



Arab Republic of Egypt



AIDE MEMOIRE

40TH ANNUAL ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE

THEME:
**TRANSFORMING INSTITUTIONS IN AFRICA
FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

VENUE: CAIRO, EGYPT
DATE: 3RD-6TH December, 2019

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Africa needs to respond adequately to the challenges confronting it on the socio-political and economic fronts. To effectively address these challenges, Africa must strengthen its governance and public institutions through the adoption of sound governance and public administration practices, which are only possible within the context of viable institutions.

It is known that effective, accountable and inclusive institutions are essential to achieving Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development commonly known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Institutions (formal and informal) – determine how decisions are made, how resources are allocated, how well markets function, how natural resources are governed, how conflicts are managed and how violence and crime are prevented and addressed. Effective, accountable and inclusive institutions that provide access to justice are based on effective rule of law, respond to the needs of people and provide timely, appropriate and equitable access to services.

Strong institutions foster equality and trust among communities, businesses and people by securing their participation and engagement and tackling corruption, and they create a culture of integrity in service delivery. Asfaw and Mbeche (2004) observe that well-functioning institutions can promote growth and reduce poverty by providing a conducive environment for implementation of sustainable development programmes hence the need for African countries to establish effective, responsive and democratic institutions that will promote accountable and transparent governance and sustainable socio-economic development.

The legitimacy of institutions, systems, and processes are determined by a range of factors, including respect for human rights, fair and non-discriminatory processes and equal opportunities, where no one is excluded or discriminated against on the grounds of age, race, colour, sex, language, religion, class, political affiliation or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status. Institutions that have not achieved this level of sustainable invulnerability require transformation and that is exactly what Africa, at least accordingly to Agenda 2063 and the SDGs, needs in order to prosper.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND CONTEXTUAL ORIENTATION

For the past three years, AAPAM has centred on the theme of ‘transformational leadership’ which is considered key to Africa’s realization of its developmental objectives set out in Agenda 2063. AAPAM has decided to further focus on transformation of institutions by training its intellectual capacity to interrogate and propose measures to transform institutions and develop their capacity in public administration and management which is a prerequisite to achieving levels of sustainable development as outlined in Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. This is premised on the evidence that, whereas institutions play a cardinal role in development, continents like Africa have weaker and ineffective institutions because of poor enforcement of the rule of law, corruption, mismanagement, absence of strong civil society and political interference (Asfaw and Mbeche, 2004).

When former United State President Barack Obama first came to Africa, he delivered a powerful speech to the Ghanaian Parliament where he stressed the importance of strong institutions to Africa’s prosperity and sustainable peace. In the 21st century, capable, reliable, and transparent institutions are the key to success. In elaborating on what capable institutions look like, Obama stated that effective parliaments; honest police forces; independent judges; an independent press; a vibrant private sector and civil society are the factors that give life to democracy, because that is what matters in people's everyday lives. In envisioning ‘the Africa We Want’, Obama reiterated that with strong institutions and a strong will, Africans can live their dreams in Nairobi, Lagos, Kigali, Kinshasa, Harare, in Accra and indeed the rest of Africa. It is therefore safe to surmise that strong institutions in addition to constructing appropriate levels of checks and balance that hold leaders accountable, ensures inclusive and effective service delivery.

3.0 RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION FOR THE THEME

Institutions and leadership are twins conjoined at the hip wherefore none can function effectively without the enabling lever of the other. It therefore bears reason that a treatment of one must elicit a critical examination of the other. Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063 envisions an Africa which has capable institutions and transformative leadership in place at all levels, where the institutions are at the service of its people, and citizens own and actively participate in social, economic and political development and management. It is expected that capable institutions will nurture a competent, professional, rule and merit-based bureaucracy which will serve the

continent and deliver effective and efficient services. Based on this dream for Africa the 40th AAPAM Roundtable Conference will explore avenues for transformation that will ensure institutions at all levels of government in Africa will be developmental, effective, inclusive, democratic, and accountable.

The SDGs recognize the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice. Institutions that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparency, effectiveness and accountability. These two dependable and affirming visions (Agenda 2063 and the SDGs) clearly demonstrate the centrality of capable institutions for the attainment of sustainable development in Africa and indeed elsewhere in the world. It is this premium paced by the two visions on building and transforming institutions in Africa that has informed the AAPAM fraternity to dedicate the 40th Roundtable Conference to discuss and offer suggestions on how to transform institutions in Africa to be strategically positioned for transformed service delivery.

OBJECTIVES OF THE ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE

In recognition of the fundamental need to transform institutions in Africa for sustainable development, the 40th Roundtable Conference will be anchored on the following objectives:

- 4.1 Explore ways and means of transforming public service institutions into effective, inclusive and accountable vehicles for the realization of sustainable development
- 4.2 Interrogate current practices on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and proffer avenues for repositioning it as an enable in the public sector to achieve sustainable development.
- 4.3 Discuss and propose measures to strengthen institutions and mechanisms of public-policy coordination.
- 4.4 Identify and agree on cross-cutting issues that are critical for the transformation of public sector institutions in Africa.
- 4.5 Evaluate decentralised institutions with a view of proposing consolidation interventions to ensure enhanced and effective service delivery.

- 4.6 Present a platform for delegates to share and exchange innovations and best practices through case studies on transformation of public sector institutions

5.0 EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- 5.1 AAPAM Roundtable conferences are essentially platforms for information sharing, knowledge and experience exchange but at the end of this 40th Session delegates will come away with:
 - 5.1.1 Tangible ideas on how to transform and cement public service institutions into effective, inclusive and accountable vehicles for the realization of sustainable development.
 - 5.1.2 Interventions on how to reposition ICT instruments into effective public sector institutions' enablers to achieve sustainable development.
 - 5.1.3 Concrete measures of strengthening public-policy coordination institutions and mechanisms
 - 5.1.4 Firmed up cross-cutting issues that are critical to the transformation of public sector institutions in Africa identified like the role of private sector.
 - 5.1.5 Charted propositions for the consolidation of decentralised institutions for enhanced and effective Service delivery
 - 5.1.6 Best practices on innovation and transformation in public sector institutions

6.0 ROUND-TABLE SUB-THEMES

6.1 Transforming the Public Service Institutions for Effective, Inclusive and Accountable Achievement of Sustainable Development

Participants at the 39th Roundtable Conference agreed that good institutions are enablers of inclusivity, effectiveness and accountability. Building on this tenet, contributors to this session will acknowledge that putting great efforts in institutional transformation to attain an effective, inclusive and accountable governance architecture will move Africa to the path of accelerated realization of its transformational goals as stipulated in Agenda 2063 and the SDGs. The sub-theme will outline a nuanced approach to institutional building that sets out both the hard and soft wares that are essential for imbedding invincibility in governance structure for them to be able to wither cyclical political and economic storms that define Africa's social economic landscape. Contributors will, in the main, demonstrate that effective, inclusive and accountable institutions are the hallmarks of sustainable development.

6.2 The Role of Digital Transformation as Public Sector Institutions Enablers to Achieve Sustainable Development.

One of the key insights rendered at the 39th Roundtable Conference was that even though ICTs remains the greatest enabler for innovation, bringing more possibilities with the digital revolution, innovation is however not synonymous to ICT. Contributors on this dynamic subject will stretch the frontiers of knowledge to share thoughts on the significance of ICTs in public sector institution building, and how it enhances efficiency for countries to achieve sustainable development. Contributors will explicate how the ICT ecosystems interact through or in mutually beneficial relationships and effective collaborations, including harmonising capacities of diverse participants and resources for the common good of effective service delivery.

6.3 Strengthening Public-Policy Coordination Institutions and Mechanisms for Effective Implementation

Policy coordination in the context of implementation of the SDGs and Agenda 2063 presents one of the most challenging institutional building and integration dilemmas. Policy-making is seen and treated as a design task, with

most discussions of policy design focusing on creating or improving a single program whilst enabling the designer to focus on the specialized demands of the program area and to attempt to limit other considerations, which approach may produce programs that are too narrow. One important premise for policy design should be that the success of any one program will depend at least in part on other programs. Contributors to this sub-theme will, in the main, examine the causes of coordination challenges and the mechanisms that may be available for improving such coordination. Contributors will also discuss the limits of coordination as a solution to governance failure in the broader context of transforming Africa's public administrations.

6.4 Cross-Cutting Issues on Transformation of Public Sector Institutions in Africa

In the whole process of interrogating on the role of institutions in implementing the 2063 Agenda and SDGs, there is need to also take a look at the various blocks that constitute strong effective inclusive and accountable institutions. Among these are: leadership and human resources. The point to keep in mind when considering institutional development for the achievement of the SDGs and Agenda 2063, is that institutions without leadership and human resources who possess the appropriate competences, values and mind-sets, are empty shells.

In recognition of these competing tensions in the administrative machinery and looking to firming up public institutions, authors on this theme will identify and interrogate the cogency of cross-cutting issues in public administration. Close attention will be paid on issues related to or impacting on improvement of the delivery of services to citizens; enhancement of the accountability of public officials; delegation of decision-making; promotion of professionalism and meritocracy in recruitment. It is considered that, well oriented cross cutting issues can and should enhance the malleability of public service institutions.

6.5 Strengthening Decentralised Institutions for Enhanced and Effective Service Delivery

It is a factual exposition that over the years developing countries have increased the democratic basis of local government, a practice which has in

effect complemented the restoration or deepening of democracy at the national level. It is common course that local governance enhances both the *legitimacy* of government (by strengthening participation and accountability in policy-making) and the *efficiency* of public service delivery (by improving information, input and oversight). It is also true that local authorities are being given political power to make decisions, elect their own leaders, raise revenues, and take independent investments decisions. Along with this greater political autonomy comes more responsibility and financial resources through expanded tax bases or transfers from the centre.

Within this convoluted context of institutional building authors on this segment will discuss transformation challenges local governments have to grapple with especially with regard to: (a) strengthening the capacity of people to engage with local government as citizens; (b) increasing the responsiveness of local governments to their citizens through democratic institutions; (c) enhancing the efficiency and quality of public services in critical areas (education, health care, social safety-nets, infrastructure management); and (d) preserving the macro-economic stability of inter-governmental fiscal relations.

6.6 Country Case Studies

The development of institutions is always driven by purpose and by contextual concerns. This should be the same in the case of developing governance and public administration institutions in Africa at local, national, regional and continental levels. The overriding purpose for developing governance and public administration institutions must be to establish and nurture institutions to enable them to support the development process and to meet the challenges confronting the continent and its people. Developing institutions entail not only strengthening the institutions that already exist, but also being responsive to the current reality and adopting new forms that fit the unique situations of each country or region's historical, cultural and political reality in a way that can support the realization of the development aspirations of the people

Part of the attraction to the Annual AAPAM Roundtable Conferences is the opportunity availed for delegates to learn and benchmark on best practices in

innovative approaches to institutional building, transformation of administrative establishments, service delivery, good governance and many other endeavors geared towards an inclusive and accountable service delivery. It is therefore expected that Case Studies in this 40th Roundtable conference will present a veritable platform for a rich harvest of best practices in successful initiatives of institutional transformation to realise sustainable development from across the African continent and global

7.0 THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE ROUND-TABLE CONFERENCE



8.0 EXPECTED PARTICIPANTS

Besides governments, individual and non-state actors, AAPAM values the attendance of partner institutions. In the 39th Roundtable Conference, the following partners graced the occasion:

- a) African Public Service Human Resource Managers Network (APS-HRMnet)
- b) United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa) and its Academy- African Local Government Academy (ALGA)
- c) World Government Summit
- d) Organisation Development (OD) Institute
- e) American Society for Public Administration (ASPA),
- f) the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS),

- g) United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)
- h) Palestinian National School of Administration (PNSA)

Overall delegates to the Roundtable conference are drawn from and comprise the following:



9.0 CONFERENCE VENUE AND DATES

The conference will be held in **Cairo Egypt**

Conference Dates: **3rd to 6th December, 2019**

10.0 CONTENT FOR THE CONFERENCE

Speakers and presenters at the Conference will be identified by AAPAM in collaboration with partnering institutions. For the speakers, the following deadlines shall be adhered to:



11.0 WORKING LANGUAGES

The working language shall be **ENGLISH, FRENCH, and ARABIC.**

12.0 REGISTRATION AND PARTICIPATION FEES

12.1 All participants are encouraged to register online <http://www.aapam.org/conferences-and-events/event-calendar#id=109&cid=1076&wid=701> and pay registration fees at the following rates:

- (a) Participants from host country - **USD 310**
- (b) Others - **USD 410**
- (c) Accompanying Persons (spouses of participants) - **USD 210**

Completed registration forms may also be emailed directly to the AAPAM Secretariat

12.2 Participation fees shall be paid at the time of registration and/or at the venue of the conference. However, Delegates are encouraged to pay earlier (at least 3 weeks to the conference date) and may pay by bank transfer to the AAPAM Account whose details are given below:

AAPAM A/C FCY 1103297694
Kenya Commercial Bank
Milimani Branch
P.O. Box 69695, Nairobi, Kenya
Tel; +254 20 2719433/2719434, 2719470
Fax: +254 20 2729942
SWIFT CODE: KCBLKENX

- 12.3 Those paying by bank transfer are expected to show evidence of payment on the day of the conference.
- 12.4 Delegates may pay the equivalent of the participation fees indicated above in other convertible currencies such as the Euro, British Pound Sterling (GBP), Canadian Dollar (CND), and South African Rand. The equivalents of the participation fees in these currencies shall be indicated in a schedule that will be available at the registration desk.

13.0 HOTEL ACCOMMODATION

13.1 Full information on recommended hotels shall be posted on the AAPAM website: www.aapam.org

14.0 CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Further information and inquiry on the conference may be directed to:

AAPAM Secretariat
The Secretary General
132 Fuchsia Close, Gigiri
Nairobi, Kenya.
P O Box 48677, 00100 GPO, Nairobi,
Kenya
E-mail: aapam@aapam.org or
info@aapam.org
Telephone: +254 20 2629650; 254 712
262 707

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4. Kumssa A. and Mbeche I. I (2004): The role of institutions in the development process of African countries. *International Journal of Social Economics*, Volume: 31 Issue: 9, 2004.
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