



3RD AFRICAN GOVERNANCE EXPERTS SEMINAR

CALL FOR PAPERS

2nd to 3rd of December 2020
Virtual Seminar

Submission of Abstracts Due: **23rd October 2020**

Submission of Full Papers Due: **27th November 2020**

Introduction

The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Continental Secretariat, based in Midrand-Johannesburg, South Africa (<https://www.aprm-au.org/>), in collaboration with the University of the Witwatersrand (WITS) School of Governance, based in Parktown-Johannesburg, South Africa (<https://www.wits.ac.za/wsg/>), is inviting abstracts from African experts, scholars and practitioners. The accepted papers will be presented by the Authors at the **3rd African Governance Seminar** scheduled to take place **virtually** on the **2nd and 3rd of December 2020**. Seminar Papers that meet rigorous academic standards will be published

The African Governance Seminar Series is a multi-stakeholder interactive platform for debate and analysis of developments and trends on governance in Africa. The format of the series comprises an annual conference of experts, universities and schools of government in Africa. The seminar focuses on four thematic areas of democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance, socio-economic development, as well as the African Union (AU) Agenda 2063 within the framework of Futures Studies.

Background

Launched by the African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of States and Governments in 2003, the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)¹ is the continent's self-monitoring and peer review instrument for promoting good governance. AU member states voluntarily accede to the Mechanism, its review processes and implementation of National Plans of Action deriving from the reviews. In this regard, participating states are encouraged to adopt AU standards and codes to improve constitutionalism as well as policy adoption, domestication and implementation.

In an effort to enhance coherence between academia and practitioners in the construction of discourse on governance and standards of practice, the APRM essentially brings together a wide spectrum of the governance community. To this end, the APRM Secretariat has partnered with the Wits School of Governance (WSG) to develop the African Governance Seminar Series (AGOSS). The WSG is a multi-disciplinary post-graduate school in the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. WSG works closely with government and civil society across the African continent in pursuing research, training and education in governance². Due to its proximity to the APRM, the WITS School of Governance serves as the anchor institution for the AGOSS.

The APRM co-ordinates the AGOSS organising and technical committees, which comprise one representative from an academic/training institution and/or think tank from each of the 6 AU Regions (Central, East, North, South, West and the Diaspora) on the African continent.

¹ The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM): <http://www.aprm-au.org/>

² The University of the Witwatersrand. 2018. <https://www.wits.ac.za/wsg/who-we-are/>

Rationale

AGOSS was established as an interactive platform for debate and analysis of developments and trends within governance in Africa, focusing on the four thematic areas: democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and socio-economic development. In recognition of the disconnect and dissonance that often occurs between the two communities in Africa, the platform thus aims to bring multiple stakeholders including academics, practitioners as well as public and private non-state actors to dialogue. This bridges the divide between theory and practice, in addition to the main purpose which is to encourage and promote continent-wide convergence on AU good governance values, standards and codes.

Call for Papers

The call for papers for the **2020 African Governance Seminar** invite topics on one or several of the themes whose details are as below:

AGOSS 2020 Themes and sub-themes

AGOSS 2020 Seminar Main Theme: Resilient and well-governed societies

Resilience is the capacity of a system to overcome external or internal shocks, through learning, adapting, coping and/or transforming. Good governance is a key feature of resilient communities and societies at large. The ability of a government to develop and enforce rules and to deliver services in any social, political or economic climate may be considered the hallmark of good governance. As the AGOSS is a platform for discourse on novel African-generated research on governance, the main seminar theme for 2020 invites participants to explore state resilience. The theme is spurred by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has highlighted the need to increase the resilience of public systems such as public healthcare, trade and security. The seminar theme challenges authors to investigate measures of resilience which may not be common in contemporary political science discourse. Papers may include sub-themes on the state and sovereignty, multi-level governance, resilience in policymaking and implementation, disaster management, government preparedness, government reserves, regional economies, elasticity, trade, vulnerability indices and inclusivity.

Sub-Theme One: The COVID-19 Pandemic: key lessons, responses and strategies

The global outbreak of the novel corona virus, Covid-19, has impacted normal functioning of economic, social and political systems and called for innovative responses and strategies. African countries can benefit from utilizing past lessons learned from responding to pandemics such as Ebola; developing innovations and implementing emerging interventions. The Session invites papers which explore interventions prior to the Covid-19 pandemic and those that emerge from the outbreak with a focus towards development of thriving, peaceful and well-governed African states. Authors are invited to explore ways in which, through research, states can be encouraged to adapt to a post-covid-19 world and re-define governance in a sustainable manner. This includes the role that academics and practitioners play, through both development and governance discourse to ensure innovation in areas such as the health-sector, peace and security, national and regional trade as well as safeguarding of resources to ensure increased wellbeing for citizens.

Sub-Theme Two: Conflict prevention and peace

Conflict zones remain a major deterrent to economic growth and sustainable development in Africa, as a result of the displacement of millions from their homes, unable to participate in improving their country. To meaningfully develop and increase human well-being, countries must be conflict-free. The theme invites papers that present solutions for areas in conflict through national security, arms, terrorism, conflict management, exploitation of national resources, corruption, illicit financial flows, protection of children and other vulnerable groups. The session invites authors to propose tools which enable conflict prevention and early warning through organs of the African Union such as the African Peer Review Mechanism, the African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA) and its Peace and Security Council (PSC). Sub-themes include peacekeeping and capacitation of military personnel in conflict zones. It is to be noted that the 2020 African Union theme is Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development.

Sub-Theme Three: The Future of Governance

Future scenarios and professional forecasting predict that the 21st century, owing to a Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), will be characterized by emerging technologies that will change the way people conduct their lives. This includes the internet of things, artificial intelligence and robotics for example. To building upon discourse from the AGOSS 2019 theme: Governance Futures and the AU Agenda 2063, which explored elements of what good governance will mean for future public and private institutions in Africa, the 2020 theme invites papers which exclusively explore, discuss and address the required and likely innovations towards fulfilling the aspirations of the AU Agenda 2063. Africa must move away from business as usual and rapidly improve accessibility of e-services, green economies, inclusive and participatory governance for sustainable development. Sub-themes may further explore the evolution of ICT technologies, the relevance of traditional government structures and institutions, how African leaders will

transform, what kind of government will be suitable for the Africa of the future, as well as how the meaning of governance may change, both epistemologically and practically.

Submission Process

Seminar authors are invited to submit abstracts on or before **23rd October 2019**:

1. A 300-500 word abstract and brief outline of the proposed paper.
2. The first page of the proposed paper should include the title, authors' name, affiliation and full contact details.
3. Potential author's biographies should be submitted, indicating the list of papers authored and/or published. Kindly state the title of the paper(s), Journal and Issue number of the paper(s) published.
4. Upon submission of their abstracts, potential authors will be notified of the outcome of their submissions. If their abstract has been selected, potential authors will receive further information regarding the submission process and Seminar logistics.
5. Full Draft papers must be submitted via e-mail in both PDF and Word format as attachment to ags@aprm-au.org and copy WSG.APRM@wits.ac.za) on or before **27th November 2020**.
6. The final Paper submissions should be approximately 2,500-5,000 words in length, excluding references, figures, tables, and appendices.



NB: Papers submitted must not have been published, accepted for publication, or under consideration for publication anywhere else.