Resource Guide to Arab Parliaments

The Program to Strengthen the Lebanese Parliament Through Development of a Legislative Resource Center in Lebanon (PSLP) is a United States Agency for International Development-funded legislative strengthening program designed to strengthen the administrative support services of the Lebanese Parliament and assist the Parliament in the establishment of a resource center which will serve as a leader in information and training in the Arab world. The program is implemented by the State University of New York / Center for International Development (SUNY/CID).

SUNY/CID is a leading university-based international development center enhancing knowledge and practice in the area of governance and policy making. Over the past quarter century, SUNY/CID has provided technical assistance to over 30 parliaments and regional parliamentary associations worldwide.

This Resource Guide to Arab Parliaments provides information on selected books, articles, reports, conference papers and websites on legislative institutions, and governance, in the Arab world. The Resource Guide includes resources from 1993 to date and aims to assist researchers in Arab parliaments by providing them with a compilation of possible reference materials.
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I Legislative Studies and Legislative Development in Arab Countries

This section provides references and websites on the internal rules and regulations of Arab legislative bodies, evaluation of the institutional performance of some of these legislatures, manuals to enhance legislative work, comparative perspective on the functions of parliamentary committees, overviews on MPs’ immunity, studies on parliamentary reform and development and the roles and functions of parliaments in the Arab world.

a. General Resources on Arab Parliaments and Arab Parliamentary Websites

1) Arab Parliaments. www.arabparliaments.org
   Provides access to a wealth of parliamentary development resources, such as studies, policy guidance and links to networks and databases related to the Arab world.

2) Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union (AIPU). www.arab-ipu.org
   Provides information on the activities, publications, conferences and workshops held by the Arab Inter-Parliamentary Union as well as country profiles of the 22 member countries.

   Provides the full text of the constitutions and laws and bylaws that govern the functioning of Arab legislative institutions.

4) Program on Governance in the Arab Region (POGAR). www.pogar.org
   Provides access to POGAR’s e-library comprising books, articles, reports and news on Arab legislatures and other government institutions.

5) Arab Parliaments’ Websites
   The websites of Arab parliaments mostly provide information on their constitution, internal rules and regulations, members, legislative sessions, laws passed, committees and committee work.
• Algerian National Council. www.majliselouma.dz
• Algerian National People’s Assembly. www.apn-dz.org
• Bahraini Council of Representatives. www.nuwab.gov.bh
• Bahraini Shura Council. www.shura.bh
• Comoros Assembly of the Union. www.auc.km
• Djibouti Republic, National Assembly. www.assemblee-nationale.dj
• Egyptian People’s Assembly. www.parliament.gov.eg
• Egyptian Advisory Council. www.shoura.gov.eg
• Iraqi Council of Representatives. www.parliament.iq
• Jordanian House of Representatives. www.representatives.jo
• Jordanian Senate. www.senate.jo
• Lebanese National Assembly. www.lp.gov.lb
• Mauritanian National Assembly. www.assembleenationale.mr
• Mauritanian Senate. www.senat.mr
• Moroccan House of Representatives. www.parlement.ma
• Moroccan House of Councillors. www.conseillers.ma
• Omani Consultative Council. www.shura.om
• Omani State Council. www.statecouncil.om
• Consultative Council of Saudi Arabia. www.shura.gov.sa
• Sudanese Council of States. www.councilofstates.gov.sd
• Sudanese National Assembly. www.parliament.gov.sd
• Syrian People’s Assembly. www.parliament.gov.sy
• Tunisian National Constituent Assembly. www.anc.tn.
• UAE Federal National Council. www.almajles.gov.ae
• Yemeni House of Representatives. www.yemenparliament.com
b. Internal Rules and Processes:


الهَيْتَى، نُعْمَان عَطَّالِلَه. (۲۰۰۷). تشريع القوٰاٰنين: دراسة دستورية مقارنة. (بالعربية)


*A comparative study of legislative processes and bill drafting across several Arab countries.*


الهَيْتَى، نُعْمَان عَطَّالِلَه. (۲۰۰۷). الأنظمة الداخلية للبرلمانات العربية (الجزءان ۱ و ۲). دار رسلان للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع. (بالعربية)


*A full-text compilation of the bylaws of Arab Parliaments.*


*Presents a comparative overview of the rights and duties of Arab parliamentarians as stated in the bylaws of the parliaments of Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Yemen, Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco; discusses the rights and duties of parliamentarians, their right to join parliamentary committees, speak in general assemblies and committee meetings and submit draft laws; compares Arab parliamentary bylaws concerning oversight, parliamentary immunity, resignation and MPs’ duties in attending plenary sessions.*
EGYPT


Paper contributed to the Regional Workshop on Economic Law-Making and Governance, Cairo Egypt. The study provides an overview of the official structures of research and information services in Egypt’s People’s Assembly. The study is accompanied by a critical analysis of the service’s quality of performance and suggestions for its development.


Analyzes the role of women in the Egyptian Parliament.


Paper contributed to the Regional Workshop on Economic Law-Making and Governance, Cairo Egypt. Reviews the parallel information structures of the Egyptian People’s Assembly.


Discusses the rights of an MP to express opinions in the Egyptian Parliament given procedural and legal limitations.
MOROCCO


Studies oversight of the constitutionality of the internal rules of the Moroccan House of Representatives.


Provides an overview of the issues and difficulties faced in the Moroccan Parliament.


Provides an account of and a commentary on the new rules of procedure in the Moroccan House of Representatives.


Provides a structural analysis of the stages of bill drafting and law making in both chambers of the Moroccan legislature.
c. Performance of Arab Parliaments


A referential framework to monitor and analyze parliamentary performance in selected Arab countries, namely, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco and Egypt.


Explores the relationship between institutions, roles, and role conflict, examines the destabilizing effects of the coexistence of overlapping international institutions in the context of the Arab Middle East.
EGYPT


Provides a brief history of Egyptian parliamentary life from the 18th Century to 1971; discusses the principles and characteristics of constitutional amendments implemented in 1980 and 2005.


Presents an overview of constitutions and draft constitutions in Egypt from 1923 to 1971 (amended in 1984 and 2005) and investigates possible prospects for constitutional reform.


Examines the Egyptian People’s Assembly’s political functions, oversight role, internal mechanisms and constitutional limitations during the 2005-2006 session.
LEBANON


**English abstract of the monograph “The 1992-1996 Lebanese Parliament”, published originally in Arabic by the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies. The research focuses on the performance of the Lebanese Parliament as the legislative branch of the government.**

MOROCCO


Provides an overview of the structure of parliament, oversight functions, rules of procedure and parliamentary diplomacy in the Moroccan House of Representatives.

THE PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY


Provides insight into the Palestinian parliamentary experience from 1996 to 2006 and assesses the Palestinian Authority's progress in establishing a democratic system.


Discusses the legal basis of the Palestinian Legislative Council, its social and political composition, its oversight functions and the constitutional development of the political system during the transitional phase in the West Bank and Gaza after the Oslo Peace Agreement between Israel and the PLO (1993-1996).

**YEMEN**


Examines the development of Yemen's parliament since unification in 1990. It draws on field surveys and interviews conducted during 1998-99, primary documentary sources and Yemeni and Arab media reporting.

d. Legislative Process:


Provides a collection of articles presented at the Symposium on Improving Legislative Drafting in Arab Parliaments organized by UNDP in Beirut in 2003; tackles issues related to good governance and legislative drafting in Arab parliaments.


*A guide for Arab legislators on empowering youth.*


*Presents the principles of sound public budgeting measures to promote parliament’s role in the process of budget formulation and the obstacles that limit the effectiveness of parliaments in this domain; discusses methods of budget preparation, approval and implementation as well as auditing and monitoring budget implementation in Lebanon, Syria, the Palestinian Authority, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Oman, Yemen, Sudan, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Djibouti, Somalia and Mauritania.*


*Proceedings of a workshop in Beirut (3-6 February 2003) on “the Development of Legislative Drafting for Arab Parliaments”. The workshop covered the following themes: 1) Preparation and drafting of legislation, 2) Management of the preparation and drafting processes, 3) Communication and publication of legislative material, 4) Evaluation of existing laws.*


Studies the development of the legislatures of the Arab republics of Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Egypt, Sudan, Tunisia and Algeria.

6) **The Parliamentary Program**. [http://barlamanprog.net/index.htm](http://barlamanprog.net/index.htm)

*Deepens public awareness of Arab parliaments and parliamentary culture by conducting research and scientific studies and developing a group of scholars specializing in parliamentary affairs; supports the development of parliamentary assemblies.*

**IRAQ**


*Provides guidelines on strengthening the capacities of the Iraqi House of Representatives; issues discussed include: how to read, analyze and draft a bill.*

**OMAN**


*Provides insights into the Omami Public Law and its role in legitimizing the status-quo.*
e. Parliamentary Committees:


Studies the role of standing committees in Arab parliaments in terms of legislative drafting and oversight capacities and compares them to their counterparts in other countries such as the United States.

f. Parliamentary Immunity:

MOROCCO


g. Parliamentary Reform and Development


Combines the proceedings of the 2nd annual conference of the Parliamentary Program of the Faculty of Economics and Political Science – Cairo University (July 15th – 17th, 2003). The topic of the conference was parliamentary reform.
2) The Egyptian Association for Disseminating and Developing Legal Awareness. 
http://www.eaddla.org/project%20eaddla.htm

A civil, non-profit society whose main purpose is to seek the achievement and spread of the culture of human rights and the empowerment of citizens.

h. Parliament’s Roles and Functions:

i) Democracy and Governance


An overview of the roles of a number of European and Arab parliaments, shedding light on the importance of parliaments in guaranteeing checks and balances and ensuring representation of the interests of the electorate.


Examines the revival of parliaments in the Arab world; provides an overview of parliament’s role and functions in six Arab countries: Lebanon, Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait, Yemen and Egypt.


Compares Arab monarchies with monarchies in other parts of the world, including those that have made a successful transition from monarchy to democracy and those that have not.


*Provides a comparative study on the government structures and political systems of Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan and other countries in the Middle East.*


*Provides a study of the status and powers of the legislative branch in Arab republics.*


Explores the impact of religious orientation on attitudes toward democracy through public opinion data collected in Morocco, Algeria, Palestine (West Bank and Gaza), and Egypt.

EGYPT

1) Onians, Charles. (2004). *Supply and Demand Democracy in Egypt.* World Policy Journal, 21(2), 78-84. (In English)

IRAQ


2) Dawisha, Adeed and Dawisha, Karen. (2003). *How to Build a Democratic Iraq.* Foreign Affairs, 82(3), 36-50. (In English)

JORDAN

1) Denoueux, Guilain; Wilcox, Oliver; and Zawaneh, Zayyan. (2003). *Jordan Democracy and Governance Assessment.* Center for Democracy and Governance and USAID/ Jordan. (In English)

Assesses Jordanian democracy and governance institutions and mechanisms. Analyses the Parliament’s prerogatives and internal procedures.

LEBANON


Highlights the political role of the Lebanese Parliament in different historical eras starting with Ottoman rule and arriving at the Taif Agreement; highlights the social and political features of the 1972 Parliament.


Provides an analysis of the behavior of Lebanese political institutions after the Taif Agreement and compares such behaviors to the text of the amended constitution.

MAURITANIA


OMAN


QATAR

1) Rathmell, Andrew and Schulze Kirsten. (2000). Political Reform in the Gulf: The Case of Qatar. Middle Eastern Studies, 36(3), 47-62. (In English)
ii) Constitutional Development


*Studies the constitutional and political systems of Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Yemen, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and Sudan.*


*Presents and analyzes different approaches to studying the relationship between constitutional law and political systems.*


(المسيوني، أمينة. (2010). الإصلاح الدستوري في العالم العربي. (بالإنكليزية)

*The study details the reasons behind constitutional reform in the Arab world. It elaborates on the most important areas that have been affected by reform and analyzes whether reform has been sufficiently comprehensive. The cases of Morocco, Bahrain, Egypt, Algeria and Mauritania are studied.*


*Covers the constitutions of Arab countries in terms of principles and types, and rights and duties; covers the structures and performance of parliaments as well as the jurisdictions of heads of states and governments.*

**BAHRAIN**


*Provides a comparative study of the 2002 and 1973 Bahraini constitutions.*

**LEBANON**


*Focuses on the gradual abolition of the confessional system in Lebanon, as a reform measure stated in the constitution.*


*Studies the constitution of Lebanon from historical, political and social perspectives.*


*Provides a chronology of the Lebanese constitution’s evolution from 1922 to 1990. Positions the 1990 amendments within the conflict resolution scheme of the Taif agreement, showing how the new constitution observes universal constitutional standards and meets the requirements of Lebanese sectarian/regional politics.*

**PALESTINE**

1) Brown, Nathan J. (2000). *Constituting Palestine: The Effort to Write a Basic Law for the Palestinian Authority*. Middle East Journal, 54(1), 25-43. (In English)

*Examines the basic law for the Palestinian Authority created in 1994.*

iii) **Conflict and Post Conflict**


*Paper contributed to the Regional Workshop on Strengthening Arab Parliaments in Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation. Assesses the role of parliament in preventing, managing and resolving conflict. The assessment builds on field research conducted in four arab countries: Iraq, Lebanon, Sudan and Yemen.*

Paper contributed to the Regional Workshop on Strengthening Arab Parliaments in Conflict Resolution and National Reconciliation. Presents the Yemeni Parliament as a case study, exploring the dynamics and mechanisms that facilitate or weaken the role of parliament in resolving or preempting internal conflict.
II Parliamentary Accountability and Oversight

This section provides references and websites on approaches and tools for parliamentary oversight in Arab countries.

   
   "الهيتي، نعمان عطا. (2007). الرقابة على الحكومة. دار رسلان للطباعة والنشر والتوزيع. (بالعربية)"
   
   
   *Provides a constitutional comparative analysis on parliamentary oversight and systems of checks and balances in the Arab world.*

   
   
   
   *Examines the processes, tasks and procedures of parliamentary interpellation in Kuwait, Bahrain, Yemen, France, Britain and the United States of America.*

   
   
   
   *Paper contributed to the "Towards Strengthening the Oversight Function of Arab Parliaments: Improving the Legal Framework" workshop. Compares parliamentary oversight tools available in the constitutions, bylaws and rules of procedure in five Arab countries: Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Jordan and Iraq.*


Explains the influence exerted by the executive on the legislative branch in a comparative study of Jordan and Britain.


Provides publications, activities, projects and press releases of ARPAC, primarily intended to fight corruption in the Arab world.


Provides access to a host of parliamentary development resources, particularly on Arab parliaments.


Describes the parliamentary oversight in the Lebanese and Arab context. Dār Bilāl Lit-tibā’ah wan-nasḥr.

*Provides a comparative study on legislative oversight from a Lebanese, Arab and international perspectives.*


(بالعربية) الصاوي، علي. (٢٠٠٧). الرقابة البرلمانيّة. المركز الدولي للدراسات المستقبليّة والاستراتيّجية.


*Defines the concept of parliamentary oversight, global developments affecting the oversight role of the parliament and instruments of parliamentary oversight in accordance with law and practice.*


*Proceedings of the Symposium on Arab Parliamentary Development, held in Beirut in 2000. Presents a comparison between the rules of procedure of Arab parliaments as well as their legislative functions; discusses the oversight role of Arab parliaments and sheds light on Lebanese parliamentary performance.*


Maliki, أحمد. (٢٠٠٩, أكتوبر). الإطار القانوني للرقابة البرلمانيّة على الحكومة في مصر، الجزائر، المغرب، موريتانيا، تونس. ورقة مساهمة في ورشة العمل الإقليمية نحو تعزيز "الدور الرقابي للبرلمانات العربية- تطوير الإطار القانوني" بيروت، لبنان (بالعربية).


*Paper contributed to the Towards Strengthening the Oversight Function of Arab Parliaments: Improving the Legal Framework - Regional Parliamentary Workshop. Provides a description of the*
legal framework for parliamentary oversight in Egypt, Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia and Mauritania; provides recommendations on reforms of oversight system and regaining the balance of power between the three branches of government in targeted countries.


Provides country studies and reports on corruption in the Middle East and North Africa.


Provides an overview of the stages involved in developing parliamentary ethics for parliamentarians, including establishing principles, developing content and mechanisms for regulation and enforcement and training.


Highlights political controls (popular, partisan and legislative) on the workings of the executive authority.


Paper contributed to the Towards Strengthening the Oversight Function of Arab Parliaments: Improving the Legal Framework - Regional Parliamentary Workshop

Contains essays focusing on parliamentary accountability and the role of parliament as a major link in the chain of accountability between government and citizens. Includes a chapter on Palestine and another on Lebanon.


Provides an overview of parliamentary oversight in Egypt and Kuwait.


Compares political science and constitutional law approaches to parliamentary oversight and discusses various dimensions taken into consideration when studying parliamentary oversight in political systems, namely: parties, aims and means, tools, time and results; It Presents the case of Egyptian parliamentary oversight during the stage of confined pluralism (1976 to 2001).


Discusses the importance of parliamentary interpellation in holding ministers accountable and informing the electorate of the general performance of the executive in Kuwait and Egypt.

A comparative study on popular oversight of the head of state in modern constitutional texts and Islamic Sharia texts.
III Elections and Electoral Laws

This section provides references and websites on election laws and practices in Arab countries.

1) Carapico, Sheila. (1993). Elections and Mass Politics in Yemen. Middle East Research and Information Project. (In English)


The article studies the Moroccan electoral system and assesses its fairness through examination of the September 2007 elections for the Moroccan House of Representatives.


   Provides studies and research material on Arab political parties.

7) Political Resources on the Net. [www.politicalresources.net](http://www.politicalresources.net)

   Provides detailed information on political parties, elections, government institutions, media and public administration links in Lebanon and globally.
IV Socio-Economic Development

This section provides references and websites on social and economic development in Arab countries. Social and economic studies in selected Arab countries are cited. United Nations studies on economic and social development in the Arab world are highlighted. Studies on economic development, economic reform, poverty and economic growth are provided.


Provides studies, meeting reports, public information and working papers on: sustainable development and productivity; social development; economic development and globalization; information and communication technology; statistics; and emerging and conflict related issues in ESCWA countries including Lebanon, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, among others.


Provides political and economic perspectives on social policy and its evolution in the Middle East and North Africa. Chapters are provided on Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Morocco, Tunisia and Turkey.


Reviews progress made in the Arab region towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Analyzes the structure and evolution of trade in the Middle East and North African countries in the 1990s.


Defines a large number of terms used in the Arab world to describe political phenomena and processes as well as biographies of individual political leaders.


Provides reports on diverse topics of social policy, development, democracy and civil society. Also provides a number of publications on religion, culture, politicization, social protection and poverty.


Provides information on Jordan’s privatization strategy, laws and regulations as well as the progress of the privatization process in Jordan.


Offers information and documents about privatization (process and benefits), Lebanon’s business environment (the economic system, legislative environment, human capital and infrastructure), privatization legislation (the framework law, the telecommunications sector law and the electricity sector law), and major privatization projects (mobile privatization, Liban Telecom corporatization and power sector reform).


Simulates the influence of an increase of 10% of the price of gasoline in Lebanon on the consumer price index.

Provides a thorough analysis of current economic policy, transformation and legislative changes in Libya.


"ببلاوي، حازم (1990). الدولة الريعية في العالم العربي. منشورات جامعة كاليفورنيا، كاليفورنيا، الولايات المتحدة الأميركية (بالإنكليزية)."

"Analyzes the economics of Arab rentier states with a special focus on the UAE."
V Governance - General

This section cites references and websites on government institutions (central/regional/local) in Arab countries, government processes and programs (administrative reform, economic reform, budgetary reform and privatization), legal studies and databases, non-governmental and civil society organizations and political institutions in the Arab world.

a) Government Institutions


   Provides links to the websites of the ministries of municipal affairs of Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Syria.


   Provides extensive information on Egypt’s people and land, politics, economy, tourism and society in general.


   Provides links to research on government and law in Arab countries.


   Provides an overview of the Omani privatization program objectives, strategy and methods as well as ongoing and future privatization projects.
6) **Ministry of Economy and Trade, Republic of Lebanon.** http://www.economy.gov.lb/MOET/English/Pages/Home.aspx

Provides information on projects conducted by the Ministry of Economy and Trade; Also provides statistics, prices and market research as well as publications related to the economy and trade in Lebanon.


Provides a view on the centrality of executive power in the Maghreb countries with specific reference to heads of state; Highlights the weaknesses of legislative institutions vis a vis the strong executive in North African Arab Countries.


Discusses decentralization and local government (definition, forms, degrees and levels of decentralization). Also discusses the relationship between decentralization, democratization and development in the Arab region.


Examines the status and role of the President of the Republic in Lebanon according to the 1926 constitution and the 1990 (Taif Agreement) constitution.
b) Government Processes and Programs

1) **UNDP-Regional Bureau for Arab States (RBAS).** [http://arabstates.undp.org](http://arabstates.undp.org)

A UNDP website; provides draft country program documents for 17 Arab countries.

2) **Center for Public Sector Projects and Studies.** [http://www.studies.gov.lb/](http://www.studies.gov.lb/)

Includes all projects and studies related to the development and reform of public administration agencies in Lebanon. It has more than 1100 studies and projects (in Arabic, French and English) covering: industry, agriculture, interior and municipalities, foreign affairs and emigrants, youth and sports, information, transport, public affairs, tourism, justice and rural and regional development.

3) **International Budget Partnership. (2010).** [http://www.internationalbudget.org](http://www.internationalbudget.org)

Provides a large number of publications including key reports, studies and other publications that document the efforts of civil society organizations to improve budget processes and institutions and contribute to expanding international dialogue on the importance of budget transparency and accountability.


Offers a list of publications (annual reports, strategies, charters, guides, programs and projects) related to administrative development and reform in Lebanon.


Provides research on public accounting and budget reform in general and in Arab countries in particular; focuses on the main shortcomings of current public accounting and budgeting systems in the Arab world.
c) Legal/Legislative Databases

1) **Arab Legal Portal.** [http://www.arablegalportal.org/associations/index.aspx](http://www.arablegalportal.org/associations/index.aspx)

   Provides links to databases on Arab banking laws, legal texts of Arab legislative bodies, texts on Arab financial regulations and controls, legislation and court rulings in Egypt, Arab associations’ laws and the Arab criminal encyclopedia.


   Aims at developing and reinforcing the rule of law and integrity and good governance in Arab countries.

3) **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).** [www.ipu.org](http://www.ipu.org)

   Provides data on IPU activities (workshops, seminars, books produced and research conducted on parliamentary administration and politics around the world), in addition to web links to parliaments.

4) **Jurispedia Encyclopedia of Law.** [http://ar.jurispedia.org](http://ar.jurispedia.org)

   Provides a large number of legal references for the majority of countries organized thematically or by country. The website provides links to legal databases of all member countries.

5) **PARLINE.** [www.ipu.org/parline](http://www.ipu.org/parline)

   Provides data on 265 parliamentary chambers in 188 countries with parliamentary government.

d) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)


   Provides the history of the evolution of NGOs in the Arab World, their engagement in charitable work and national politics and their relationship with the political systems of their respective countries.

Discusses the analytical framework of Arab civil society and provides an overview of its current conditions and role.