



The Asfari Institute for Civil
Society and Citizenship
مركز الأصفري للمجتمع المدني والمواطنة
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Issam Fares Institute for Public
Policy and International Affairs
معهد عصام فارس للسياسات
العامة والشؤون الدولية

Call for Papers: Labor Movements and Unions and the Quest for Social Justice in the Arab World

The Asfari Institute for Civil Society and Citizenship and the Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs, in consultation with the International Labor Organization, are issuing a call for research papers on labor movements and unions and the quest for social justice in the Arab region.

In light of the social and economic problems that the Arab intifadas have highlighted after decades of neoliberal policies, unemployment, corruption, and social inequalities under Arab regimes, economic and social reform has become central to the demand of Arab citizens. What role have unions played in the struggle for social justice in the region? How autonomous and representative are these labor organizations? What challenges — imposed by national, regional, and international frameworks — face labor movements, and what opportunities exist - or could exist for them?

Research papers should include:

- A historical overview of labor movements and their progress, impact, and challenges in the past ten years;
- The legal, structural, and financial frameworks of unions;
- The local, regional and international environments' influence on labor movements, and analytical recommendations for the future.

Each research paper should focus on one particular Arab country, with priority given to: Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Sudan, Oman, Bahrain, Yemen, Occupied Palestine, Iraq, Lebanon, and Jordan.

Applicants are asked to follow these guidelines:

- After carefully reviewing the research framework, submit: (1) a (maximum) two-page concept note that would include a discussion of the methodology; (2) a writing sample; and (3) the CV of the researcher (s). *Collaboration between several researchers is welcome.*
- Submissions can be in either Arabic or English.
- Submissions should be sent to: Dr. Rania Masri (rm97@aub.edu.lb), and Ms. Leila Kaban (lk49@aub.edu.lb).
- Submissions are due by **September 10, 2015**

Researchers will be notified by September 25, 2015, and will be paid for the study. All researchers will be invited to a methodology workshop in Beirut, Lebanon in October or November. First drafts of the study are expected by February 2016, when they will be presented in a closed workshop for discussion.

The expected output is a 10,000-word research report that will be co-published by the two Institutes.

Case Study Framework: Labor and Trade Union Movements and the Quest for Social Justice in the Arab World

I – Brief history of labor during the past ten years

- A. The structure of the labor force and its' components' educational status, geographical-sectoral distribution, wage share of the profits, and the national output (with gender mainstreaming for each category)
 - 1. Various wage categories: manual work, office work, teachers, etc
 - 2. Sectors: industry, agriculture, services, etc.
 - 3. Public / private / mixed
 - 4. Formal / informal
 - 5. Migrant workers
 - 6. Unemployed
 - 7. Child labor
 - 8. Women
 - 9. Youth
 - 10. Persons with disabilities
- B. Productive structures and the composition of the national economy (policies, legislation, and institutions)
- C. The impact of economic and social transformations in light of structural adjustments on labor
 - 1. What structural adjustments have the governments implemented in their respective countries?
 - 2. The economic and social impact of these adjustments on labor (non-regular workforce, social protection, deterioration of public services...)
 - 3. The impact of transformations on the evolution of trade union movements (New economic sectors without trade union frameworks)

II. Unions

- A. Legislative framework: the constitution, labor laws, authorities and international agreements, unions' internal systems and regulations
- B. The structure of trade unions: Membership, gender composition (including leadership roles), union pluralism or monism, formal or independent, the adaptability of the trade union structure with the current structure of the economy
- C. Funding and financial independence, the availability of union full-time officials , the availability of institutions (research and training centers, etc)
- D. Agricultural trade unions in the context of agricultural cooperatives
- E. The labor movement and the trade union movement: Are there other forms of labor organization and what is the nature of the relationship between them? (Labor Committees, unions for the unemployed, migrant workers' unions, etc.)

- F. The stances and activities of the trade union movement in the country during the last ten years pertaining to:
1. Human rights and the defense of trade union freedoms
 2. Economic and social rights
 3. Political positions
 4. The dialogue about wages, prices, and insurance
 5. Foreign labor
 6. Activities:
 - a) Strikes (in the workplace, partial strikes, general strikes, sit-ins, occupying workplaces, etc)
 - b) Demonstrations
 - c) Direct advocacy
 - d) Advocacy through media
 - e) Collective bargaining at all levels (Institution, sector, nation)
 - f) Collective labor contracts (in any sectors or institutions)
 - g) Other activities
 - h) The transformations of trade unions activities and their causes
 - i) Evaluation of each of these activities

III - The trade union movement and the regional climate (Independence, Collaboration, and Connection)

- A. Authorities and new strategies developed by in the past ten years
- B. Political Parties
- C. Associations and non-governmental organizations
- D. Civil society organizations and monitors directly involved in labor issues and trade union
- E. The case of the tripartite and bilateral partnership in the country under study
- F. The impact of the trade union movement and its participation in organizations

IV – Trade union movements and their relationship with regional and international institutions

- A. The assignment of institutions
- B. Evaluation of the nature of the relationship and its outcomes
- C. The impact of international and regional policies on trade union and labor movements

V – General evaluation and recommendations for trade union movement activities in each country based on all of the above (I-IV)

- A. New and forthcoming challenges
- B. New and potential strategic opportunities
- C. Suggestions for interventions and support to strengthen the role of the labor movement in the quest for social justice