training**

Innovation, CB, and Local Gov

- Innovation in the Public Sector (Chair: Mohammed Sabba, BIPA)
 - Career empowerment to drive innovation
 - **Innovation by leveraging technology: E-Government**
 - **Innovation through partnerships: PPP**
- Capacity Building and Local Governance (Chair: Ali Salman, UNDP)
 - **Importance of evaluation and Gap Analysis, TNA, to identify priority areas for capacity building**
 - Raise awareness of value of perf mgmnt systems
 - Bridge PS to education systems to match needs
 - **Give regions authority over management of HR**

Second day

- **Plenary session**
 - **Networking for PA research in the region**
- **Six Breakout Sessions**
 - Public management education in the region
 - Public Finance
 - E-Government
 - PA Research
 - Public Governance
 - Performance management

Networking for PA Research

- Moderator: Ali AlMahmoud, GPIC
- Dr Najet Zarrouk (Pres, UN Committee of Experts on Public Admin)
 - Many opportunities for networking: Civil society, UN regional organizations and commissions (DPADM, CEPA); Regional groups (EU, AU), member states, IDB/WB,...
 - **Projects to collaborate on with UN: Participation in the World public sector survey, E-government surveys, ...**
- Dr Fabrice Larat (Directeur-adjoint de la formation, Ecole Nationale d'Administration, France)
 - Know the partners (their interests & resources)
 - **Institutional but flexible procedures to structure cooperation**
 - **Network needs critical mass, time to accumulate knowledge**
- Dr Bader malallah (DG, Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait)
 - **Public sector reform and downsizing in larger context (socio-economic context and overall development policy)**

PM Education in Region

- Competency based approach for Masters of Public Administration (MPA) programs (Ayman Hussein, American University, Beirut)
 - Leadership & Management, Policy process, Analysis & decision making, Communication & interaction, ...
 - **Underemphasized areas: Quantitative decision methodology, Electronic data processing and information systems, Political values and processes**
- Dr Nadia Bernoussi (Interim Director, ENA, Morocco)
 - **Regional schools of administration**
 - **Contextualization of MPAs**
- Prof. R Fouchet (IMPGT, Aix-Marseille, France)
 - Public Mgmt education must be contextualised
 - Vision and philosophy of public sector's role in each country
 - **Good PM Education requires PA research**

Public Finance & Performance Mgmt

- Public Administration research (Chair: Ahmed Hassouni, ISA, Morocco)
 - Legislative research services & methodologies
 - **Research absorption capacity in the PS**
 - Evaluating research impact
- Public Finance (Chair: Amal Hawwa, Institut des Finances, Lebanon)
 - **Need classification for public sector procurements**
 - Follow international best practices
- Performance management (Chair: BIPA)
 - **Competency frameworks**
 - **Management by objectives**
 - Training Evaluation & Assessment professionals

E-Government & Public Governance

- E-Government (Chair: Ali Soufi, U of Bahrain)
 - **Importance of IT Strategic planning**
 - Proactive security policies
- Public Governance (Chair: Karim Said, Arabian Gulf University)
 - Promote accountability and transparency
 - Develop Auditing capabilities
 - **Promote use of international accounting practices and reporting standards**



MENAPAR

Middle East and North African Public Administration Research network

MENAPAR



- Objectives

- To promote a research culture and help build a research capacity within public sector
- Promote exchanges and build networks between researchers, practitioners and civil servants in region
- Provide a resource-base to support evidence-based PA and policy making in region
- Develop an indigenous discourse on challenges and research problems in public administration and good governance in region
- Bridge gap between academia & practice

MENAPAR



- **Means**

- Disseminate research findings through publications
- Publish the **Arab Review of Public Administration**
- Maintain a portal and community of practice offering a resource-base, experts for entire region
- Organize the MENAPAR annual conference
- Organize seminars and workshops bringing together researchers and practitioners
- Organize panels in major conferences (IIAS)
- Training curricula to develop research capacity and absorption in public sector

MENAPAR Founding Board

- Bahrain Institute of Public Administration, Bahrain
 - Dr Raed BenShams, chairman
 - Dr Sofiane Sahraoui, Research Director
- Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait
 - Dr Bader Malallah
- Basil Fuleihan Institute for Economy and Finance, Lebanon
 - Dr Lamia Moubayed
- General Personnel Council, Palestine
 - Mr Musa Abu Zaid
- Arab Governance Institute, Tunisia
 - Dr Khalil Amiri
- Ecole Nationale d' Administration, Morocco
 - Dr Nadia Bernoussi
- GPIC, Bahrain (non-voting member)



Thanks BIPA for the generous welcome and excellent organization

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Thanks to the logistics team and all session coordinators

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