CALL FOR PAPERS

Policies, Governance and Leadership in Turbulent Times in the MENA region

MENAPAR/AMEPPA Conference

American University in Cairo
Cairo, Egypt
7-10 December, 2023
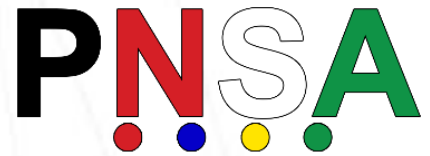
Call for Papers

Policies, Governance and Leadership in Turbulent Times in the MENA region

The Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR) and The Association for Middle Eastern Public Policy and Administration (AMEPPA) are organizing a joint annual conference to be held at the American University in Cairo from December 7th – 10th, 2023. This partnership is a reflection of the two institutions' shared vision to promote South-South cooperation, good governance and professional competencies in the MENA region. The conference theme will contribute to knowledge exchange and knowledge production in topics pertaining to public policy and the functioning of public administration, interconnected systems of energy, food, and governance; knowledge developed to faced global crises; e-governance and digitalization; policy innovation and leadership in the MENA region.

Brief on MENAPAR

The Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research (MENAPAR) is a registered international NGO with its Secretariat in Palestine and serving the MENA region. MENAPAR is a strategic partner of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) and also a member of the Global Coalition of Think Tank Networks (GCTTN) for South-South Cooperation.

MENAPAR in its intrinsic nature is a model of South-South Cooperation (SSC) for knowledge creation and exchanges that occur among member organizations and individuals from government and the civil society.

Brief on AMEPPA

The Association for Middle Eastern Public Policy and Administration (AMEPPA) is a network of academics and professionals dedicated to serving the public interest, displaying personal integrity, promoting ethical institutions, and motivating professional competence in the Middle East. Institutionalized at the American University in Cairo, AMEPPA seeks excellence in public service and devoted to the promotion of sound governance in the Middle East based on transparency, accountability, ethics, integrity, fairness, and public interest that will support the emergence and development of a professional cadre of public servants in the Middle East.

Brief on EU-OECD SIGMA

SIGMA (Support for Improvement in Governance and Management) is a joint initiative of the OECD and the European Union, principally funded by the EU. Its key objective is to strengthen the foundations for improved public governance. In partnership with the European Commission Directorate-General for Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement negotiations (DG NEAR), its currently work with several countries in the MENA region.

Brief on UN-ESCWA

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia - ESCWA provides member States with substantive analysis, policy advice, technical assistance, capacity-building and knowledge sharing on a host of governance and institutional matters, including political reform and transition, crisis and conflict management, and damage and loss assessment. This holistic approach stresses the importance of laying the foundations for accountable, responsive and inclusive governance institutions, and for crisis management and post-conflict institutional rehabilitation. These programmes also focus on consensus-building and national dialogue, and international and regional governance collaboration.

The Middle East & North Africa General Context

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region has experienced significant turbulence in recent years, characterized by a range of political, social, economic, health, and security challenges, which can be attributed to various governance capability factors, including political unrest, armed conflicts, economic disparities, social inequalities, and climate change adverse effects.

The governance of economic challenges and disparities is one of the key dimensions of turbulence in the MENA region. High unemployment rates, increased poverty and employment precarity, and limited economic opportunities and social protection measures have fueled social discontent and curtailed the advancement on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the region. The region has one of the lowest female labor force participation rates in the world and some of the highest rates of women's unemployment. The region also has some of the most exposed countries to the negative impact of climate change. Turbulent times have also seen strains on social cohesion, human rights, and governance.

The COVID-19 pandemic and the other regional and world crises have had introduced an additional layer of turbulence to the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, significantly impacting public administration. The pandemic has had significant economic repercussions in the MENA region, with disruptions to trade, tourism, and other sectors. The pandemic has posed unprecedented governance challenges, requiring public administrators to make rapid and informed decisions, and to adapt their approaches to effectively respond to the crisis. This has necessitated the establishment of crisis management structures, interagency coordination mechanisms, and decision-making processes that involve various stakeholders. On the positive side, the pandemic has accelerated the adoption of digital technologies and e-governance in the MENA region.

Public Administration and Public Policy in the MENA Region

Turbulent times in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region have had a profound impact on public administration and policy making, as well as the region's governance, stability, and overall development. The challenges and dynamics associated with political instability, armed conflicts, economic disparities, and social tensions have significantly influenced the role, functioning, and effectiveness of public administration in the region, including governance and policy challenges, institutional resilience and capacity building, crisis management and emergency response, citizen engagement and trust, and economic management and social development, security and stability. Turbulent times also create a complex environment that influences policy-making, including shifting policy priorities, policy uncertainty and instability, adaptive policy responses, stakeholder engagement and inclusion, external influences and aid conditionality, and policy reforms and institutional adaptation.

In times of turbulence and uncertainty, effective policies, governance, and leadership play a crucial role in navigating challenges, fostering stability, and driving positive change. Poor leadership skills and ineffective governance can result in ineffective decision-making.

The above issues and dynamics raise questions about the position and reaction of public policies, public administration and its transformations. Then, as the region continues to recognize the vulnerabilities of global interconnected systems of energy, food and governance, public administration seeks to navigate the complexities of the region's turbulent times and drive positive change for sustainable development and stability, and to dismantle and dissect the recent accelerated policy patterns of infrastructural development, digital transformation, crisis governance and emergency management, policy innovation and adaptation, stakeholder engagement and participatory governance, leadership, ethics, accountability, and transparency, enlarged public-private partnerships, fiscal decentralization, localization of sustainable development, collaborating with international partners.

Researchers, experts, and practitioners are invited to submit their contributions on the following topics and sub-topics:

A. **Effects of political crisis and institutional vacuum situations on public policy and the functioning of public administration**

   1. What are the policies and strategies that enhance the ability of public administration to withstand and adapt to political crises and institutional vacuum situations?

   2. What are the specific governance challenges that arise during political crises and institutional vacuum situations? What are the implications for the decision-making processes, policy implementation, and accountability mechanisms? How can public administration address these challenges to ensure effective governance?

   3. How can public administration collaborate with other stakeholders to bridge the gap?

   4. How does public administration adapt its approach to policy formulation and implementation in the absence of established institutions?

   5. How can public administration ensure inclusivity and citizen participation in decision-making during political crises and institutional vacuum?

   6. What role can international actors, such as international organizations or neighboring countries, play in supporting public administration during an institutional vacuum?

B. **The importance of interconnected systems of energy, food, and governance in the MENA on the region's socio-economic development, political stability, and environmental sustainability.**

   1. How does the interconnectedness of energy, food, and governance systems in the MENA impact the region's socio-economic development? What are the opportunities and challenges associated with fostering synergy among these sectors?

   2. What are the implications of energy and food security for political stability in the Middle East?

   3. How can effective governance contribute to ensuring stable access to energy resources and food supplies, and the transition to cleaner energy sources and more sustainable food production practices?

   4. How do energy and food systems in the Middle East interact with and impact each other?

   5. What role does regional cooperation and collaboration play in enhancing the interconnected systems of energy, food, and governance in the Middle East?

   6. How can effective governance of interconnected energy, food, and governance systems contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Middle East?

C. Capitalizing the experiences and knowledge developed during the actions carried out in the face of the COVID-19 crisis and other global crises

1. How has the public administration in the MENA region utilized the lessons learned from the COVID-19 crises and other global crises to strengthen its preparedness and response mechanisms for future crises?

2. What specific measures and policies have been implemented by the public administration in the MENA region to address the challenges and capitalize on the experiences gained during the crises?

3. How has the public administration in the MENA region adapted its governance frameworks and decision-making processes based on the insights and knowledge acquired during the crises?

4. What role has technology played in enabling the public administration in the MENA region to respond effectively to the crisis, and how can these technological advancements be leveraged in future crises?

5. What collaborative efforts have been undertaken by the public administration in the MENA region to share best practices, exchange knowledge, and promote regional cooperation in response to the crises?

6. How has crisis influenced public administration reforms and innovations in the MENA region? What new approaches or practices have emerged as a result of the crises?

D. New practices in E-Government and Digitalization to face time of turbulence in the MENA

1. How has the emergence of e-government and digitalization in the MENA region transformed governance and leadership practices during times of turbulence and uncertainty?

2. What innovative strategies and approaches have been adopted by governments in the MENA region to leverage e-government and digitalization as tools for effective crisis management and decision-making during periods of turbulence?

3. What role does leadership play in driving the successful implementation of e-government and digitalization in the MENA region, and how can leaders effectively navigate turbulent times to achieve positive outcomes?

4. What challenges and barriers have governments in the MENA region encountered in adopting and implementing e-government and digitalization strategies during times of turbulence, and how have they overcome these challenges?

5. How can digitalization and e-government practices enhance citizen engagement and participation in governance processes in the MENA region, especially during periods of social change and turbulence?

6. How can governments in the MENA region ensure inclusive and equitable access to digital services and technologies, considering the diverse socio-economic backgrounds and digital literacy levels of their populations during times of turbulence.

7. The implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation on public administration and public policies in the MENA region.

E. Policy innovation and adaptation to face time of turbulence in the MENA

1. How can public policy be adapted and innovated to address emerging challenges and uncertainties in turbulent times?

2. What strategies can be employed to enhance policy responsiveness and flexibility in the face of rapidly changing circumstances?

3. How can public administrators identify and prioritize policy areas that require urgent attention during turbulent periods?

4. What lessons can be learned from successful policy innovations and adaptations in different turbulent contexts?

5. How can evidence-based decision-making and policy evaluation contribute to effective policy responses in times of turbulence?

F. Leadership in Times of Turbulence

1. What leadership qualities and skills are most critical for effectively leading in turbulent and uncertain environments?

2. How can public administrators foster innovation, adaptability, and agility in their leadership approaches during times of turbulence?

3. What strategies can be employed to inspire and motivate teams and stakeholders in challenging and uncertain circumstances?

4. How can public administrators navigate political complexities and stakeholder interests to achieve effective governance and policy outcomes?

5. What lessons can be learned from successful examples of leadership in turbulent times, and how can these lessons be applied in different contexts?

Conference Submission Guidelines

To begin the submission process, please register and login to the following link:

https://www.conftool.org/menapar-ameppa-2023

More details will be available on MENAPAR website, to be released shortly.

Guidelines for proposals and supporting documents

The participating contributions must be submitted prior or on the 10th of September, 2023 in the form of an abstract maximum of two pages or 700 words. They should consist of three sections:

- **Motivation and Outline:** This section should provide a clear statement of the problem at hand, and the knowledge gap the paper will address in light of existing literature.

- **Methodology and Analysis:** This section should clearly identify the research question, the hypothesis to be tested, and the research methodology that will be employed. It should describe the data that will be used in the analysis, either qualitative or quantitative.

- **Policy Implications:** Researchers are encouraged to describe preliminary results and policy implications, if possible.

- Submissions can be made in **English / Arabic**.

As for the complete write-up, it should be done in fifteen to twenty pages maximum (6000-8000 words).
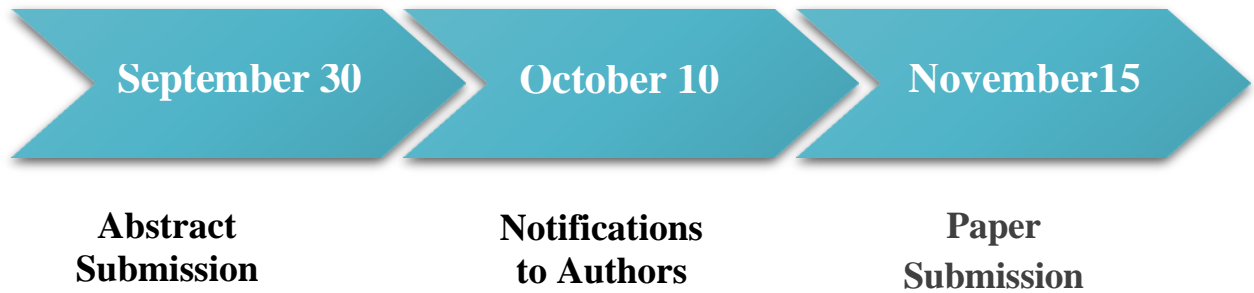
Publication of the best contributions:

Based on recommendation by the scientific committee of the conference, a select number of papers may be proposed for publication in the following Journals:

- IDARA: Review of the National School of Administration of Algeria
- DinA (Developments in Administration): the E-Journal of the International Institute of Administration Sciences
- AMEPPA's journal Middle East Review of Public Policy and Administration (MERPPA).

** Other Scientific Journals - To be published later

Important Dates

September 30	October 10	November15
Abstract Submission	**Notifications to Authors**	**Paper Submission**

Conference Chairs

- H.E Mousa Abu Zaid, MENAPAR President, Chairman of General Personnel Council (GPC) and Head of Palestinian National School of Administration (PNSA).

- Dr. Ghada Barsoum, AMEPPA President, Associate Professor and Chair of the Public Policy and Administration Department at the American University in Cairo.

Scientific Committee

Conference Program Co-Chairs

- Prof. Ali Debbi, President of MENAPAR Scientific Committee, ENA – Algeria.

- Dr. Rabeh Morrar, The Head of the Scientific Committee in the PNSA, Associate Professor in Economics at An-Najjah National University, Palestine.

- Dr. Sofiane Sahraoui, Director General, International Institute of Administrative Sciences, Brussels.

- Dr. Youness Abouyoub, Head of Governance and State-Building, UN-ESCWA.

- Dr. Nick Thijs, Senior Policy Advisor, OECD – SIGMA.

- Ms. Batoul Murad, Directorate of Consultancies & Research, Bahrain Institute of Public Administration.

- Dr. Laila El-Baradei – Professor and MPA Director, The American University in Cairo, Egypt.

- Dr. Tamer Qarmout, Assistant Professor, Head of Program - Doha Institute for Graduate Studies

A full list of committee members will soon be available on the MENAPAR website.

Registration Information

Registration information will be available on the MENAPAR website shortly.

Fees:

Participant	Fees
Participants and Presenters from Egypt	No Participation fees
Regular foreign attendees	USD 200
Paper Presenters	USD 200
Foreign PhD Student	USD 100
Accompanying persons	USD 100

Registration fees doesn't include travel / accommodation costs

Contact Information

For any conference related questions, please contact the MENAPAR Secretariat via:

- MENAPAR: info@menapar.org

- Mr. Ala'a Hammad – PNSA: alaa.hammad@pnsa.gov.ps ;
  Phone: +972 5929600070

You may also contact the Local Organizer via:

Email: AMEPPAconference@aucegypt.edu

Phone: 02-26162115

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We look forward to your submissions and to seeing you at the Conference in Egypt!