

# Human Capital Formation in the Public Sector and the Challenge of Building the State in Times of Crisis

THE GIFT-MENA NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE - KUWAIT



# 2014



GIFT-MENA is a consortium of schools and institutes specialized in the training of government civil servants in the MENA region. The network includes as well regional and international organizations. It acts as an exchange platform and serves as a networking hub in a collective effort to document and disseminate successful regional experiences and knowledge in capacity development. Its main areas of focus relate to public finance management and state modernization. Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan (Lebanon) hosts the secretariat of the network.

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THE **GIFT-MENA** NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE - 2014

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# Foreword

Dear reader,

The latest events happening in the Middle East and North Africa and citizens' quest for better governance are putting civil service reform at the forefront of the political and modernization agenda.

In their efforts to reform the administration, Governments are increasingly counting on capable and responsive training providers who could help them achieve the needed change.

But when faced with multiple decision-makers, little consensus and permanent security challenges, to which extent could training institutions carry out their mission effectively?

On the occasion of the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the **GIFT-MENA** Network, experts and practitioners met in Kuwait to analyze policies, approaches and tools used by the public sector to recruit, train and operate. They discussed the current context and challenges of bringing civil service training and education in MENA countries in line with international benchmarks. The conference provided a space for all actors of State modernization to meet and exchange views, ideas and practices and to discuss challenges of financing, legislation and capacity. Donors and regional and international organizations were also present to shed the light on international good practices and to offer technical assistance and advice.

The present publication summarizes the works of the conference and the recommendations resulting from two days of active dialogue and exchange.

The conference was also a platform to showcase both the urgency and prospects in further exploring and harnessing the opportunities for South-South cooperation: starting off in 2006 with 9 member institutions from 7 Arab countries and 8 international organizations, the GIFT-MENA network brings together today more than 58 members from 19 Arab countries, in addition to 17 regional and international partner organizations. It facilitates knowledge and expertise sharing across the Arab world, which is crucial to finding relevant solutions to the region's common development challenges.

We hope that this publication as well as other activities of the **GIFT-MENA** network will encourage you to join hands with us to promote a culture of continuous learning, cooperation, innovation and change across the region.

**For the Secretariat**  
**Sabine Hatem**



# The conference in numbers

<b>19</b>	countries represented
<b>90</b>	participants
<b>20</b>	high officials present
<b>25</b>	participating experts
<b>3</b>	cooperation agreements signed
<b>51</b>	participating training institutions
<b>14</b>	regional and international organizations present

## List of acronyms

<b>ADETEF</b>	■ Agency for International Technical Cooperation of the French Ministries of Finance, Economy, and Sustainable Development
<b>ADFD</b>	■ Abu Dhabi Fund for Development
<b>API</b>	■ Arab Planning Institute
<b>ASEAN</b>	■ Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>BIPA</b>	■ Bahrain Institute for Public Administration
<b>DSG</b>	■ Dubai School of Government
<b>ENA</b>	■ Ecole Nationale d'Administration
<b>ESCWA</b>	■ Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
<b>EU</b>	■ European Union
<b>GDP</b>	■ Gross Domestic Product
<b>GIFT-MENA</b>	■ Governance Institutes Forum for Training in the Middle East and North Africa
<b>HR</b>	■ Human Resources
<b>IASIA</b>	■ International Institute of Administrative Sciences
<b>ICT</b>	■ Information and Communications Technology
<b>ILO</b>	■ International Labour Organization
<b>KFAED</b>	■ Kuwait Fund For Arab Economic Development
<b>MBRSG</b>	■ Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government
<b>MDG</b>	■ Millennium Development Goals
<b>MENA</b>	■ Middle East and North Africa
<b>MENAPAR</b>	■ Middle East and North Africa Public Administration Research
<b>MERCOSUR</b>	■ Southern Common Market
<b>MFA</b>	■ Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<b>NAFTA</b>	■ North American Free Trade Agreement
<b>NGO</b>	■ Non-Governmental Organization
<b>ODA</b>	■ Official Development Assistance
<b>OECD</b>	■ Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
<b>SADC</b>	■ Southern African Development Community
<b>SFTD</b>	■ Saudi Fund for Development
<b>SME</b>	■ Small and Medium Enterprises
<b>UK</b>	■ United Kingdom
<b>UNDP</b>	■ United Nations Development Programme
<b>USA</b>	■ United States of America

# Introduction

Three years after the start of the uprisings in the Arab world in January 2011, the political and economic outlook for much of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region remains uncertain. On-going changes are raising questions about the fundamental qualities of government and creating unprecedented opportunities for reform and modernization.



One of the main issues of concern for the MENA economies is the bloated and often low productive public sector that refrains the economy from achieving its full economic potential and meet the social contract. In the MENA region, the share of public sector employment averaged around 21% for the period 2008-2011, one and a half times higher than elsewhere in the world, and the public to private sector employment ratio reached 2.7, along the same period.<sup>1</sup> Yet, the first reaction of governments in the post-revolutionary era was to increase salaries and jobs in the public sector as a short-term response to social discontent.<sup>2</sup> However, in the current context, only a civil service staffed with talented individuals, recruited through competitive processes, well trained, and retained on the basis of attractive pay and incentive schemes, would be able to address the challenges ahead. Reflecting on the above, more than **90 experts representing 51 training**

**institutes, 19 Arab countries and 12 regional and international organizations** attended the fifth conference of the GIFT-MENA network that presented an overview of the policy context and current challenges of bringing civil service training and education in MENA countries in line with good international practices and global trends.

The objectives of the annual conference were to:

- Engage in a dialogue on policies and best practices of human capital formation in the public sector and exchange expertise among the various countries.
- Reinforce regional networks and build partnerships in pursuit of improved performance.
- Foster technical and financial support by international partners and engage them in the policy debate about capacity in Government and its impact on growth and stability.

Over two days, participants discussed structural and political constraints for human capital formation in post conflict countries and the challenge of building innovative leadership in time of crisis. They debated the importance of continuous training, development and learning in ensuring that civil servants are knowledgeable, effective and creative in fulfilling their mission to serve their country and citizens. The conference also brought forward challenges of devising public policies for capacity development and the relationship with private sector providers. Participants addressed ways to promote networks of learning and south-south cooperation in pursuit of better performance as well as channels to scale up the involvement and assistance provided by bilateral and multilateral donors and by Arab Funds for Development. Highlights of the conference and lessons learned are reported in the following proceedings.

<sup>1</sup>June 2013, IMF Working Paper WP/13/146, Does Public-Sector Employment Fully Crowd Out Private-Sector Employment, Alberto Behar and Junghwan Mok.

<sup>2</sup>2012, Opportunities and Challenges in the MENA Region, Anthony O'Sullivan, Marie-Estelle Rey and Jorge Galvez Mendez.

# Inaugural Ceremony

The conference inaugural ceremony was held under the auspices of H.E. Ms. Hind AL SOBEIH, Minister of State for Planning and Development, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor and President of the Board of Trustees of the Arab Planning Institute in Kuwait. It gathered more than 150 public figures, senior officials, diplomats and experts from the Arab world, as well as representatives of the donor community. Main issues addressed in the opening speeches are summarized below.



“  
... It is an opportunity to rethink our recruitment methods, to discuss and standardize our policies and tools, in an effort to enhance the performance of our administrations.”

Mohamed MOUBDI

## Opening speeches by

### **Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT**

Director of the Institut des Finances  
Basil Fuleihan, Lebanon

### **H.E. Ms. Hind AL SOBEIH**

Minister of State for Planning and  
Development, Minister of Social Affairs  
and Labor, President of the Board of  
Trustees of the Arab Planning Institute,  
Kuwait/Represented by Dr. Adel Al  
OUEIKAN, Secretary General of the  
High Council for Planning, Kuwait

### **Ms. Agnès ARCIER**

Chairwoman of ADETEF, France

### **H.E. Mr. Mohamed MOUBDI**

Minister of Civil Service and  
Administrative Modernization, Morocco

### **Dr. Bader Othman MALALLAH**

Director General of the Arab Planning  
Institute, Kuwait

## Keynote Speech

### **His Excellency Mr. Fuad SINIORA**

Former President of the Council of  
Ministers of the Republic of Lebanon

## Modernizing the State: The Arab challenge for the coming years

His Excellency former Prime Minister Fuad Siniora highlighted that Arab countries stand at crossroads. In an overall context dominated by uncertainty and ambiguity, Arab governments are called to modernize the State at large and to steer the transition towards new forms of democratic practices that are respectful of diversity and of the rights of minorities.

As stated by Dr. Adel Al Oueikan, challenges ahead are of various natures:

security, education, economic and social, and shadowed by declining indicators of public finances and a rise in unemployment rates; a diagnosis that calls for structural reforms that would foster a more equitable distribution of wealth.

Some countries have understood the issues at stake and engaged in reform prior to the crisis. Others will be called to do so in the post-conflict period. In all cases, the social contract between the State and citizens is expected to

evolve to be more participatory and inclusive, and to embrace the values of public service: transparency, accountability, good governance. This would require a change in deeply rooted cultures and norms, in behaviors and in the public administration at large to move from nepotism to meritocracy.

## “No reform is possible or sustainable without the human element”

In light of the above, Dr. Adel Al Oueikan pointed out to the current size and regulations of the civil service that is becoming a burden to achieve growth and development.

To achieve tangible results, reform needs faith and perseverance but also the adoption of a roadmap with clear commitments, procedures and coordinated activities among all stakeholders. And it needs, in particular, a skilful workforce that has the capacity to effectively manage both change and the administration.

Civil servants are partners of growth, acknowledged His Excellency former Prime Minister Fuad Siniora. If Arab countries do not lack resources, they need to invest in the rapid progress of

their human capital and in retaining brains and skills within the region. His Excellency Minister Mohamed Moubdi presented the case of Morocco that has focused in the past few years on modernizing its public administration to pave the way for economic development and performance and to maintain social cohesion. Public administration reform relied heavily on a vision developed at the top of the State but also on extensive consultations and dialogue with all stakeholders, from inside and outside the administration. It was accompanied by the General Review of Civil Service, a comprehensive program that made mandatory continuous training, performance

appraisal, mobility and career path development for civil servants. Through such initiatives, the Moroccan government was able to enhance local development and governance, to encourage SMEs development and entrepreneurship, to attract foreign investment and to reduce unemployment.

## “Training schools are called to stand at the forefront of reforms”

Because of new challenges in internal, foreign, social and political conditions, training schools in the MENA region will eventually have to redefine their roles to stay relevant and operate efficiently. Being proactive, try out new approaches and adapt quickly to

governments needs and shifting trends in public administration, improve training methods and techniques, upgrade existing curricula, generate knowledge and create new skills among civil servants are few among the many tasks expected from the

training community in MENA to drive the public administration forward, as highlighted by former Prime Minister Fuad Siniora, Dr. Bader Malallah and Ms. Lamia Moubayed Bissat.

## South-South cooperation is on an upward curve in the Arab world

All speakers noted the high level of participation to the event as a proof and testimony of the importance of cooperation and openness across the Arab world. They commended the work of professional networks such as the GIFT-MENA network that offers a platform for exchange, learning, innovation and inspiration for policy-makers, leaders, practitioners and scholars.

Dr. Bader Malallah insisted on the importance for training operators to stay abreast of the latest developments in the areas of State modernization, capacity development and cooperation, to be able to strengthen their role and accompany change in their respective countries.

Ms. Lamia Moubayed Bissat pointed out to the expansion of the GIFT-MENA network that started off in 2006 in

Beirut with 9 member institutions from 7 Arab countries and 8 international organizations to convene today more than 58 members from 19 Arab countries, in addition to 17 regional and international partner organizations. She highlighted the unique role played by the network in fostering knowledge and expertise sharing in the region, in facilitating bilateral, triangular and multilateral cooperation and in showcasing achievements in the domains of State modernization and public financial management from across the Arab world.

The ratification on the occasion of the conference of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Arab Planning Institute and the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform of Morocco and of another between the Bahrain Institute of

Public Administration and the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan of Lebanon were concrete examples of successful bilateral cooperation in the region. A third cooperation agreement to be signed between the Institute of Finance of Morocco and the National School of Finance of Tunisia was also announced.

Ms. Agnès Arcier highlighted that added value was also brought by the network to the international community, civil service reform being a contemporary challenge for many developing countries. She reiterated France's support to this networking initiative and commended the quality of the exchange and partnerships that are taking place under the umbrella of the GIFT-MENA network.

## A call to Arab donors: “Capacity development is not a side dish”

Finally, in her speech, Ms. Agnès Arcier encouraged Arab donors and development funds to support more substantively successful South-South cooperation initiatives such as the GIFT-MENA network.

And Ms. Lamia Moubayed Bissat asked “how could training schools and institutes properly operate and achieve results when capacity development is still regarded by many as a side dish?”

# Panel I

Can we build capacities in times of crisis?  
Challenges and opportunities for the MENA region



“  
*Crisis are times for innovation.*  
Pierre THÉNARD  
”

## Chairperson

**Dr. Raed BENSAMS**

Director General, Bahrain Institute of  
Public Administration, Bahrain

## Guest Speakers

**Dr. Ihab MAGABLEH**

Expert, Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait

**Mr. Carlos CONDE**

Head of the MENA-OECD Governance  
Programme, OECD

**Mr. Pierre THENARD**

Director of International Relations,  
Ecole Nationale d'Administration,  
France



## **Dr. Raed BENSHAMS**

Dr. BenShams is the founding Director General of the Institute of Public Administration in Bahrain (BIPA). He has built BIPA into a partner of choice to build capacity into Bahrain's public sector. Five years after its start of operations, BIPA has developed a wide range of training programs for all strata of public servants. It has also developed key signatory services in consulting and is about to launch its research activities with the establishment of a public service think tank in the region. Dr. BenShams was decorated with the Medal of Highest Level of Competence by HM the King for his achievements in the public sector. He holds a PhD in management from Bradford University, an MSc from Leeds University and has occupied key Government positions prior to joining BIPA. He was Assistant General Secretary for HR, Finance and Admin Affairs at the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Director of Statistics at the Central Informatics Organization (CIO).



## **Dr. Ihab MAGABLEH**

Dr. Magableh obtained his bachelor and Master's degrees from the University of Yarmouk in Jordan. He got his Doctorate in Economics from the University of Sydney. He was President of the division of financial economics, then Director of the center for research, consultancy and society service at the University of Jordan. As an academician, he has published numerous research papers in foreign magazines and participated in conferences through the publication of working papers.

He has also delivered and animated training programs in a number of regional and international organizations, and provided consultancy and studies to numerous national, regional and international institutions.

He is member of the Arab Trainers Union and the society of friends for scientific research, in addition to some foreign specialized associations.

He was later appointed director of the Center for Consultancy and Training, and Dean of the faculty of administrative sciences and logistics at the German Jordanian University. He is currently an expert at the Arab Planning Institute.



## Dr. Carlos CONDE

Dr. Conde is the head of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme since 2007. In this capacity, he has promoted policy dialogue on governance reform between MENA and OECD countries and supported the work of the networks of practitioners of the initiative. During this period, the Initiative has been successful in introducing in the MENA context the process of OECD peer review. Before joining the OECD, he was associate professor of political science and public policy in the University of Granada, Spain. In this position, Dr. Conde led several projects of academic co-operation and research, networking between Arab and European universities. He had visiting positions in Harvard University and Al Akhawayn University of Morocco, where he lectured between 2001 and 2003. Dr. Conde holds a PhD in Political Science and Public Administration from the Complutense University of Madrid.



## Mr. Pierre THENARD

Mr. Thenard is a French diplomat. Former student of the “Ecole normale supérieure”, and holder of an “aggregation” of History, he started his career at the University of Cairo, after which he led the service of cooperation and cultural action at the General Consulate of France in Jerusalem. After his graduation from ENA in 1993, he joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) where he held a number of key positions as advisor to French Ministers and Counsellor within

French Diplomatic Representations. After he came back to the MFA, he has been appointed as deputy-director for Security at the Strategic Affairs, Disarmament and Security Directorate and then became special advisor in the private office of Ms. Rama Yade, State Secretary in charge of Foreign Affairs and Human Rights. After two years spent as adviser in the Directorate for Prospective, he has been appointed General Consul in Tangiers, Morocco. Since April 2013, Mr. Thenard is the Director for International Relations of the French National School of Administration (ENA). Mr. Thenard hosted a seminar of master level at Sciences-Po Paris from 2005 to 2010 dedicated to the “Arab World in the international relations”. He wrote a number of articles on the US policy in North Africa and Middle East.

## Context and challenges

In the emerging context of crisis and change, policy-makers and human resources leaders are called to embrace the mindsets of economists and reallocate scarce resources, namely talents, with great efficiency, looking outward to take into account both the macroeconomic perspective and microeconomic constraints. MENA Governments and their respective civil service administrations are joining forces to become more responsive to the current and future needs of their countries and citizens, placing a high priority on capacity development in their revised planning policies, from recruitment to performance evaluation.

The first panel discussed the policy options and strategic considerations to be made by Governments, training institutions and civil servants to identify and implement good practices and achieve sustainable capacity development impact on the long term.

The main issues raised were:

- **Government Initiatives:** Are civil servants partners of growth? How are countries of the MENA improving since 2000, what initiatives have been undertaken?
- **Policies:** Are government policies contributing to improve capacity development and lifelong learning across the civil service? Are the

legislation and financing dedicated to capacity development positive triggers? What are the latest initiatives to improve capacity development?

- **Strategic Vision:** Has the crisis modified our vision of capacity development and service delivery? What are we doing to attract, retain and empower talents in Government? Are government entities linking talent with compensation schemes and performance assessments?
- **Budget Integration:** What approaches to privilege in budget surplus countries versus fragile states?

## Recommendations

### 1 Integrity, performance and accountability to drive reform in MENA countries

These three values were advanced as the most important values that would shape government policies and actions in the coming years. To bring about results, approaches are expected to combine careful strategic planification, institutional anchorage and regular monitoring and evaluation throughout the reform implementation process; in addition to the implication of political actors to guarantee stability and sustainability. Figure 1 summarizes the lessons learned for reform implementation. However, questions were raised as to the sequencing of reforms: shall political reform precede economic reform or vice versa?

### 2 Reforms are needed at the Human Resource Management level

When the trend in OECD countries is shifting towards a major decrease in public sector employment, MENA countries are still heading towards massive public sector recruitment; a trend mostly guided by political and social considerations. Figure 2 provides an overview of anticipated changes in employment levels in OECD countries. Human Resources Management policies were therefore introduced as pillars of modernization. These policies need to be consistent with public service values and embedded as a strategic enabler to pursue other public management reforms. France provided an example of how by shifting from a career-based to a competencies-based civil service, and coupled to specific recruitment measures, it was able to reduce its workforce in the public sector by 3% in 5 years.

### 3 Tackle and change deeply rooted cultural norms

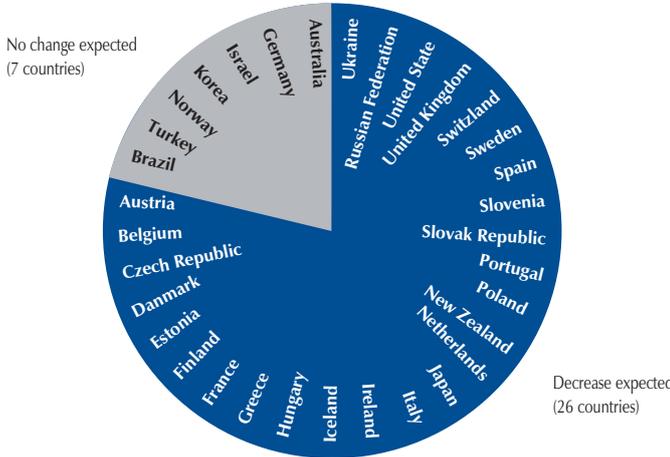
Broad consultation with all stakeholders regarding the reform process, institutional coordination and efficient communication are good practices that can be used to create a dialogue, generate interest and build consensus around reform. Civil service is expected to evolve to embrace new values and principles, as indicated in Figure 3.

Figure 1: **Lessons learned for reform implementation**

- Be prepared for resistance
- Focus on small wins
- Communicate and involve all stakeholders
- Develop confidence and keep it high
- Be prepared to adapt for political and technical changes
- Have realistic expectations and deadlines
- Under promise and over deliver

Source: Carlos Conde, Deputy Head of Division, Governance Reviews and Partnership Division, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate, OECD – “Capacity building in challenging times”, 2014.

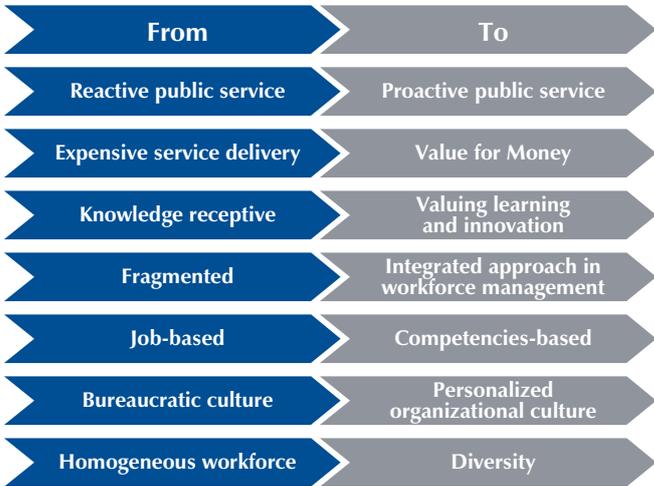
Figure 2: **Anticipated changes in employment levels in OECD countries**



OECD countries, which have adopted Human Resources Management reforms at a governmental level, have experimented changes in employment level in more than 26 countries. Across the OECD, while the economic crisis has focused attention on costs, governments are concluding that investments in the skills, leadership and management capacity of the public service is crucial for dealing with current and emerging challenges.

Source: 2010 OECD Survey on Strategic Human Resources Management in Central/Federal Governments. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932390652>

Figure 3: **Evolution trends of civil service in OECD countries**



Source: Carlos Conde, Deputy Head of Division, Governance Reviews and Partnership Division, Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate, OECD – “Capacity building in challenging times”, 2014.

## 4 Training schools have a central role to play to steer a value-based evolution

Emphasis was laid, mostly by the Arab Planning Institute, on the need to provide capacity building in the areas of strategic management and leadership and to update existing curricula to include information and cases on contemporary challenges such as poverty reduction, unemployment, youth, and others.

To fulfil their roles as agents of change, training schools need to be on a permanent evolution mode, assessing their approaches and reinventing their methods. One example discussed was the case of the National School of Administration of France (ENA) that had to refocus its mission and intervention methods around five pillars, following budget cuts by the French government.

These five pillars were:

- Develop a selective strategy in what concerns areas of intervention and themes; Prioritize.
- Increase empowerment through the use of ICTs.
- Create synergies with alumni associations.
- Harmonize bilateral and multilateral cooperation: in the MENA region, programs were already implemented with Bahrain, Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia.
- Join professional training and research networks (IASIA, MENAPAR, GIFT-MENA, etc.) and use benchmarks for institutional development.

Another challenge was raised by the Bahrain Institute of Public Administration, questioning the ability of training schools to adapt their programs at times of crisis and to act with flexibility and agility. It also proposed the creation of a training program for “Crisis Officers”.



## Questions from the floor

- What is the difference between policy-making and new public management?
- How can you rebuild a nation and its public sector after its history and libraries were destroyed, and after experts and trainers have emigrated?
- Is social media a medium of change?
- How are training schools and institutes coping with privatization trends?
- Are training schools assessing the impact of their programs at both individual and organizational levels?

# Panel 2

Is capacity development a policy or a market place?  
Are private sector organizations meeting the needs  
of the public sector?



“The key to succeed is to care about people. Care, basic care, will lead to performance.”

Michel DEVRIES

## Chairperson

**Ms. Nadia BERNOUSSI**

Director General, National School of Administration, Morocco

## Guest Speakers

**Prof. Michiel S. De VRIES**

President of IASIA

**Dr. Bassem YOUNES**

Director of Strategic Alliances,  
Mohammed Bin Rashid School  
of Government, United Arab Emirates

**Prof. Zafiris TZANNATOS**

Senior International Consultant  
for Research and Policy



## Ms. Nadia BERNOUSSI

Professor of Constitutional Law and acting Director of the National School of Administration, Ms. Bernoussi holds a State Doctorate in Public Law. Since 1984, Ms. Bernoussi has worked as a university lecturer at the National School of Administration, the Royal Institute of Management, the Higher Institute for Administration, the Diplomatic Academy and the College of Law (France) and lectured at the Supreme Council of Accounts and the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Economy and Finance and Privatization and in the territorial administration and the General Secretariat of the Government and the School of Governance and Economics.

She is a former member of the Advisory Committee in charge to review the Moroccan Constitution and Vice-President of the International Association of Constitutional Law, and an international consultant and a founding member of the Moroccan Association of Constitutional Law.

She is author of several publications and presentations since 1986, most recently "The crisis of the political elite in Morocco", "Why should the national list be kept as a women list", "Moroccan constitutional jurisprudence and legal security", "Confidence in the institutions a study for the benefit of the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies", "Regionalism in Morocco" and "Constitutional justice today, between legitimacy and effectiveness".



## Professor Michel DE VRIES

President of the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA), Professor De Vries is full Professor and holds the chair in Public Administration at the Radboud University of Nijmegen, the governor's chair in Public Governance in Small Systems of Law at the University of Aruba, and is visiting professor at the Masaryk University in

Brno. He is a full member of a number of European groups, an observer at the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and Chair of the Nispacee "Colloquium for Practitioners". He is also peer reviewer for numerous journals, magazines and international publishing houses.

Prof. De Vries conducts research on Comparative Public administration, policy processes in municipalities and provinces, public policy change and evaluation, values in the public sector, public participation and interactive policy making and public sector reform. He has published many books, book chapters and articles in refereed journals. His latest book is Training for Leadership.



## Dr. Bassem YOUNES

Dr. Younes is the Director of Strategic Alliances at the Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG). He has a combined American and British educational background in Civil Engineering culminating with a PhD and DIC from the prestigious Imperial College of London awarded in 1990. Dr. Younes has a wealth of experience in academia where he contributed to several international academic events and publications. In the area of research, he has presented a number of refereed technical papers in national/international conferences and professional journals. He has also authored a number of well received commissioned reports. He was designated a Distinguished Visiting Professor at University College, Florida Institute of Technology in 2005.

Before joining the Dubai School of Government (DSG) in 2011 as Director of Academic Affairs, Dr. Younes had been engaged in academic and consultancy capacities across the region. Amongst the many institutions he contributed to setting up is the British University in Dubai.

Dr. Younes has played a key role in the MBRSG Strategic Planning process. He also heads the institutional reforms and the Master of Public Administration (MPA) program reforms and program accreditation.



## Professor Zafiris TZANNATOS

Professor Tzannatos is a Senior International Consultant for Policy and Research based in Beirut, where he was previously Senior Advisor for the 22 Arab States at the ILO and before that, Chair and Professor of the Economics Department at the American University of Beirut.

He has also been Advisor at the General Secretariat of the Executive

Council of the Government of Abu Dhabi, and worked for many years at the World Bank as Advisor to the Managing Director as well as Manager for the MENA region and Leader of the Global Child Labor Program. He has held several academic and research appointments and has advised governments of industrialized and emerging economies as well as international and regional organizations. His publications include 14 books and monographs, and 200 reports and papers in the areas of labor economics, poverty, inequality, education and training, social policy and development strategy. He is a peer reviewer of scientific journals and international publishing houses, and has presented papers and delivered speeches in hundreds of seminars and international conferences. He has studied at the University of Athens, Greece, obtained his Doctorate at the University of London, UK, and received his executive education at Harvard University and the Kennedy School of Government, USA.

## Context and challenges

Better governance is linked to a better prepared workforce in the public sector. Because the latter seeks the delivery of high quality services, organizations and people servicing it must be of the highest level of skill and preparation.

Better governance is also linked to improved coordination mechanisms among the various stakeholders, among which private sector organizations. Governments in several countries have started to engage with the private sector as a privileged partner and to develop public-private learning partnerships, with one philosophy in mind. Though there are differences between human resources policies and practices in the public and private

sectors, the ultimate goal is the same: to attract, develop and retain talents. Panel two focused on the possibilities of regulating the training market as well as the opportunities, obstacles and conditions for successfully engaging the private sector in civil service skills development.

The main issues raised addressed:

- **International Outlook:** What does the international experience tell us about regulating the training market? Who leads the process? With what vision and tools? Are there lessons to be learned?
- **Private Sector Training versus Government:** Are there key differences in how training is

practiced between the private sector and government? Can there be limits to private sector interventions? What are the best ways to ensure integrity in a scenario of increased interface between the public and the private?

- **Quality Management:** What does quality management engage? What are lessons learned in setting standards and regulating the training market? Is the certification of training programs, of bodies and institutions or of trainers an efficient tool of quality management?

## Recommendations

### 1 The Arab world is rich in skills

According to Prof. Tzannatos, the Arab region has the highest skilled immigration rate in the world; which means that if Arabs can work abroad in high-income countries with advanced technologies, then they have more skills than is locally required (i.e. the demand for skills is low) or are endowed with more qualifications than local employers are willing to pay for.

### 2 Training on its own is not sufficient

Merit-based recruitment, detailed job descriptions, skills development, performance appraisal and professional career paths are all essential components for an efficient and attractive public sector.

### 3 Move towards the provision of on-demand training

As suggested by the IASIA, training is not about following hypes, but about a fit between need and supply. For better efficiency, governments need to investigate the needs of the public sector before they deliver training, and to target three levels: the individual, the organization and the institutional environment.

In MENA countries, there is a need to establish organizational conditions under which the proper utilization of skills in the public sector is promoted. This will depend on:

- The quality of education acquired at pre-entry education institutes
- The existence of training institutes able to train on the job.
- The capacity of the Public Sector to integrate and engage new comers.
- A coherent mission that drives program organization and curriculum development.

### 4 Successful training is not determined by the amount of money invested but by careful and experienced coordination of training

Capacity building is a participatory process involving the State, government, public institutions and the private sector.

The effectiveness of training in the public sector will be achieved by the adequate combination of:

- Teachers, trainers and experienced organizational members who work with and are in direct relation with the organizations for which they are providing the service.
- Specifics of the context.
- Linkages between content and actual skills.
- Efforts shall focus on the relevance of the content and on measuring the return on investment.

## 5 Induction programs for public sector new recruits are of the highest importance as they allow to

- Socialize newcomers during the first period they integrate the organization.
- Expose them to situations in which cognitive imbalance, incongruity or dissonance is bound to occur.
- Recognize the decisive role of experienced organization members.
- Strive for an implicit mutual understanding of expectations - create a psychological contract.

## 6 Training is a marketplace

According to the MBRSC, the public sector is expected to set the regulatory framework and allocate the necessary resources to capacity development. It shall also oversee the delivery of programs and assess impact. The private sector has a greater role to play in the design and delivery of training programs and provision of consultancy services. Private sector organizations are expected to align their approaches and the information delivered to the Government strategy, to answer the needs formulated by public institutions and to integrate the specificities of civil service values and ethics within their programs.

## 7 Trainers need to have the necessary skills but they also mostly need to be motivated to transfer knowledge.

## 8 The key issue in times of crisis is for public administrations to provide stability and maintain its delivery of services to citizens. It is also to be capable to stand away from politics and separate the concepts of Government and State.



## Questions from the floor

- How can we support the rise of training to a profession and according to which standards?
- Is it too soon to move towards distance learning?
- How can we improve coordination among training providers?
- How can offer quality and relevant training content without falling into standardization?
- How can we attract expert trainers and retain them?

# Roundtable Discussion I

Modern trends to a performant civil service



## Discussant

**Mr. Mohamed Lhabib GOUBI**

Director General of Human Resources,  
Bank of Algeria

## Presenters

**Mr. José Antonio MARTINEZ ALVAREZ**

Director General, Institute of Fiscal  
Studies, Spain

**Mr. Vincent POTIER**

Director General, Centre National  
de la Fonction Publique, France

“ Networks allow for the development  
of collective intelligence.

Vincent POTIER ” ”



## Mr. Mohamed LAHBIB GOUBI

Director General of Human Resources at the Bank of Algeria, Mr. Goubi holds a Masters in Economic Policies from CERDIE-Clermont-Ferrand in France, a Bachelor Degree in Economics from the University of Algiers, and a Graduate Certificate in Banking, Financing for Development from the Institute of the Arab Maghreb (IFID) in Tunisia.

Mr. Goubi served as the General Manager of Studies (2011), Director of Relations with official and multilateral bodies (2006), and Director of Analysis of Economic Conditions (2004) at the Bank of Algeria. He also worked at the General Directorate of the National Bank of Algeria in 1990.

## Mr. José Antonio MARTINEZ ÁLVAREZ

Mr. Alvarez is currently the Director General of the Institute of Fiscal Studies of the Secretary of State of Finance. Doctor in Economics, he is a professor at the National University of Distance Education at the Department of Applied Economics and Economic History and Director of the Higher Council of Statistics of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness; as well as Director of the Tax and Budget Report magazine; President of the Spanish Journal of Economics, published by the Ministry of Finance and Specialist in taxes and budget policy. He is also a specialist in

monetary policy and banking. He has been Economic Counsellor and Chief Economist of the Institute of European Studies. Member of the Research Group on Theoretical and Empirical Economics, he has written numerous articles in national and international journals, among which: Fiscal Policy in the European Union; Redistribution of Income and Wealth: the Negative Income Tax; Poverty, the welfare state and the economics of education; Budgetary policy and financial stability; as well as the Zero Base Budget or the Budget Stability and Fiscal Policy.



## Mr. Vincent POTIER

Mr. Potier is the director general of the National Center of Territorial Public Service since 2010. He obtained a Master's degree in human sciences (1976), graduated from the Institute of Political Studies in Paris (1979) and graduated from the National School of Public Health (1982).

He has occupied a number of key positions within the French local Government. He has a number of publications among which: "L'éloge du service public local" (with Jean-Luc Boeuf and Jean-Jacques Urvoas, Editions de la Lettre du cadre, 1997). "Déontologie et responsabilité" (Editions Sept, 2000). "Maîtrise des risques dans la gestion locale" (with Philippe Harang, Editions du Moniteur, 2001). "La déontologie dans la fonction publique territoriale" (with Vincent Péguy, Editions du Moniteur, 2002). "Les collectivités territoriales et leurs responsabilités" (in cooperation Jurisclasseur, 2003). "Evaluation des politiques locales" (with Magali Bencivenga, Editions du Moniteur, 2005). "Dictionnaire pratique des collectivités territoriales" "Action sociale et médico-sociale des collectivités territoriales" (Editions du Moniteur, 2006). "Le management public des territoires" (contribution to a collective edition, Editions de l'Aube, 2012).

## Context and challenges

In the current context of uprisings and change, the quality of leadership has repeatedly been questioned. Moving away from the paradigm “Doing more with less”, public leaders are now expected to “Do things differently with less” and to have the will, power, and technical capacity to move away from the endemic and widespread corruption to meet citizens and investors half way. They are also required to promote the values of ethical leadership and to recognize and encourage women leadership in the public and private sectors. In addition, in modern human resource management, talent management and workforce planning go hand-in-hand.

Given the shape of the public sector environment for the next few years, characterized by downsizing, budgetary constraints and increasing citizens’ pressure for more effective public services, workforce planning offers solutions for skilled labor shortages, increased wage bills and overstuffed civil service as well as for the enhancement of recruitment, mobility and career advancement at the individual level.

The main issues raised focused on:

- **Leadership Community:** How can we build a leadership cadre that is more responsive and representative, and able to accompany change?

What are the most appropriate capacity development approaches to today’s public leadership challenges? How can we create a leadership community?

- **Strategic Workforce Planning:** How does strategic workforce planning serve the reform agenda and help governments meet economic and social challenges? What are the tools needed for effective workforce planning in the public sector? What is the expected strategic outlook?

The following recommendations and steps were suggested to shape the way forward.

## Recommendations

### 1 **Redefine and maintain a permanent dialogue around public values**

Including: Equity, efficiency, value for money, flexibility, citizenship, ownership and performance.

### 2 **Revisit public policies and strategic choices**

Propose a new vision to modernize public policies, implement a political project, build public leadership and conduct change management, work towards decentralization and enhance the capacities of local authorities.

### 3 **Modernize Human Resources Management in the public sector**

This includes lobbying for a modern legal framework for recruitment, training and professional advancement, working towards systematic career development and providing motivation to change.

### 4 **Encourage peer learning and innovation**

through exchange with peers, bench-learning, and professional networking, encouraging innovation in public initiatives, make use of new technologies in exchange and learning, explore potential synergies and harmonization among training schools at the national and regional (MENA) levels.

# Roundtable Discussion 2

Time for MENA to invest in knowledge creation and global thinking



“Coping with the crisis in a time of crisis is a challenge in itself. Training requires time in order for it to be absorbed and for new initiatives to be put forward. The challenge is even greater when spirits are not ready for such change.”

Raed BENSHAMAS

## Discussant

### Mr. Awad ABU SHOOK

Director General of Human Resources,  
Central Bank of Sudan, Sudan

## Presenters

### Dr. Raed BENSHAMAS

Director General, Bahrain Institute of  
Public Administration, Bahrain

### Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT

Director, Institut des Finances Basil  
Fuleihan, Lebanon

### Ms. Nisreen SHAKER

Expert, Research Advisor Office,  
Council of Representatives, Iraq

### Mr. Tarik ALAMI

Director, Emerging and Conflict Related  
Issues Section (ECRI), ESCWA



## Mr. Awad ABU SHOOK

Mr. Abu Shook is the Director General of Human Resources at the Central Bank of Sudan. He started his career at the Bank in 1981, before which he served at the Ministry of Labor. He holds a Bachelor of Economics from the University of Khartoum.

At the Central Bank of Sudan, Mr. Abu Shook has worked within several departments, namely the General Administration of Policies, Research and Statistics; the Department of Banking Supervision, the General Administration of Public Accounts and Financial Affairs, the Directorate General of Internal Audit, and the General Department of Human Resources.

## Dr. Raed BENSAMS

Dr. BenShams is the founding Director General of the Institute of Public Administration in Bahrain (BIPA). He has built BIPA into a partner of choice to build capacity into Bahrain's public sector. Five years after its start of operations, BIPA has developed a wide range of training programs for all strata of public servants. It has also developed key signatory services in consulting and is about to launch its research activities with the establishment of a public service think tank in the region.

Dr. BenShams was decorated with the Medal of Highest Level of Competence by HM the King for his achievements in the public sector. He holds a PhD in management from Bradford University, an MSc from Leeds University and has occupied key Government positions prior to joining BIPA. He was Assistant General Secretary for HR, Finance and Admin Affairs at the Ministry of Cabinet Affairs and Director of Statistics at the Central Informatics Organization (CIO).



## Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT

Ms. Moubayed Bissat is the Director of the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan. She is a development specialist with a Masters degree from the American University of Beirut.

She worked in the private sector and collaborated with many United Nations agencies namely UNDP and ESCWA.

Her current work involves leading the Institute of Finance and providing policy advice on capacity development, human capital formation, and institutional reform, access to information, advocacy and public awareness aimed at facilitating the implementation of reforms.

She is a founding member of many professional networks including GIFT-MENA and other Lebanese civil service associations.

She has been awarded the prestigious French distinction of "Chevalier de l'Ordre National du Mérite", for her significant contribution to the development of cooperation ties between France and Lebanon, her commitment to State Building and to the values of neutral and impartial civil service.



## Ms. Nisreen SHAKER

Advisor for Research and Studies in the Iraqi Council of Representatives, Ms. Shaker holds a B.S. of Statistics and a degree in administration development in addition to a diploma in I.T.

Ms. Shaker held several positions in the Ministry of Planning - National Center for Administrative Development, in the Iraqi Council of Representatives - Office of the Advisor for Research and Studies. She worked in several areas, particularly the development of skills of middle and senior management on leadership topics, economics and change, planning and automation. She has carried out field studies in the areas of good governance and the fight against corruption, e-government, women leadership, and the role of NGOs. She has numerous contributions in the areas of women empowerment, integrity, working schemes, restructuring government departments, integrated services and e-services as well as partnership-building between the public and private sectors and administrative development and reform.



## Dr. Tarik ALAMI

Dr. Alami is the Director of Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division (ECRI) at the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia.

In this capacity, he is in charge of ESCWA's Program on Governance and Conflict Mitigation and Development, which focuses on studying root causes of conflict and how to reduce the impact of conflict and instability on socio-economic development in the Arab region and to assist member countries in addressing the challenges of democratic transitions. He has served the United Nations in a number of capacities.

He has written, spoken and organized meetings on topics such as MDGs, Food Security, Conflict-Driven Displacement, Governance Deficit and conflict relapse, Conflict-Driven Displacement, Dynamics of Communal Tension. Dr. Alami was a professor of Economics at the American University of Beirut from 1996-2004. He has published several articles including in: Journal of Policy Modeling, Journal of Economics and Business, Journal of Macroeconomics, Journal of Economic Studies, Journal of Development and Economic Policies and Arab Economic Journal. He graduated with a B. A. in Economics from Bir-Zeit University, Palestine; M.A. from George Mason University in Virginia, USA and a Ph.D. in Monetary Economics from the American University in Washington DC, USA.

## Context and challenges

Political, economic and social transitions as well as governance and public administration reforms need to be supported by a focused effort and a substantive investment in evidence-based research, comparative experience and the creation of a wide array of knowledge instruments that would foster forward and critical thinking, provide a base for social dialogue and contribute to trigger effective change in public policies. In this perspective, two regional initiatives were recently launched:

- **ASSADISSA**, a professional journal of Public Finance and State Modernization, was launched by the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan in July 2011 that aims at fostering dialogue between researchers, practitioners and policy-makers in the Arab world.
- The Middle East and North African Public Administration Research (MENAPAR) was launched in June 2013 by the Bahrain Institute of Public Administration to create a regional study group and forum for research, analysis, and academic-practitioner exchange on the urgent

topic of managing transitions in public governance, with a special focus on the Middle East.

The main issues raised were the below:

- **Knowledge Research:** Is the MENA region giving priority to scientific research and innovation on issues of public administration, capacity building and lifelong learning of civil servants? To which extent is it contributing to the international research agenda? Are successful local and regional practices well documented and shared?

- **Policy Reforms:** What are the knowledge tools put at the disposition of policy and decision-makers to support policy reform? Should training institutions be involved in knowledge creation and how? How can research efforts be federated in the MENA region?

Based on a mind map, participants issued a set of recommendations as to how MENA countries could tackle investing in knowledge creation and dissemination.



## Recommendations

### 1 Introduce a framework for knowledge management

- Encourage knowledge creation initiatives at the local level using both quantitative and qualitative research.
- Facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and feed in regional networks like MENAPAR and the GIFT-MENA.
- Propose knowledge tools that would be grounded in practice and reflect the needs of citizens, in an effort to influence the decision-making process at the level of government.

### 2 Invest in human resources in charge of producing knowledge

- Provide training to build research capacity in the public sector.
- Encourage all training institutions to invest in substance and build their capacities to publish evidence-grounded work.
- Encourage them to network with peers, and build knowledge partnerships with the academia.

### 3 Elaborate national strategies for knowledge creation and dissemination

- Evaluate the degree of knowledge available.
- Document national experiences and cases and transform them into good practices.
- Engage the public and private sectors as well as civil society in the process of research and learning for better public policies.
- Engage training institutes in regional exchange of knowledge and good practices.

#### 4 Establish direct research efforts to feed in the policy-making process

#### 5 Improve the quality and relevance of knowledge tools put at the disposition of governments

■ Improve statistics, indicators and data collection, in addition to monitoring, reviewing and scrutinizing the work of governments. International data comparison points towards a positive association between a country's statistical capacity index and commonly used governance indicators: i.e. better production of data is likely to contribute to better governance in the same way that better governance is likely to foster data production and dissemination.

- In MENA, and when compared to the rest of the world (figure 4), all independent sub-indices are below world average, but the gap is largest when it comes to the methods used for data collection.
- The ESCWA is working on the creation of an Arab Governance Indicator (AGI) that includes a number of composite indicators covering the entire spectrum of governance. This indicator would allow the identification of priorities and the suggestion of new, evidence-based policy options to improve governance in Arab countries in transition.

#### 6 Create pressure groups to advocate and support scientific research and the production of knowledge

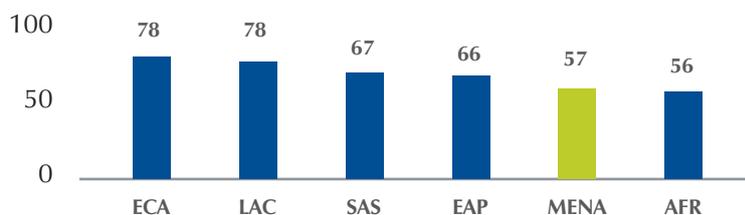
#### 7 Accompany the publication of research papers with intellectual debates

#### 8 Create regional partnerships

that would request technical assistance in the field of knowledge production.

The roundtable discussion concluded that a trend shift needed to be established in the Arab world; a move away from knowledge consumption towards knowledge production.

Figure 4: **Linkages between governance and statistical capacity, based on the World Bank statistical capacity index (2010)**



Source: Tarek Alami, Director of Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Division, ESCWA, "The Measurement of Governance in Arab Countries in Transitions", 2014.

Figure 5: **Challenges & opportunities for the MENA region in knowledge production**

- Promote knowledge creation as an integral part of capacity development
- Accompany knowledge creation by debate
- Establish strong linkages with policy-making
- Encourage contribution from the region and establish a wide readership
- Ensure sustainability of knowledge creation despite limited financial resources
- Link international practice to national policies

Source: Lamia Moubayed Bissat, Director of the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan of Lebanon, "Time for MENA to invest in knowledge creation and global thinking", 2014.

# Roundtable Discussion 3

What can be done to promote Arab development cooperation?



“*South-South cooperation should be strengthened through the development of strategic partnerships that promote international technical cooperation and knowledge sharing.*”

Eva BEUSELINCK

## Discussant

**Mr. Nicolas DUBOIS**

Director of State Modernization, Civil Service & Training Management, ADETEF, France

## Presenters

**Ms. Eva BEUSELINCK**

Policy Analyst, OECD

**Mr. Tarek GAMMOUDI**

Director, Advisor to the Minister of Development and International Cooperation, Tunisia

**Mr. Edouard DAHDAH**

Senior Public Sector Specialist, World Bank, Egypt Country Office



## Mr. Nicolas DUBOIS

Mr. Dubois is the Director of State Modernization, Civil Service and Training Management at Adetef since 2013. Mr. Dubois has developed, managed and implemented technical assistance programs in the area of State, Institution and Capacity Building, the Rule of Law, Public Administration Reform, Human Resource Development, Anticorruption, Public sector reform strategies, and Integrity systems in OECD Countries, Central Europe, the Western Balkans, Central Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and the Caucasus. He worked at the Secretariat General of the European Parliament (1986-1987), the European Institute of Public Administration (1987-1997) and the OECD (1997-2013). He also worked as senior expert for the Council of Europe and the World Bank. Mr. Dubois holds degrees from the University of Lausanne (CH), the College of Europe (B) and University Paris IX Dauphine (F).



## Dr. Eva BEUSELINCK

Dr. Beuselink is a Policy Analyst at the Governance Reviews and Partnerships Division (Public Governance and Territorial Development Directorate) at the OECD. Before joining the OECD, she was deputy chief of staff of a member of the Belgian federal government, dealing with budget, HR and reform processes. Before that, she worked for the Belgian Development Agency on institutional and organizational strengthening of the public sector in a wide range of (mainly African) countries, and as a researcher at the Public Management Institute (K.U. Leuven, Belgium). She holds degrees in anthropology, development, economy and public management.



## Mr. Tarek GAMMOUDI

Mr. Gammoudi holds a PhD in statistics and demography with distinction, as well as a degree in economics.

He is currently appointed Director at the Ministry of Development and International Cooperation in charge of supervising governmental work and administrative reform (2012 - 2014).

He has held the position of representative of the state in the council for the development of the North West (2010 - 2012) and in the council for the development of the western center (2009 - 2010).

Mr. Gammoudi is a lecturer at the Institute of Labor and Social Studies at Tunis since 2007. He has contributed to the preparation of memos to ministerial sessions related to development and administrative reforms since 2005.



## Mr. Edouard AL-DAHDAH

Mr. Al-Dahdah is a Senior Public Sector Specialist who has been working at the World Bank since 2001, first in Washington in the Middle East and North Africa Vice-Presidency and the World Bank Institute starting in 2004 and now in Cairo Egypt, where he is responsible for the Bank's public sector and governance work. He is one of the core authors of the award-winning World Bank report on "Better Governance for Development in the Middle East and North Africa: Enhancing Inclusiveness and Accountability", published in 2003, and is currently working on producing a companion volume. His fields of expertise include the political economy of institutional reforms and quantitative economic history. A Lebanese national, he did his graduate work at the University of Chicago and Georgetown University, and his undergraduate work at the American University of Beirut.

## Context and challenges

The international debate on the effectiveness of international aid has been largely dominated by the voices of bilateral and multilateral development agencies from the North. A growing effort is now being made to seek a more balanced cooperation scheme with the emergence of South-South cooperation and of new models of North-South cooperation. Understanding the issues at stake for the MENA region, the international community has recently launched many initiatives, such as the Deauville Declaration and Partnership<sup>3</sup> (Figure 6) and the MENA Transition Fund<sup>4</sup> (Figures 7 and 8) to help and support Arab countries in their transitions. With the challenges faced by Arab countries, and in the current environment of challenge and change, Arab donors are also called upon to

further support State modernization, knowing that their share of international aid to the region was historically high in the 70's and 80's and started falling over time. Scaling up their assistance would be a powerful tool for shifting the aid paradigm, building new partnerships, creating and sharing best practices and putting in place more equitable forms of global interdependence and governance.

The main issues raised were the following:

### ■ Collaboration in Capacity

**Development:** Are countries of the Arab region able to collaborate and create synergies in areas of capacity development and human capital formation? How can state strategy pair with international

organizations to improve training and capacity building? Are regional development organizations and banks addressing the question of skills and capacity building in Government? Can synergies between technical assistance and training be reinforced? And how?

### ■ Development aid and financing:

What is the role of the Transition Fund and what does it offer in terms of technical cooperation for transition countries? How does it leverage and complement support from other donors and partners? What does this entail in terms of economic development?

■ **Strategic Outlook:** What is the scope and prospects of South-South cooperation in the area of capacity development and knowledge transfer?

## Recommendations

### 1 Coordination and harmonization

The donor community expressed its willingness to assist and fund initiatives that would facilitate democratic transitions and deploy efforts towards a stronger coordination and harmonization among donors.

### 2 Ownership

Beneficiaries of aid are expected to act as partners, not only as recipients. They need to set priorities, formulate needs, and steer the work and assistance provided by the donor community.

### 3 Learning

To support reform, access to information should be facilitated, dialogue promoted, comparative knowledge developed and made available to the public at large and peer-to-peer learning should be strongly encouraged.

### 4 Exchange and networking

Networks, be it formal or informal, are professional communities that help promote collective intelligence. They should be encouraged and supported.



<sup>3</sup>For more information about the Deauville Partnership: <http://www.g8.utoronto.ca/summit/2011deauville/2011-arabsprings-en.html>

<sup>4</sup>For more information about the MENA Transition Fund: [www.menatransitionfund.org](http://www.menatransitionfund.org)

Figure 6: **The Deauville Partnership for Arab Countries in Transition**

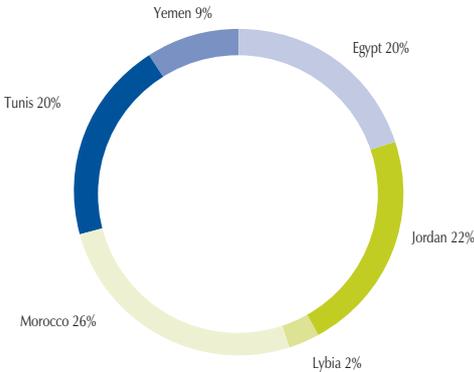
The Deauville Partnership was launched in May 2011 by the G8 as a long-term, global initiative that provides Arab countries in transition with financial and technical support to:

- Achieve economic stabilisation and implement reforms
- Boost job creation
- Strengthen inclusion and governance for transparent, accountable governments
- Foster regional integration and open up transition countries to increased trade and investment with the G8 and with each other

The Partnership came as a response to the historical changes underway in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. It provides 5 Transition Countries (Egypt, Jordan, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and Yemen) with international support and expertise to modernize their public policies in a time of economic adversity and political transition.

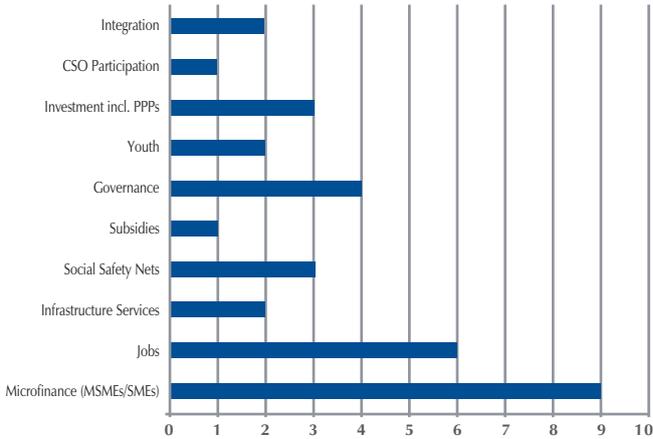
*A MENA Transition Fund (<http://www.menatransitionfund.org>) was created in 2012 to advance policy and institutional reforms through the provision of grants for technical cooperation programs. The Fund became operational in 2013 and has already approved over \$100m of transition country initiated projects. For more information: The Declaration of the G8 on Arab Springs*

Figure 7: **A look at the Transition Fund - Allocation of funds to countries**



Source: Eva Beseulnick, Policy Analyst, OECD, “The Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition”, 2014.

Figure 8: **A look at the Transition Fund - Portfolio mix**



Source: Eva Beseulnick, Policy Analyst, OECD, “The Deauville Partnership with Arab Countries in Transition”, 2014.

Figure 9: **MAAREFAH**



In 2013, the World Bank launched MAAREFAH, as part of her “Connecting Voices in MENA” initiative. MAAREFAH is an online platform for discussions, knowledge sharing and resources on governance, financial management and procurement in the Middle East and North Africa region. It was established in response to counterparts of World Bank’s demands for a way to continue dialogue in various conferences and the ongoing popular demand for change, accountability, transparency and inclusiveness from the people of the MENA region.

# Concluding Remarks

By

**Zafiris Tzannatos**

Senior International Consultant for Research and Policy

**Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Colleagues and Friends,  
We have come to the end of our conference on Human Capital Formation in  
the Public Sector and the Challenge of Building the State in Times of Crisis.**



I would like to express my thanks to the organizers, the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, the Secretariat of the network, the Arab Planning Institute and the ADETEF that have contributed and supported the conference's organization.

I would also like to add my appreciation to all delegations, speakers and participants for making time to be with us during the conference and actively participate in this event.

Finally, I would like to stress that I am honored to be with you and deliver these concluding remarks. Like all of us, I benefited from the lively presentations and country experiences of your countries that have made remarkable progress especially since the 1990s. However, in a globalizing world, what matters is not how fast you move but how fast you move relative to others. In this respect, the Arab region has not moved as fast as it could and it should, if not for us, for the millions of youth that are in a long state of "waithood" and can become a lost generation. And how fast one moves does not

depend on individuals but on the collective representatives of the society, that is, on how good the Government policies are, that is, on how well the public sector implements the policies, that is how well trained civil servants are. In this conference, we focused on the need to train civil servants and improve their skills but, as I will mention below, their performance can be compromised by the structure of the State and the nature of the Government.

In the short space of time we have before the conference is concluded by Ms Lamia Moubayed Bissat and Dr. Bader Malallah, I will not attempt to provide a summary of the many and useful things we discussed, as you all know what we covered and, in any case, there will be a summary report that will be shared with all in the near future.

Instead, I attempt to bring under one umbrella the diversity and complexity of the issues we covered, in particular with respect to where training fits into

public sector performance. This is important so that the training effort is not wasted both at national level and at intra-Arab level. The latter was the focus of our conference and clearly showed the many benefits that can come from the regional networking of the Arab countries and the cross fertilization of ideas and experiences. Intra-Arab cooperation cannot not be downplayed, despite the vast differences between the Arab countries. These differences are also found, for example, between North Europe and Portugal, Italy, Greece and Spain that are unfortunately grouped under the acronym "PIGS". Yet, Europe states are not just cooperating but are trying to integrate.

Moreover, efforts for regional integration are taking place across the whole world, not just in Europe. North America has NAFTA. South America has MERCOSUR. Asia has ASEAN. Africa has formed SADEC among its Southern members. The world is not just globalizing but is also regionalizing as competitive pressures on individual countries increase. When we refer to the Arab region, we should not confine ourselves just to linguistic, cultural and religious similarities but we should include the prospects for greater regional networking, cooperation and integration.

Let me start with training before I go into issues of public administration and Government policies. Training can have an effect only within the broad parameters within which it

operates. It is like good seeds falling on the ground. If the quality of the ground is not good or water is scarce, these good seeds can only grow up to a point, if they do at all and are not totally wasted. So, if recruitment in the public sector is based on credentialism, that is, it values all kinds of certification and degrees irrespective of their value added to the holder of that piece of paper, then the potential impact of training will be greatly compromised. In fact, it can reinforce the belief among civil servants that getting more “certificates of attendance” is enough in itself for promotion. In addition to credentialism, training can have small impact on those who have been recruited on the basis of entitlement rather than merit, as the case is when priority is given to considerations such as gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity and, of course the “old tie network” for which the local, albeit broader, term is “wasta”.

Moreover, for training to have an effect, it should be relevant to the tasks that the trainees will subsequently perform. Even when training is based on the best pedagogical and practical methods, and when the trainees acquire cutting-edge knowledge and new skills, the question is whether they are not going to use the knowledge and skills they acquired in their work. To avoid this, one needs to have clear job descriptions and prior assessment of training needs for the workers who do these jobs. In other words, trainers may be very good in what they know and do but their training may not be up to date or needed for the work the trainees will subsequently do.

Drawing on an example from the private sector, I was in a country where vocational trainers taught the trainees how to fix televisions. The training covered repairs of black and white televisions. This is what the aging trainers knew about but there are no black and white televisions anymore. This issue was in fact, raised by one participant yesterday, that is, whether training should be provided by the

public of private sector. The concern was that, if the trainers were civil servants who have tenure, they may teach the same things today as those they taught the first day of their appointment decades ago. This does not need to happen and brings us back to the previous point whether the public sector is professional or credential-based.

This remark raises the issue of the overall capacity of the public sector to implement its own policies beyond the availability skills. This requires good managerial and administrative systems, including IT. Civil servants may have capacity to do what is expected of them and may also continuously upgrade their skills but this is different from their motivation to excel. The public sector lacks two “sticks”, that is, dismissals for poor performance and lack of profitability. But it has “carrots” in terms of pay and promotion.

Incentives therefore depend whether there is meritocratic assessment of performance managers. If this is not the case, training will not result in better performance and higher productivity. In this case workers may lack motivation and say “why bother if others who do not work hard, and do not do the fancy things I can do, are going to be treated equally and, probably, more favorably than me”. Finally, let me turn to the role of policies. Training and public administration may be good but Government policies may be below expectation. Since we have a finance bias in this conference, let me give an example from the credit rating agencies, such as the big three: Moody’s, Standard & Poor’s and Fitch. These agencies rate countries and companies in terms of their credit-worthiness, that is, their ability to pay back their debts by making timely interest payments avoid and the possibility of default.

Now can a domestic company get a higher rating than that of the country in which it operates? As an example, there are companies in today’s Greece

that are star performers but their rating has sunk together with that for Greece. Individually, citizens and companies cannot do better than what their country does. They can only do so at the expense of other individuals and companies. This is a zero sum game. So, one needs good governance, good administration and good skills. The big question is then how to improve governance. In general, governance in the Arab region is globally on the lower side. This is both on the political side and on economic side. In the decade leading to the Arab Spring, the region had the lowest rankings in terms of an index of voice and accountability and also per capita increase in incomes.

The interplay between politics and economics is complex and, in any case, training politicians is different than what “leadership courses” offer to private companies. So, we can concentrate on training technocrats. In this respect, one of the most important, if not the most important, training is on the ingredient that holds livelihoods and societies together: Public finance. Of course, you are aware of the budgetary crisis in the US that closed the Government last Autumn. The Government closed because the implicit debt of the country, that is, its underlying dynamics, could not be agreed among rival politicians. The EU is in disarray because its fiscal policy is disjointed from its monetary policy.

Last is my own country, Greece. Greece is getting Olympic medals for its still rising debt, the longest recession in modern times (6 years), the deepest one since the Wall Street Crash in 1929 and a level of unemployment that makes the Arab region look a labor market heaven: Unemployment is nearly 30% overall and youth unemployment 60%. One more point for Greece: When a new Government was elected in 2009, it estimated that the deficit was 7% which was then revised to 11% and then to 16%. And the debt was not 110% of GDP but

130% of GDP. These differences are enough to turn an illiquid economy into an insolvent one, as indeed happened. God bean counting matters though in the case of Greece the wrong accounting was probably a combination both of incompetence and political manipulation, that is, corruption. So, governance and economics go together and economics cannot be separated from public finance.

Let me now conclude by what I feel could be promising next steps not just for the countries represented in this conference but also those that happened not be able to join us this time and will hopefully join us next year.

First, the Arab region needs to consider enhancing capacity at the level of policy making together with capacity for development and thus address the twin challenges of governance and economics. This is what should be done. In addition the region needs to develop capacity for policy dialogue both internally, between Governments, citizens and all the stakeholders, and also in regional and international forums. This is about how it should be done.

Second, capacity building needs to be fully integrated with respect to training systems, human capital formation and broader human development with the necessarily, albeit often resisted, organizational reforms and institutional changes. This is not a side-dish, it is a main course. Again, this should be addressed through joint planning across all actors, State and non-Governmental

ones. It should involve the public sector at large, the private sector, employers and of course workers in both the public and private sectors, Civil Society Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations that are active across the communities.

And the design of these reforms should be evidence-based. They cannot be carried out without prior spending, institutional, organizational and functional reviews. There have been many public sector reforms in the Arab region but most have been driven by political and fiscal, not developmental, consideration rather than substantiated reviews. These reviews are technical, not political. And here, training has a lot to offer so that the distinction between fiscal adjustment and economic adjustment is clear.

Third, especially for the Arab region, South-South cooperation is important. This is cooperation between those who are not part of "the big boys' club", that is, the G20, Europe, the superpowers, the West, the North and the East. The importance of inter-regional cooperation did not escape the discussions in our conference. It was mentioned yesterday that the examples and models that are presented to Arab policy makers from Western countries are not always relevant or readily applicable to the countries in the region. It is critical in this respect not just to meet and talk but to join efforts to build knowledge, not just share it. Training can contribute to and benefit from the discovery and advancement of new home-grown analytical and

empirical knowledge.

Finally, I want to leave you with a question: How can we strengthen the involvement of Arab Funds for the development of the region? How can we mobilize funds to support regional initiatives such as the GIFT-MENA network? I am saying this because I read in recent documents from an Arab organization's report that [quote]:

*"Arab donors have been generous to the Arab world. They have established national development funds, such as the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED), the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD), the Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD)... Some Arab donor countries are establishing development agencies, such as the United Arab Emirates' Office for the Coordination of Foreign Aid and Qatar is also involved in foreign aid activities. However, for the most part, Arab ODA is untied (meaning: it does not come with conditionalities), while Arab donors are not present in recipient countries to monitor it. This raises the risks of mismanagement. Aid could be granted and coordinated in a more efficient way, with stronger monitoring, more focused oversight, and greater transparency. To avoid mismanagement requires regular evaluations and impact assessments".*

In other words, money is often less of an issue than what one does with it. But if there is money, then all for the better.

Thank you.

***On the occasion of the closing ceremony, the Minister of State Reform, Decentralization and Civil Service of France, represented by Mr. Christian Nakhlé, Ambassador of France to Kuwait, pledged additional support to the network's development and earmarked 50,000 Euros, to complement previous support allocated by the French Treasury since 2010.***

*The GIFT MENA network... holds a conviction... that public action is a response to the social challenges of our century and a pillar of economic development. ... I am convinced that this contribution will help enhance south-south cooperation with our partners in the Arab world.*

Marylise LEBRANCHU



# Conference Agenda

Tuesday, JANUARY 28, 2014

14:00 - 17:00

## GIFT-MENA Network Meeting

Venue: *Abdullatif AL HAMAD Hall - API Headquarters*

17:00 - 19:00

## Inaugural Ceremony

Venue: *Abdulaziz AL HUSAIN Hall - API Headquarters*

## Opening speeches

**Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT**,

Director of the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, Lebanon

**H.E. Ms. Hind AL SOBEIH**,

Minister of State for Planning and Development, Minister of Social Affairs and Labor, President of the Board of trustees of the Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait

**Ms. Agnès ARCIER**, Chairwoman of ADETEF, France

**H.E. Mr. Mohamed MOUBDI**,

Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Modernization, Morocco

**Dr. Bader Othman MALALLAH**,

Director General of the Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait

**Keynote Speech** by Honorary Guest

**H.E. Mr. Fuad SINIORA**, Former

President of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Lebanon

19:30 Cocktail Reception

Venue: *Arab Planning Institute Headquarters*

Wednesday, JANUARY 29, 2014

Annual Conference

09:30 - 11:00

## Plenary session

Venue: *Abdulaziz AL HUSAIN Hall - API Headquarters*

## Can we build capacities in Times of Crisis? Challenges and Opportunities for the MENA Region

### Chairperson

**Dr. Raed BENSHAMS**, Director General, Bahrain Institute of Public Administration, Bahrain

### Guest Speakers

**Dr. Ihab MAGABLEH**, Expert, Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait

**Mr. Carlos CONDE**, Head of the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, OECD

**Mr. Pierre THENARD**, Director of International Relations, Ecole Nationale d'Administration, France

### Discussion

11:00 - 11:30 / Coffee break

11:30 - 13:00

## Plenary session

Venue: *Abdulaziz AL HUSAIN Hall - API Headquarters*

## Is capacity development a policy or a market place? Are private sector organizations meeting the needs of the public sector?

### Chairperson

**Ms. Nadia BERNOUSSI**, Director General, National School of Administration, Morocco

### Guest Speakers

**Prof. Dr. Michiel S. De VRIES**, President of IASIA

**Dr. Bassem YOUNES**, Director of Strategic Alliances, Mohammed Bin Rashid School of Government, United Arab Emirates

**Mr. Zafiriz TZANNATOS**, Senior International Consultant for Research and Policy

### Discussion

13:00 - 14:00 / Lunch

14:00 - 15:30

## Roundtable discussions

### Roundtable Discussion 1: Modern Trends to a Performant Civil Service

Venue: *Abdulbaki AL NOURI Hall - API Headquarters*

### Discussant

**Mr. Mohamed Lhabib GOUBI**, Director General of Human Resources, Bank of Algeria

## Presenters

**Mr. José Antonio MARTINEZ**

ALVAREZ, Director General, Institute of Fiscal Studies, Spain

**Mr. Ahmed LAAMOUMRI,**

Director of Studies, Communication and Cooperation, Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Modernization

**Mr. Vincent POTIER,** Director

General, Centre National de la Fonction Publique, France

## Roundtable Discussion 2: Time for MENA to invest in knowledge creation and global thinking

*Venue: Ibrahim SAAD AL DEEN Hall - API Headquarters*

### Discussant

**Mr. Awad ABU SHOOK,** Director General of Human Resources, Central Bank of Sudan, Sudan

### Presenters

**Dr. Raed BENSAMS,** Director General, Bahrain Institute of Public Administration, Bahrain

**Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT,** Director, Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, Lebanon

**Ms. Nisreen SHAKER,** Expert, Research Advisor Office, Council of Representatives, Iraq

**Mr. Tarek ALAMI,** Director, Emerging and Conflict Related Issues Section (ECRI), ESCWA

## Roundtable Discussion 3: What can be done to promote Arab Development Cooperation? What is the role of initiatives such as the Deauville Partnership and the MENA Transition Fund?

*Venue: Abdullah AL MUTAWAA Hall - API Headquarters*

### Discussant

**Mr. Nicolas DUBOIS,** Director of State Modernization, Civil Service & Training Management, ADETEF, France

### Presenters

**Ms. Eva BEUSELINCK,** Policy Analyst, OECD

**Mr. Tarek GAMMOUDI,** Director, Advisor to the Minister of Development and International Cooperation, Tunisia

**Mr. Edouard DAHDAH,** Senior Public Sector Specialist, World Bank, Egypt Country Office

*19:30 Diner / invitation by the GIFT-MENA Secretariat*

Thursday, JANUARY 30, 2014  
Annual Conference

9:30 - 10:30

**Presentation of the workshops' results and recommendations**

*Venue: Abdulaziz AL HUSAIN Hall - API Headquarters.*

10:30 - 11:00 / Coffee break

11:00 - 12:30

**Closing session**

*Venue: Abdulaziz AL HUSAIN Hall - API Headquarters*

### Concluding remarks

**Mr. Zafiris TZANNATOS,** Senior International Consultant for Research and Policy

### The Way Forward

**Ms. Lamia MOUBAYED BISSAT,** Director of the Institut des Finances Basil Fuleihan, Lebanon

**Dr. Bader Othman MALALLAH,** Director General of the Arab Planning Institute, Kuwait

12:30 - 13:30

**Closed Meeting of the GIFT MENA Steering Committee (on invitation only) - Detailed agenda prepared by the Secretariat**

*Venue: Abdulbaki AL NOURI Hall - API Headquarters*

13:30 - 15:00 / Lunch

15:00

**Visit to the Kuwait National Museum**