The Fourth MENA Social Policy Network (University of Bath) Conference in Partnership with the American University in Cairo’s Centenary Celebrations

Social Policy in the MENA Region: Policy learning in the era of social protection

American University in Cairo, Cairo (Egypt), 30-31 October 2019

Conference Rationale

Goal 1.3 of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals Agenda firmly established the provision of effective systems of social protection as a key function of the contemporary state. Not only does the idea of social protection have a long history in international donor interventions dating backing to the late 1980s, it also reinforces the pre-existing mechanisms of social welfare and social security provision in all regions of the world, including in the MENA region. It is however, the case that social protection as a development policy discourse in MENA countries has only gained momentum since the mid-2000s, spurred in large part by the need to respond to rapid social change and political instability and rising public deficits. We are now in an era of major policy change in the MENA region: under the new paradigm of social protection, countries are undergoing major reforms in social policy provision ranging from the introduction of cash transfer programs to re-adjustments in fiscal policy with major implications for both policy-making processes and citizen rights and welfare.

In response to this dynamic context, this conference seeks to engage with the following questions: How do we as researchers, policy-makers and practitioners make sense of the social protection agenda in the MENA region? In what ways does it replace or reinforce pre-exiting social policy structures? More importantly how can social policy change be managed in this time of social transformation? Can MENA countries learn from the policy experiences of other countries or regions? More to the point, how does policy learning happen in order to foster more effective, efficient and inclusive social protection policies?

We welcome papers in the following areas. Please ensure your abstract mentions which theme (s) your paper fits into. If your paper fits into more than one theme, this is fine, please indicate these in your abstract submission:

• Policy actors and Institutions

• Discourses and Policy Ideas

• Theories, models and paradigms of social policy in MENA

• Interventions in specific policy sectors

• Political Economic Perspectives

• Sociological Perspectives

• Cultural Perspectives

• Historical Perspectives

• Evaluation of Policy Outcomes

• International Comparative Perspectives

• Analysis of Policy Processes

• End-user perspectives

• Methodological Perspectives

• Other (please discuss with conference organizers first)

Key information for submission of abstracts:

• The submission process for abstracts will be online only. If you experience difficulties, please email Rana Jawad and Emma Ford on MENASP\_network@bath.ac.uk

• Online submission point for all abstracts: https://bathreg.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/4th-mena-social-policy-network-conference-copy-copy

• Individual paper abstracts should be of 500 words.

• Panel proposals (maximum 4 speakers): Panel abstracts should comprise of a 500 word rationale and full details of the authors with individual abstracts of 500-800 words each.

• All abstracts must mention the methodological approach upon which the paper is based

• Papers can be empirical or theoretical in nature

• If based on already published material (such as a journal paper), authors should make clear what new research the paper will present

• We will develop plans for wider dissemination of conference proceedings through the MENA social policy network website and a journal special issue proposal

• The primary language of this conference is English. Arabic language abstracts are welcome and should be submitted to MENASP\_network@bath.ac.uk

Key deadlines:

• Please submit your abstract by 29 March 2019 indicating your name, institutional affiliation and contact details. Decisions on the abstract submissions will be made in May 2019.

• It is a requirement of the conference that all presenters submit a full paper (draft format acceptable) by 1st September 2019

• All conference delegates, whether presenting a paper or not are required to register. Further instructions to follow.

Special Session for Early Career Researchers and getting your research published:

This session is aimed at PhD students and early career researchers (up to 7 years in academic post). Delegates are encouraged to bring research ideas or a working paper and share good practices with peers and two mentors of the MENA social policy network. Interested participants can sign up at registration for this session.

Special Session on Exploring Teaching Curricula in Social Policies of the MENA Region:

This session is aimed at academic staff with teaching responsibilities in social and public policy issues. Delegates are invited to share curricula, good and bad experiences in teaching, ideas on how the subject area of social policy in MENA can be further developed. Interested participants can sign up at registration for this session.

Bi-Annual General Meeting of the MENA Social Policy Network:

We will hold our first Bi-AGM of the MENASP network. Details to follow for those interested to become active more members.

Arabic Language

Logistical Information:

• Delegates may like to know that transportation to and from the American University in Cairo conference venue will be facilitated by the conference organisers. This will be arranged to/from designated hotel locations in Cairo. Further information will be made available on which hotels we recommend to conference delegates in due course. If you have immediate questions on this matter, please contact Ghada Barsoum and Rana Jawad.

• There will also be a conference dinner and further details will be announced when the conference programme is finalised. When you register for the conference, there will be a question asking you to indicate whether you wish to be included in the conference dinner.

How to contact organisers:

Please contact both of the organisers if you have queries about the conference programme:

Ghada Barsoum

Public Policy and Administration Department The American University in Cairo AUC Avenue – New Cairo 13851 Cairo – Egypt

E-mail: gbarsoum@aucegypt.edu

Homepage:

<http://www.aucegypt.edu/fac/ghadabarsoum>

Rana Jawad

Department of Social and Policy Sciences University of Bath Claverton Down Bath, BA2 7AY United Kingdom

Email: r.jawad@bath.ac.uk

Please contact both of the administrators below if you have queries about registration, accommodation or travel:

Enas Abdel Azim (enas\_20@aucegypt.edu) & Mariez Wasfi (mariez.wasfi@aucegypt.edu) Public Policy and Administration Department School of Global Affairs and Public Policy (GAPP) American University in Cairo AUC Avenue P.O. Box 74 New Cairo 11835, Egypt