



HIGH IMPACT INITIATIVE:

FUTUREGOV

BUILDING PUBLIC SECTOR CAPABILITIES FOR THE FUTURE

The 2030 Agenda is a promise, not a guarantee and halfway to the 2030 deadline, we are not halfway there. To succeed in the second half, we need to take a significant leap forward and embrace the radical political, economic and social change that the SDGs demand. This requires ambitious action at speed and at scale and an ever expanding alliance of actors pushing in the same direction. To support this effort, the United Nations has joined with Member States and key stakeholders to generate fresh political leadership and integrated support across some of the most critical aspects of the SDGs. Known as the High Impact Initiatives, together, they can deliver fresh momentum. They can prove that keeping the 2030 promise is still possible.

Dedicated sessions will be convened for each initiative at the SDG Action Weekend, on September 17, 2023. Further information can be found [here](#).

VISION FOR IMPACT

Major investment is needed to strengthen public sector capabilities to unlock accelerated delivery of the SDGs. As the world becomes increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous, public institutions can no longer do business as usual. Governments must be equipped to anticipate development risks and effectively adapt and transform their public sectors for sustainable, inclusive development that speaks to the aspirations of their people. As we look to the future, gaps in public sector capabilities present an acute obstacle to the achievement of the SDGs – member states must adopt a renewed sense of purpose and urgency towards public sector transformation.

Critical public sector capabilities for the future must create the conditions necessary for advancement across the sustainable development transitions, through 1) adapting and learning at an institutional level in the face of incomplete information and radical uncertainty; 2) using systems thinking and foresight to govern effectively, making the most of data and digital solutions; and 3) tapping into social and policy innovation beyond digitalization.

The FutureGov initiative will help member states build these three public sector capabilities to unlock accelerated delivery of the SDGs. FutureGov is designed to support member states through their ‘transformation journeys’ as they improve the way they design, finance, deliver, and evaluate public services. The FutureGov Facility will be launched at the SDG Action Weekend (16-17 September 2023) by UN DESA, UNDP, and a coalition of countries and organizations committed to enhancing the public sector, to support the achievement of the SDGs and national priorities.

OVERVIEW: FUTUREGOV

To achieve this vision, FutureGov will focus on three elements of public sector transformation – through prioritized capabilities that can shift over time in response to the evolving development needs of member states:

1. **Skillsets: Building public sector skillsets for adaptable and resilient institutions through a shared toolbox.**

Member states will participate in co-creating and regularly updating a shortlist of priority skills– including in improving the agility of public service delivery; designing systems to generate effective policies and investment decisions; and working beyond traditional boundaries to unify capabilities across agencies, sectors and society.

2. **Mindsets: Shifting mindsets towards systems thinking and foresight for effective governance and inclusive service delivery, including through digital and data tools.**

FutureGov will support countries to accelerate intergovernmental learning and countries' exchange, to effectively use system tools to inform public sector policies and investment in the SDGs, and to leverage data science and digital literacy capabilities.

3. **Innovation: Enabling broader and more impactful social and policy innovation in public sectors, supported by the requisite enabling environment**

FutureGov will help countries mainstream innovation by helping them make better use of accelerator platforms and innovation labs, apply behavioral insights to improve the efficacy of public policy, and design new interfaces for public engagement and democratized innovation.

Under the auspice of the United Nations and with support from UN DESA and UNDP, the FutureGov Facility will provide technical assistance, channel resources, facilitate intergovernmental learning, and serve as a knowledge platform – enabling member states to benefit across these three pillars.

In particular, the FutureGov Facility will include a digital portal that serves as a clearinghouse for research, policies, strategies, methodologies, tools, trainings, and case studies on public sector transformation. The portal will facilitate peer-to-peer connectivity and learning, allowing countries to share their expertise and address challenges and issues of common interest. It will provide access to specific trainings, resource materials and experts from both the Global South and Global North.

ACCELERATING THE SDGS

By supporting the achievement of **SDG16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** (*especially SDG16.6 to develop effective, accountable, and transparent institutions at all levels*), FutureGov acts as an enabler across all Sustainable Development Goals. With strengthened public sector capabilities at national and sub-national levels in institutional skilling, systems thinking, and public sector innovation, countries will be empowered to further accelerate progress towards the SDGs – for example:

- **SDG3 Good Health and Well-Being and SDG4 Quality Education:** Through progress on SDG16.6, FutureGov will result in the improved delivery of public services, including better access to healthcare and better access to quality education
- **SDG5 Gender Equality:** Through progress on SDG16.6, FutureGov will result in higher levels of participation of women in decision-making processes and thus foster gender equality
- **SDG10 Reduced Inequalities:** Through improved delivery of public / basic services and higher participation in decision-making, FutureGov will reduce economic and social barriers and inequalities
- **SDG2 Zero Hunger:** Through reduced economic and social barriers and inequalities, FutureGov will support effective hunger eradication programmes
- **SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities:** Through progress on SDG16.6, FutureGov will support coordinated decision-making, planning and plan implementation for sustainable and resilient cities and communities
- **SDG17 Partnerships for the Goals:** FutureGov will cultivate global and regional cooperation between public institutions as well as strategic partnerships with the UN, international financial institutions, development partners, private sector stakeholders, research institutions, public administration schools, and civil society

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