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 Mgmnt 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 institutionalize 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 sruvey, 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
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
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- 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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Thanks to all conference participants for their valuable contributions.