



**Joint UNDESA and APS-HRMnet Capacity Development
Workshop on
“ Reaffirming state-people governance relationships through the
lenses of Human Resource Managers in Africa”
as an integrated part of the 8th Annual Conference of African
Public Service- Human Resources Managers Network (APS-
HRMnet)**

Theme

“Bringing citizens and government closer: The Role of Human Resource Management in service delivery for transforming public service and achieving the sustainable development goals”.

Dates

6th to 10th November 2023

Venue

Kenya School of Government

1. Background

The cascading crisis have revealed the world’s shared vulnerability and interconnectedness. It has exposed human rights concerns and worsened deep fragilities and inequalities and has severely tested our leadership and institutional frameworks at local, national, regional and global levels. It has brought us together leading to a move from whole of government approach to whole of society approach at a much larger scale. Digitalization and innovation have bridged the response to ensure continuity of social public services such as education, health, social services, and partnership between institutions and people they serve have strengthen across the world.

“Now is the time to renew the social contract between governments and their people and within societies, to rebuild trust and embrace a comprehensive vision of human rights. People need to see results...it should include updated governance arrangements to deliver better public goods and usher in the new era of universal social protection, health coverage, education, skills, decent work and

housing, as well as universal access to the internet as a basic human right” – Our Common Agenda, Report of the Secretary General of the United Nations, 2021¹.

In his report, the Secretary General of the United Nations recognizes that there is a growing discontent between people and institutions that serve them, with many feeling they are left behind, there is an even deeper crisis of trust leading to an increase in social movements around the world. The report highlights the need for a renewed social contract anchored in human rights and fit for 21st century. Its three foundations would be (i) building trust, (ii) ensuring inclusion, protection, and participation, as well as (iii) measuring and valuing what matters to people and the planet form the three foundations of the renewed social contract.

UNDESA Policy Brief #75² COVID-19: Reaffirming state-people governance relationships discusses the role of effective governance³, in particular the role of the relationship between the state and people, in building countries’ resilience and in responding to and managing nation and international-wide crisis. It highlights the interrelationships of resilience and effective governance as critical in shaping public policy and determining government responses, strategies, and approaches in tackling the crisis. Failure to deliver what people need most, including basic public services leads to mistrust, regardless how open institutions are to public concerns, highly affecting the trust.

The pandemic has increased the need for concerted government actions at the subnational, national and international levels⁴. Effective responses require the acceleration of governance reforms, aiming to increase their capacities to respond to economic, social and environmental shocks. The pandemic has exacerbated multidimensional inequalities and innovative approaches are needed to tackle the challenges and turn them into opportunities.

¹ *Our Common Agenda* - <https://www.un.org/en/un75/common-agenda>
Report of the UN Secretary General-2021 is an Agenda of action designed to accelerate the implementation of existing agreements, including the SDGs.

² UNDESA Policy Brief # 75 May 2020: COVID-19 Reaffirming state-people governance relationships
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desa-policy-brief-75-covid-19-reaffirming-state-people-governance-relationships/>

³ CEPA Principles of effective Governance
https://publicadministration.un.org/Portals/1/Images/CEPA/Principles_of_effective_governance_english.pdf

⁴ ECOSOC – CEPA: Key messages and recommendations March 2021 “Building inclusive, effective and resilient institutions for sustainable recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic and timely implementation of the SDGs”
<https://publicadministration.un.org/portals/1/cepa%20contribution%20to%202021%20hlpf.pdf>

Resilience and effective governance go hand in hand and are key elements of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁵. Its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide for a global transformational vision/strategy aiming to build resilient societies that are based on the values of equity, equality, inclusion, integration, accountability, collaboration, partnership, justice, peace and security.

The report of 20th session of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), April 2021⁶ (E/2021/44; E/C.16/2021/7) highlights the importance of placing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable development at the center of its work and advise on how public administration can support the implementation and progress reviews of the sustainable development goals.

The principles of effective governance for sustainable development, as defined by the United Nations CEPA⁷ provide a roadmap in achieving UN development Agendas including SDGs, Paris Agreement, New Urban Agenda, and so on. Implementation of such principles can guide countries towards whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, leading to structural and systemic changes for the better. The United Nations CEPA outlined 11 principles of effective governance⁸, categorized into three groups: (i) effectiveness: competence, sound policymaking, and collaboration; (ii) accountability: integrity, transparency and independent oversight; (iii) inclusiveness: Leaving no one behind, non-discrimination, participation, subsidiarity and intergenerational equity.

2. Main Approach

It is against the above mentioned backdrop, that the 8th Annual Conference of African Public Service-Human Resource Managers Network (APS_HRMnet) 2023 will bring together the human resource community of Africa and other key actors and stakeholders, including academicians, civil society representatives, private sector representatives, training and research institutes, public sector management specialist, and development partners.

The Joint Capacity Development Workshop will offer the much-needed discussion platform for key human resources managers and their national and international partners to discuss the main challenges and opportunities and share insights on how to reaffirm state-people governance relationships through the lenses of Human Resources Managers in Africa..

It will be developed throughout the conference, as follows:

Day One - An introduction during the plenary session

Day One – A session on “Shaping the Workforce of the Future: Human Resource Manager as a Strategy Expert”

Day Two – A session on “Gender and Equity: Strategies for Nurturing Public Sector Institutions that recognize and live diversity, inclusion and engagement”

Day Four Leveraging on strategic partnerships to advance the whole of government approach in achieving the sustainable development goals

Day Five – Presentations of findings/recommendations during the plenary session on “Innovation as a Cornerstone for a Sustainable Public Service for the 21st Century and Beyond”

⁵ “Reaffirming State-People Governance Relationships”, UNDESA Policy Brief – prepared by John-Mary Kauzya, Former Chief of Public Service Innovation Branch/DPIDG – May 2020.

⁶ Report on the 20th session of CEPA (April 2021) <https://undocs.org/en/e.c.16/2021/7>

⁷ CEPA - Principles of effective governance for sustainable development <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Intergovernmental-Support/CEPA/Principles-of-Effective-Governance>

⁸ https://publicadministration.un.org/Portals/1/Images/CEPA/Principles_of_effective_governance_english.pdf

The Capacity Development Workshop will invite 5 experts and one resource person, all from least developing countries (LDCs) to share their national and sub-regional experiences and lessons learnt.

3 experts are leading the efforts of APS-HRMnet at the sub-regional levels, as Sub-regional Presidents of APS-HRMnet, whom along with resource person and expert will tackle some of the most challenging issues impeding the least developing countries at the intersection of state and people interrelationships, share sub-regional and national experiences on efforts to overcome them.

The 8th APS-HRMnet Annual Conference to take place on 6-10 November 2023 in Nairobi, Kenya will bring together the human resources experts of Africa, along with their development partners from academia, civil society, training and research institutes, public sector management specialist and international development partners. It is expected to welcome over 400 participants, whose focus of work is development of HR at the national and local levels throughout Africa.

The Joint Capacity Development Workshop will be an integral part of the overall conference and will benefit from this high level and diverse representation. Along with the dedicated contribution to the joint capacity development workshop, our funded experts along with UNDESA staff members will be contributing to overall conference as moderators and speakers.

3. Main Objectives

The Joint Capacity Development Workshop will provide a discussion platform for high level representatives to discuss main challenges and opportunities in addressing issues of (i) shaping the workforce for the future, (ii) citizenz engagement and participatory decision making, (ii) performance management and measurement for enhanced productivity, (iii) human resource metrics for organizational effectiveness, (iv) change management and organizational design, (v) learning and development for thriving organizations, (vi) innovation as a cornerstone for a sustainable public service for 21st Century and beyond.

Given the expected high number of overall participants in the 8th APS-HRMnet Annual Conference, the joint Capacity Development Workshop will offer a great opportunity to disseminate the ongoing substantive work on the PISB/DPIDG at the intersection of leadership, innovation, and principles of governance and further enhance ongoing partnerships with some of the key leaders of public administration reform in Africa to ensure the successful implementations of the SDGs.

The Workshop will aim the followings:

- 1-** Provide a discussion platform for Africa human resources managers and their development partners
- 2-** Analyse some of the most critical challenges in Africa, especially LDCs in designing and implementing comprehensive human resource development strategies focus on reaffirming state citizens relationships
- 3-** Enhance the importance of transformational leadership in overcoming challenges;
- 4-** Enhance the capacity to build synergies across sub-regions in promoting encompassing approaches and strategies of human resource development as a pre-condition for successful implementation of the SDGs;
- 5-** Highlight the capacity development needs in areas of governance, innovation, and leadership;
- 6-** Discuss pathways for the future actions to have citizens-centered public administrations in Africa

4. The Organizers

- The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) through the Division of Public Institutions and Digital Governance (UN-DESA/DPIDG)⁹;
- The African Public Service- Human Resources Managers Networkd (APS-HRMnet)¹⁰

5. Date and Venue

Kenya School of Government

6. Working Languages

English

7. Agenda (posted in a separate document)

⁹ <https://www.un.org/en/desa>

¹⁰ <https://apshrmnet.org/>