



## SAPA NEWSLETTER

Section on African Public Administration  
American Society for Public Administration  
Issue 6 ~ December 2024



### Message from Dr. Rym A. Kaki, SAPA Chair



Dear SAPA Members & Supporters:

2024 has been a resounding success, marked by thought-provoking inter-continental exchange of SAPA members and colleagues in Africa, groundbreaking partnerships, and a steadfast commitment to disseminating cutting edge research and best practices to advance public service.

SAPA members shined at the ASPA 2024 annual conference in Minneapolis with its all-day symposium debating *“Pathways of Enhancing Resiliency in African Governance and Development.”* The symposium brought together keynote speakers *Dr. George Scott*, APPAM General Secretary, *Dr. Ghada Barsoum*, Chair of AUC Department of Public Administration and Policy, *Dr. Anastase Shyaka*, Rwandan Ambassador, and *Dr. Brian Levy*, Professor of the Practice of International Development, SAIS, Johns Hopkins University, sharing their perspectives on the concept of “resilience” in the context of African PA. They concluded with insightful propositions on how to turn **“the crisis of vision and ungovernability”** to the hope for a policy framework reframing the continent’s **“priority problems as entry points for change.”** Not only institutions and metrics matter, problem formulation and geography matter greatly as well. As Dr. Shyaka concluded: **“Africa is a continent of the future, let us focus on where solutions are working, and put on the table a critical action agenda.”**

For the SAPA 2025 Symposium, we invite our members, ASPA colleagues, and counterparts on the continent to consider the topic, “Not Robotics, at Least Not Yet,” at the ASPA 2025 annual conference in Washington, DC! SAPA will offer our traditional all-day symposium, including a practitioner round table event to debate the role and impact of emergent technologies on African public administration systems.

A big shout-out to the respective editorial boards of SAPA and the *African Journal of Public Administration and Management* (AJPAM) for their continued collaboration, releasing SAPA’s second guest edition based on the 2022 SAPA Florida symposium on “Democratic Governance in Africa: Threats, Challenges, and Opportunities.” A third guest edition -- spurred by our 2023 Cairo continental conference (SDGs: Localization Challenges and Opportunities) and 2024 symposium themes -- is in the pipeline...

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**Newsletter Contents: Chair’s Message; Mission & Goals; Executive/Committee Leadership; 2024 External & Internal Events; ASPA 2024—SAPA Symposium & Panels; 2024 Business Meeting; ASPA 2025-SAPA Symposium; 2024-25 Fundraising Update & Pledge/Support Drive; Member News; Communicate, Connect & Collaborate.**

...SAPA's network of partners continues to expand. A special thank you goes to our main continental partner, the African Association for Public Administration and Management, for their unwavering support, the University of North Texas at Dallas for continued sponsorship of SAPA symposia, and ASPA leadership for their endorsement.

Stay tuned for more information on the *SAPA 2025 Washington, DC Symposium and Practitioners Round Table program*, including the section's outreach on the continent as we set out to organize SAPA's 2<sup>nd</sup> continental conference.

As we celebrate the section's accomplishments and look ahead, I'm conveying deep gratitude to SAPA members at large, the board, executive team, and partners in Africa and the U.S.

Forever grateful to SAPA's ubuntu, and in community,



### SAPA Mission & Goals



The American Society for Public Administration's (ASPA) Section on African Public Administration (SAPA) aims to advance the science, processes and art of public administration and governance on the African continent. It purports to foster opportunities for joint research and exchange between African Public Administration scholars and their international counterparts; provide systematic analysis, commentary, and articulation of on-the-ground plight of Africa's public service; play a leading role in advocating for diverse representation at all levels of government and promote the sense of ethical responsibility focusing on the exploration of professional, democratic, constitutional, and human values in public service. <https://thesapa.org/>

### Executive/Committee Leadership Team

**Officers:** Rym Kaki (Chair); Gedeon M. Mudacumura (Vice Chair); Bakry Elmedni (Treasurer); Simone Martin-Howard (Secretary)

**Advisory Board:** Genevieve Meyers; Peter F. Haruna; Jessie Rose Mabutas; Oluwole Owoye; Deborah L. Trent; Atta Ceesay; Sombo Muzata; Bok Gyo Jeong; Aminata Sillah, Shin Kue Ryu, Mohamed Alaa Abel-Moneim, and James Agbodzakey

**Academic Affairs Committee:** Shin Kue Ryu (Chair) [shinkueryu@isu.edu](mailto:shinkueryu@isu.edu)

**Practitioners Capacity Building Committee:** Adebayo Andari (Chair) -- [adebayo.adanri@gmail.com](mailto:adebayo.adanri@gmail.com)

**Marketing & Membership Committee:** Atta Ceesay (Chair) – [ceesayaa@buffalostate.edu](mailto:ceesayaa@buffalostate.edu)

**Communication, Newsletter & Website Committee:** Peter Haruna & Debbie Trent (Co-Chairs) – [pharuna@tamiu.edu](mailto:pharuna@tamiu.edu), [dtrent@civilstrategies.net](mailto:dtrent@civilstrategies.net)

**Fundraising Committee:** Jean-Claude Mansanga Ndongo (Chair) – [jndongo2019@fau.edu](mailto:jndongo2019@fau.edu)

**Global Outreach Committee:** Liza Van Jaarsveldt (Chair) -- [Vjaarlc@unisa.ac.za](mailto:Vjaarlc@unisa.ac.za)

## 2024 External & Internal Events

### ASPA 2024 Annual Conference—SAPA Symposium & Panels



SAPA convened its annual day-long symposium on April 12, 2024, during the annual ASPA conference in Minneapolis, under the theme, “Pathways of Enhancing Resiliency in African Governance and Development.” Four panels were held: “Rebounding from Challenging Times”; “Methodological Innovations to Better Ascertain Local Circumstances”; “A Probe into African Political Institutions’ Resilience”; and, “Theoretical Frameworks on Comparative Studies among African Nations.” Opening the proceedings were Bob Mong, then University of North Texas/Dallas president, and symposium organizing committee co-chairs Rym Kaki and Shin Kue Ryu. Special thanks to premier sponsor, The University of North Texas/Dallas!





*The symposium would not have been possible without the encouragement, enthusiasm, and financial support of then UNT Dallas President, Bob Mong...*



*Keynotes by: Dr. George Kojo Scott, Secretary General, AAPAM; Dr. Anastase Shyaka, Ambassador of Rwanda in Poland; Dr. Ghada Barsoum, American University in Cairo; and Dr. Brian Levy, Johns Hopkins University...*

*Presenting from abroad...*



*...and in Minneapolis...*



*...Including remarks by ASPA President Dr. Patria De Lancer Julnes*







*Symposium co-chairs and panelists pleased with the insights on: Africa's rebounding from the pandemic and other challenges; new paths for localized research and comparative studies among African nations; and resilience in Africa's political institutions. Again this year, SAPA has built promising new bridges between theory and practice.*



### 2024 Business Meeting

The 2024 ASPA conference was also the site of SAPA's annual business meeting. SAPA Chair Rym Kaki presented a comprehensive report including activities,



growth, and accomplishments since the section's founding in 2018, as well as the 2024-25 strategic plan. How was this progress achieved? Dr. Kaki cited productive and cutting-edge scholarship via annual symposia, panels, and roundtables at the ASPA and continental conferences. Partnerships with the African Association and the African Journal of Public Administration and Management and with UNT Dallas have also been key. SAPA's three current strategic goals were outlined: 1) Activate members' participation and contributions across all committees; 2) Ramp-up academic productivity in the U.S. and Africa; and 3) Celebrate outstanding scholarship. SAPA now counts 50 members from Canada, Egypt, Ghana, Qatar and

the U.S. who are committed and creative. The treasury has reached five figures and fundraising continues apace to cover future convenings and other projects.

### ASPA 2025-SAPA Symposium

In Q3 & Q4, the Academic Affairs Committee has been actively preparing for the 2025 SAPA Symposium within the 2025 ASPA Annual Conference. During Q3, the Call for Paper Proposals was drafted, reviewed, and finalized through a collective effort of the Committee members. The CFP was circulated through our partner and sister networks. So far, they have received 15 abstracts and anticipate dividing them into three panels. They also plan to harness the locational advantage of Washington, DC, by bringing in influential keynote speakers to help identify the key directions of both U.S. and international organizations' engagement with the African continent. The Committee is excited that ASPA is holding its annual conference in Washington, DC, the nation's capital, a sentiment shared among the entire ASPA community, as we expect to see many federal and international keynote speakers present at the conference.

### 2024-25 Fundraising Update & Pledge/Support Drive



Jean-Claude Ndongo and James Agbodzakey report that the University of North Texas/ Dallas (UNT Dallas) will support SAPA with \$5,000 towards the 2025 Symposium. Also, the Sponsorship Package is ready for members' use to foster financial resource generation for SAPA. Please contact Jean-



Claude or James to receive it, and do share it with your individual and organizational contacts to help support the Fundraising Committee's efforts.

Donations will:

- Facilitate the 2025 symposium and SAPA's efforts in general;
- Encourage opportunities for joint academic research and exchange between global and African public administration scholars, students, and practitioners with an active interest in the continent's public service and development;
- Provide systematic analysis, commentary, and articulation of on-the-ground plight of public service in the context of UN 2030 and Africa 2063 goals;
- Foster active collaboration with ASPA and the National Council, with advocacy for "diverse and inclusive representation" in Africa's public service organizations;
- Promote "ethical responsibility," around professional, democratic, constitutional, and human values; and
- Support research that explores indigenous concepts, including "ubuntu" [humanity] and "abunzi" [reconciliation], and their integration into public service norms.

Individuals and organizations are encouraged to contribute by check to Dr. Bakry Eljack Elmedni, SAPA Treasurer, 2108 Crescent Drive, Tarrytown, NY, 10591. Alternatively, contributions can be made via wire transfer, by sending an email for account details to: sapaaspafrica@gmail.com. Our fundraising goal through the Pledge/Support Drive, separate from the Sponsorship Package, is \$5,000. Please -- give generously to help reach our goal.

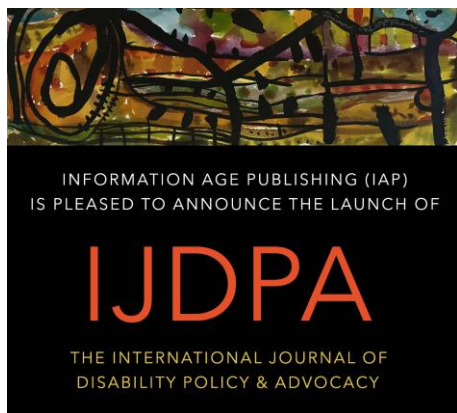
### Member News

**Peter Haruna** is the lead editor of *Climate Governance in International and Comparative Perspective: Issues and Experiences in Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean*, which examines and extracts lessons for climate action in the Global South. Among the co-editors are **Laila El Baradei** and **Liza van Jaarsveldt**.

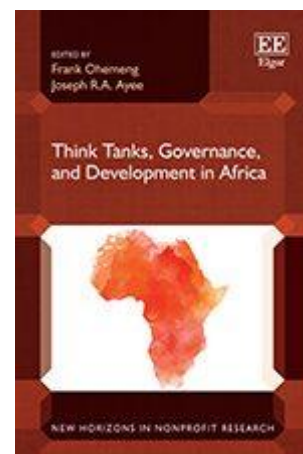


It's clear that this collaboration is another result of SAPA member networking! View more on this 2024 book, [here](#).

**Richard Gregory Johnson III** (with Joe Sehee, Deakin University, Australia) launched the peer-review journal, *The International Journal for Disability, Policy & Advocacy (IJDPA)*. IJDPA is published under the Information Age Publishing (IAP) umbrella. The inaugural issue will be published in June/July 2025 with 12 articles. The mission of IJDPA is to become the premier international journal for disability awareness and advancement. Richard would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to propose an article and/or to explore the possibilities around publishing an IJDPA Special Symposium with SAPA for 2025/2026. Please contact him at [rgjohnsoniii@usfca.edu](mailto:rgjohnsoniii@usfca.edu).



**Frank Ohemeng** has co-authored *Think Tanks, Governance and Development in Africa*. This timely volume is [available here](#).



**James Agbodzakey** has published the volume, *Collaborative Governance Primer: An Antidote to Solving Complex Public Problems.* This primer analyzes experience at local government level in the U.S., with particular attention to HIV/AIDS, COVID 19, and other public health challenges. This primer serves as a valuable new resource to scholars and practitioners of public affairs, public management, governance, public health, public policy, disaster and emergency management, and related fields. This past summer, James served as a delegate and presenter at the 25<sup>th</sup> International AIDS conference; he spoke about collaborative governance and financing during 30 years of implementing the *Ryan White CARE Act*.



**Rym Kaki** received the inaugural **SAPA Leadership Award** at the 2024 ASPA annual conference in Minneapolis. Vice Chair Gedeon Mudacumura and Dr. Kaki exchanged heartfelt gratitude for a 'power team' that achieves 'high impact outcomes.' Peter Haruna chaired the SAPA Leadership Award Taskforce.



### Communicate, Connect & Collaborate

SAPA's communication format will be changing up! This newsletter issue will be the last, and we'll move to a new publication, tentatively entitled "The Africa Diasporan Forum." Each edition will feature a reflection or two on an administrative-managerial issue of interest in the continent. The forum will highlight the work of exemplary African public servants - both practitioners and academics. Selection will be open and left to individuals to frame them the best way they can. Board members and all SAPAns can take turns to offer thoughtful reflections that can generate productive dialogue. Vice Chair Gedeon Mudacumura observes that the new format should also promote regional linkages within the continent and facilitate SAPA partnership-building. Depending upon SAPA volunteer capacity, we may also issue an annual report at the end of the academic year. Member email blasts will continue to be issued as needed, complementing the forum and annual report. Thanks to Peter Haruna, our new Communications Committee co-chair, for suggesting the new forum, and SAPA chair Rym Kaki, for moving us toward an annual report process.

As for connecting and collaborating, a recent proposal from Shin Kue Ryu is exemplary. In early November, he suggested to Rym Kaki setting a discounted graduate student membership rate for



joining SAPA. With most of the board responding, all affirmatively, several reasons were mentioned for supporting the lower barrier to entry for students as well as additional ways to support future scholars and practitioners. There could be one student panel at ASPA per year, a scholarship fund, shared tips for reducing research/conference-related travel expenses, and a SAPA mentorship program. The proposal is now on its way to the ASPA National Council for review.

**Happy Holidays to all!**

