



Conference Communiqué

The 40th AAPAM Round-Table Conference

Held on

03rd – 06th December 2019

At

**Nile Ritz-Carlton Hotel
Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt**

INTRODUCTION

1. The African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) 40th Roundtable Conference was hosted by the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt through the Ministry of Planning, Monitoring, and Administrative Reform.
2. The 40th Annual Roundtable Conference was held under the High Patronage of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, from 3rd to 6th December 2019 at the Nile Ritz-Carlton Hotel in Cairo, Arab Republic of Egypt under the theme: ***“Transforming Institutions in Africa for Sustainable Development”***.
3. The following sub-themes steered discussions at the conference:
 - 3.1 Transforming the Public Service Institutions for Effective, Inclusive and Accountable Achievement of Sustainable Development
 - 3.2 The Role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) as Public Sector Institutions Enablers to Achieve Sustainable Development.
 - 3.3 Strengthening Public-Policy Coordination Institutions and Mechanisms for Effective Implementation
 - 3.4 Cross-Cutting Issues on Transformation of Public Sector Institutions in Africa
 - 3.5 Strengthening Decentralised Institutions for Enhanced and Effective Service Deliver
 - 3.6 Country Case Studies
4. Six Hundred and Thirty-Three (633) delegates from Twenty-Four (24) Countries attended the Conference with Egypt, Ghana Malawi and Uganda recording the highest turnout respectively. The countries represented were:

Benin
Belgium
Botswana
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
D.R of Congo
Egypt
Eswatini

Ethiopia
Ghana
Kenya
Lesotho
Malawi
Mauritius
Morocco
Nigeria

Sierra Leone
South Africa
South Sudan
Sudan
Tanzania
Uganda
Zambia
USA

5. Among the participants were Ministers; Heads of Public/Civil Services and Secretaries to Cabinet; Permanent/Principal Secretaries, local elected officials and other high-ranking

Government Officials. Others were Chairpersons and Commissioners for Public Service Commissions; Heads of Management Development Institutes; Development Partners; representatives of Statutory Institutions; scholars and researchers, Women in African Public Administration Network (WAPAN), AAPAM Young Professionals and other delegates of various standing.

6. Several AAPAM partner organizations graced the Roundtable Conference. Organizations that sent representatives and delivered messages of solidarity to the conference were: the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), the African Cabinet Government Network (ACGN), Africa Public Sector Human Resource Network (APS-HRMnet), Association of African Public Service Commissions (AAPSCOMs), Parliamentarian of the African Parliament (PAP), Commonwealth Association of Public Administration and Management (CAPAM), South African Association of Public Administration and Management (SAAPAM)
7. Four finalist organizations received AAPAM Innovative Management Awards. The awards recognise and celebrate creativity in the African public services. This year, the jury received fifty-seven (57) submissions from fourteen (14) countries. Out of the 57 submissions 17 were from French and Arabic speaking countries while the rest were from Anglo-phone countries. The countries which submitted their innovations were:

a. Algeria (3),
b. Botswana (6),
c. Cameroon (7)
d. Egypt (5),
e. Ghana (1),

f. Kenya (10) ,
g. Malawi (1),
h. Mauritius (12),
i. Morocco (1),
j. Namibia(1),

k. Senegal (1),
l. South Africa (4),
m. Uganda (1) and
n. Zambia (4)

8. The winning projects were:
 - 8.1 Ending of Child Marriage by the Ministry of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs, Zambia (**Gold**),
 - 8.2 A Milestone to Public Services for Egyptian Citizens by Ministry of Local Development Egypt for the project A Milestone to Public Services for Egyptian Citizens. (**Silver**),
 - 8.3 National Complaints Management System by Ministry in Charge of Administration and Civil Service, Kingdom of Morocco (**Bronze**).
 - 8.4 National Skills Development by Human Resource Development Council, Mauritius (Glass)

OFFICIAL OPENING

9. The 40th AAPAM Roundtable Conference was officially declared open by Her Excellency Dr. Haila Elsaid, Minister of Planning, Monitoring and Administrative Reform, Arab Republic of Egypt. The conference was organized in ten (10) plenary, four (4) parallel and five (5) specialised sessions. Three of the ten plenary sessions were specifically dedicated to Innovation Management Awards, Innovation Panel and Women in Public Service with the latter focusing on the establishment of a network for Women in Public service in Africa's network around the continent.
10. The following networks met on the margins of the Roundtable Conference and held discussions on issues of specific and particular interest to them. These were: the AAPAM Young Professionals Network (YPN), the APS-HRMnet, Research and Academia, the Cabinet Secretaries/ Heads of Service. UNDESA also conducted workshops on the margins of the conference. In these forums information was exchanged, experiences shared and lessons learned. The AAPAM Executive Committee and Council also held meetings on the margins of the conference.

INTERVENTIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

11. In recognition of the reality that 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:

Conference shared and exchanged the following insights:

- 11.1 The 4th Industrial Revolution presents Africa with a massive opportunity to benefit from related skills like creativity, Innovation, emotional intelligence, etc
- 11.2 The young people are the ones who will experience the real challenges presented by Agenda 2063 and hence need to be put at the centre of implementation.
- 11.3 As automation becomes the norm, employees will require agility to oscillate between inter-disciplinary scenarios.
- 11.4 As we move forward with the SDGs and Agenda 2063 implementation, institutions like AAPAM need to sustain capacity to remain relevant and dependable.
- 11.5 During the 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) Member states re-committed to SDGs implementation and the need to speedy institutional transformation

- 11.6 Even though Africa is the richest continent it has the poorest people in the world
- 11.7 Make great people and you will be built great nations
- 11.8 Africa needs strong institutions as much as its needs strong and effective leaders.
- 11.9 If institutions do not mirror the aspirations of the African people, they are bound to fail.
- 11.10 Leadership manifests at various levels and it is the responsibility of every leader to ensure institutions are creative and effective and the products of this leadership should trickle down the value chain.
- 11.11 The new generation of citizens has little patience for government failures
- 11.12 Universities are key players for building the necessary capacity for administrative reforms
- 11.13 ICT and digital platforms are important for sustainable development and are already transforming lives in significant ways.
- 11.14 In Africa only three (3) countries South Africa, Mauritius, closely followed by Seychelles are in top 50s on e-government and e-participation
- 11.15 There is a universal consensus that innovation and creativity are the bedrock of any sustainable political, economic, social, environmental, physical and technical growth.
- 11.16 Most decentralization programmes are focused on securing resources from the central government and creating employment for local people with no focus for local development.

- 12. In acknowledging the fact that effective, accountable and inclusive institutions are essential to the achievement of Agenda 2063 and to the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. 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.

The Conference acknowledged that:

- 12.1 Women empowerment is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 12.2 ICT is the greatest enabler for innovations.
- 12.3 Transformational leadership creates an innovative environment.
- 12.4 Community involvement is critical to sustainable innovation.
- 12.5 Egypt has and continues to consolidate its relations with its African counterparts in a myriad of economic development ways.
- 12.6 Early guidelines on public administration came from ancient Egypt.

- 12.7 Africans did not fully benefit from the 1st, 2nd and 3rd industrial revolution
- 12.8 Ethical leadership a quo pro qua for policy co-ordination and implementation institutions.
- 12.9 New technologies are key enablers in strengthening policy coordination and implementation institutions.
- 12.10 Decentralization is about improving decision making and service delivery at local level.
- 12.11 UNDESA has the most relevant and updated data on e-government and e-participation.
- 12.12 Digital and E-government have grown exponentially, its crucial nutrient is advancement of people demands, however disparities remain within and among countries.
- 12.13 Customer focused service delivery is the best support for persons with disability

CONFERENCE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13. In accepting the reality that 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 the one must elicit a critical examination of the other. Granted that 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.

Conference made the following recommendations:

- 13.1 There is need for Africans to translate conversations into tangible actions and results.
- 13.2 Governments and the private sector should sponsor more young people to attend AAPAM Conferences
- 13.3 The Egyptian Presidential Council on Digital Transformation is a good practice to be replicated around Africa.
- 13.4 African needs strong political will to empower the youth
- 13.5 There should be participation and responsiveness in policy coordination and implementation
- 13.6 African should create institutions that are adaptive, listening, that are responsive, versatile and that ensure citizen participation to shape policy.

- 13.7 Administrative reforms should be people driven and e-participation is an important communication tool.
- 13.8 Connecting African people is our shared prosperity hence governments must put people at centre of digitization.
- 13.9 Digital divide can aggravate the social divide and investment in its use can be a force for positive social change.
- 13.10 Informal institutions should be incorporated into digitization projects to ensure sensitivity communities' cultural dimensions.
- 13.11 Given the massive youth unemployment challenges, the Mauritius model of targeted training is a best practice for replication.
- 13.12 Innovation is the gateway to institutional transformation for sustainable development.
- 13.13 As we observe this season of violence against women and children the Zambia model of ending child marriage is a best practice for the many countries still grappling with this social menace.
- 13.14 Local to local collaboration is necessary to encourage the creation of viable economic zones
- 13.15 Countries should avoid big bang decentralization; stay sequential and shun transposing wholesale one system to another

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

14. The Conference conveyed profound gratitude to all AAPAM partners, especially Member States, and in particular the Government of Egypt, under the Leadership of His Excellency President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, for his country's generosity, commitment to and support for the Annual AAPAM Roundtable Conferences.
15. The Conference congratulated the AAPAM Innovation Management Award winners for their dedication, commitment and brilliance in excelling and thereby expanding the horizon of knowledge.
16. Delegates expressed their sincere appreciation to the National Organising Committee; the Management and Staff of Nile Ritz-Carlton Hotel and the Egyptian people for their hospitality as well as outstanding hosting, courtesies that were impeccably and proficiently prepared for them.

17. Delegates thanked the AAPAM leadership and secretariat as well as resource persons and rapporteurs for their dedication and commitment to making the 40th Round-table conference the success it is.
18. The theme and venue for the 41st Roundtable Conference will be communicated to AAPAM fraternity in due course.