

Innovation, Digital Government and Changing Mindsets for Public Sector Transformation in Guyana to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals

Week 1: 22 - 24 March 2022

Week 2: 29 - 31 March 2022

10 am to 1 pm (ECT and EDT); 11 pm to 2 am (GMT+9)

Bios of Speakers

Day 1 - Setting the Scene- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: The Need for Public Sector Transformation, Innovation, Digital Government, and New Mindsets

Day 2 - Innovation and Digital Government

Day 3 - Key Mindsets for Innovation, Digital Government and Public Sector Transformation

Day 4 - Key Mindsets for Innovation, Digital Government and Public Sector Transformation (Cont.)

Day 5 - Action Planning for Changing Mindsets to promote Innovation, and Transformation in the Public Sector in Guyana

Day 6 - The Way Forward: Priorities and Actions for Change

Ministry of Public Service, Guyana

Sonia Savitri Parag

Minister of Public Service, Ministry of Public Service, Guyana



Ms. Savitri Sonia Parag is thirty-eight (38) years old. Originally from the Essequibo Coast, she was born at Suddie where she resided for thirteen (13) years and attended the Anna Regina Primary School (now known as C.V. Nunes Primary).

She attained Queens College in 1994 but went on to attend the President's College from 1994-1999. She then entered the University of Guyana in 1999 as an English Major and subsequently went on to pursue Law from 2002-2005 at the University of Guyana where she obtained a Bachelor of Law degree and then to Hugh Wooding Law School from 2005-2007 where she obtained her certificate to practice Law.

Attorney-At-Law, Ms. Parag was admitted to the Legal Bar in October Of 2007 and was in private practice from 2007 to 2020.

On the 5th August 2020 she was sworn in as the Minister of Public Service which is the portfolio she currently holds.

Jacob Opadeyi

Jacob Opadeyi is the Director of Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) and consultant at the Ministry of Public Service, Guyana



Jacob Opadeyi is the Director of Guyana Online Academy of Learning (GOAL) and consultant at the Ministry of Public Service, Guyana. He is a retired Professor of Geomatics Engineering and Land Management at the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Trinidad. A former Vice-Chancellor and Principal, University of Guyana. He is an expert in GIS applications in environmental analysis and modeling, natural hazard and risk mapping, land management, and watershed management. He was a Technical Advisor at the UWI Disaster Risk Reduction Centre.

Dr. Opadeyi has a PhD in Land Management and a Masters in Survey Engineering from the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, Canada. He obtained an Executive MBA from the University of the West Indies in St. Augustine, Trinidad as well as a Masters and Bachelor's degrees from the University of Lagos, Nigeria. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) awarded him a certificate in flood hazard mapping, modeling and monitoring.

Dr. Opadeyi is an academic leader with extensive experience in teaching, research, publications, and development on topics related to spatial data management, system analysis for development management, urban planning and environmental monitoring and disaster mitigation. He is the Lead-author of *Vulnerability Benchmarking Tool*, a technical manual published by the Organization of Eastern

Caribbean States and USAID. Dr. Opadeyi's research areas include GIS modeling of heavy metal and sediment in watersheds, natural hazard mapping techniques, vulnerability assessments, land cover change monitoring, telephonic flood hazard early warning systems, and water quantity and water quality modeling.

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Juwang Zhu

Director, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), UNDESA



Juwang Zhu is currently Director of the Division for Sustainable Development/DESA. In that capacity, he leads a team in normative, analytical and capacity building work in promoting and coordinating the implementation of the sustainable development agenda of the United Nations.

Among his various assignments at the UN Secretariat, Mr. Zhu served as Chief of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General/DESA. In that capacity, he advised the Under-Secretary-General on a range of policy and management issues. During this period, Mr. Zhu also coordinated the Department's substantive advice to the Executive Office of the Secretary-General on development issues and on the restructuring of DESA's capacity building programme.

Mr. Zhu was Special Advisor to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), and in that capacity assisted in coordinating support for the Conference. He also contributed to the departmental support for Rio+20 follow-up, including work on post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs.

Mr. Zhu has more than 30 years of experience at the UN Secretariat. He had worked in the Division for Sustainable Development for more than a decade, with diverse responsibilities.

Prior to his reassignment to DESA in 1993, Mr. Zhu had previously worked as a policy analyst in the secretariat of the UN World Food Council and in the UN Office in Geneva. He joined the UN Secretariat in 1985.

Born in Shanghai, August 1961, Mr. Zhu graduated from the Shanghai International Studies University in 1982 and did post-graduate studies in Beijing Foreign Studies University. He has an MSC in financial economics from University of London and an MA in international relations from Webster University.

Adriana Alberti

Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)



Ms. Alberti is Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UN DESA. She has thirty years of international knowledge and expertise in governance and public administration. She coordinated and contributed to a number of UN publications, including the UN E-Government Survey. She has led capacity development activities in over 25 countries from around the world, including on innovation in governance and digital government. She coordinated the UN Public Service Forum and Awards programme. As Chief Technical Advisor, she managed an innovation programme in the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Balkans. Prior to joining the UN, she worked at the University of Bologna and taught at several universities. She was Visiting Fellow at Princeton University, the Institute of Advanced Social Studies in Spain, and the University of Birmingham in the United Kingdom. She was awarded fellowships from the Italian National Research Council, the European University Institute, the Government of Spain for the Salvador de Madariaga Research Grant, and Harvard University. She holds a Ph.D. in Social and Political Sciences from the European University Institute; a master's degree in Political Science magna cum laude from the University of Bologna and an Executive Education certificate from Harvard University.

Stefania Senese

Programme Management Officer of the Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit (PMCDU), Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)



Stefania Senese is Programme Management Officer of PMCDU/DPIDG/UN DESA. Since 2000, she has contributed to the formulation, organization and management of capacity development programs. Before joining UN/DESA, she was Professor of Public Management at the National School of Administration of Italy and research fellow at the Department of Public Administration of the University of Rome, where she taught both at the undergraduate and the post-graduate level. Ms. Senese has a Ph.D. in Governance and Public Administration.

Vincenzo Aquaro

Chief of Digital Government Branch in the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations (UN DESA)



Mr. Aquaro is the Chief of the Digital Government in the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government - Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, supporting the Secretariat in promoting digital government, and leading the UN flagship publication E-government Survey. In 2019 Mr. Aquaro was named in Apolitical's list of the World's Top 100 most influential people in digital government. Mr. Aquaro has 30 years of experience in ICT in the public sector including extensive senior leadership. He has served as CEO of an Italian corporate specialized in project management and evaluation of strategic ICT projects, and as chairman of the Consortium for Automation and Risk Management in Agriculture, specialized in ICT bank solutions for SME in agriculture. With the University of Roma3 he also co-chaired two editions of the Master's degree in ICT Governance in Public Administration. Mr. Aquaro holds a Master's degree in Electronic Engineering from University of Bari, Italy.

Veronique Verbruggen

Senior Interregional Advisor Governance and Public Institutions, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs



Ms. Veronique Verbruggen is Senior Interregional Advisor for Governance and Institution Building and supports the UN member states (in particular LICs, SIDS and Land locked developing countries) with the implementation of SDG 16 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals framework, more in particular in the area of institutional and policy coherence and public sector reform. She was deployed as Senior Political Affairs Officer at UNSOM (Somalia) on matters of stabilization, community recovery, local governance and service delivery and peacebuilding matters. She worked for 13 years as Senior Governance and Conflict Advisor in Kenya, Russia/ North Caucasus, Ukraine, the Western Balkans, Iraq, Afghanistan, Turkey and Indonesia on behalf of the British Department for International Development (DFID). As Public Sector Governance Reform specialist to the European Commission's DG for Enlargement she led a public sector reform strategy in partnership with OECD that was implemented in collaboration with North Macedonia, Croatia, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Turkey and Kosovo. As Chief Program and Knowledge Management at the UNDP- hosted Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, she shaped and implemented roadmaps to give people operating in the informal economy access to justice, strengthen labor and business rights and strengthen secure tenure of land. Before that, she worked for many years as an Advisor to the European Commission's DG on Employment and Social Affairs. Veronique Verbruggen holds a Master's degree in Political Sociology and an MBA.

Wai Min Kwok

Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UN DESA



Wai Min Kwok joined the United Nations Secretariat in 2008. Before that, he spent over ten years in the energy and information technology sectors as an engineer and a technopreneur. In UN DESA, he has been entrusted with a portfolio of roles, including as one of the lead authors for selected editions of the UN E-Government Survey and the World Public Sector Report. His areas of expertise span a range in sustainable development, public policy, public administration and management, digital government, digital transformation and Internet governance. For three consecutive years in 2011-2013, he was the Secretary of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council. Wai Min Kwok was formerly a Lee Ka-Shing graduate scholar and Mobil Oil scholar. He has a postgraduate master's in public administration with the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy and an honours degree in electrical engineering at the National University of Singapore.

Keping Yao

Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer, UN DESA, DPIDG/UNPOG



Keping Yao is a Senior Governance and Public Administration Expert at the United Nations Project Office on Governance of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Mr. Yao has been working at UNPOG since 2013, and his areas of work include strengthening public administration capacity in developing countries for realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, digital government, innovation in public service delivery, citizen engagement and government innovation for promoting social inclusion of vulnerable groups, and open government data for disaster risk reduction. Before joining UNPOG, Mr. Yao had worked in UN DESA for more than 10 years in different functions. Prior to his UN career, Mr. Yao had worked as an economist in the People's Bank of China for 9 years. Mr. Yao has a PhD in economics.

Mi Kyoung Park

Governance and Public Administration Expert, UN DESA, DPIDG/UNPOG



Ms. Mi Kyoung Park is Governance and Public Administration Officer at the United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG) of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA). Her work contributes toward the development of public governance capacities of Member States for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by conducting capacity development trainings, developing training materials, conducting research and policy analysis, and fostering partnerships with diverse stakeholders. Her research and work areas include participatory and inclusive governance, social inclusion of people in

vulnerable situations and leaving no one behind, government innovation, ICTs and digital government for SDG implementation, innovation in public service delivery, and SDG localization, among others. Prior to joining UNPOG, Ms. Park worked as a researcher at the Korea National Diplomatic Academy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea. Ms. Park has an MSc in Global Politics from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and a BA in International Studies from Korea University.

Ana Cristina Thorlund

Governance and Public Administration Expert, UNPOG/DPIDG/ UN DESA



Ana Cristina joined the United Nations System in 2005. She worked in UNDRR's Office for Northeast Asia as liaison officer for P.R. China, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia and DPR Korea. She also provided services to the Global Education and Training Institute in the Republic of Korea. Prior to this assignment, she has led the Secretariat of the International Recovery Platform in Kobe, Japan and served in UNDRR for the parliamentarians and gender initiatives in Geneva.

In this capacity, she has supported the engagement of members of parliament from Asia, Africa, Europe and Latin America in disaster risk reduction and supported legislative efforts for the development of the Disaster Risk Reduction and Management law in the Philippines (2010), the Model of Law for the East African Community (2013).

Ana supported the CEDAW Committee for the Development of the General Resolution on Gender-related dimensions of DRR in the context of Climate Change. Her most recent publication is [the Trilateral best practices: Application of technology for reducing disaster risks in China, Japan and Korea](#). Her academic background includes a master of sciences from the University of Geneva in Switzerland and a specialization for assessing and managing geological and climate-related risk. Ana speaks English, French and Spanish and is a national from Costa Rica.

Anya Thomas

Economic Affairs Officer, SIDS Unit, Division for Sustainable Development Goal (DSDG), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)



Ms. Anya Thomas is a sustainable development specialist, with over 20 years of developing country experience in sustainable development issues at national, regional and international levels. She has spent her career working to provide institutional, policy and strategic support and advice to Small Island Developing State (SIDS) on a broad range of sustainable development policy related issues. Her areas of expertise include environment policy, poverty reduction, climate change and disaster risk reduction. Ms. Thomas also has extensive experience in international negotiations and consensus building, having lead Caribbean SIDS in a number of hemispheric and global international environment and sustainable development processes. A leader and skilled manager, particularly effective at

strategic planning and guiding implementation of ideas, Ms. Thomas also has extensive experience in resource mobilization, strategic planning and management and programme and project planning, development, budgeting management, monitoring and evaluation. Throughout her career Ms. Thomas has worked with the private sector in Jamaica, the CARICOM Secretariat and now serves in the SIDS Unit of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA). Ms. Thomas holds a LL.M degree from Newcastle University in international and environmental law and an undergraduate degree from the University of the West Indies, Jamaica.

United Nations Resident Coordinator Office (UN RCO)

Yesim Oruc

United Nations Resident Coordinator in Guyana



Ms. Oruc brings more than 20 years of experience in international relations and sustainable development to her new role. At the United Nations, she held leadership positions with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), including, most recently, a senior role at the UNDP Representation Office in Washington D.C., USA where she managed key organizational strategies and partnerships. She also served as UNDP Country Director in Albania and led programme and partnership initiatives for UNDP country operations in Romania as well as Turkey.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Ms. Oruc worked as a copy editor in Cairo, Egypt.

She holds a master's degree in Middle Eastern studies from the American University in Cairo, Egypt and a bachelor's degree in political science and comparative governments from Yale University in Connecticut, USA.

Nicholas Wintle

Economist, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator, Guyana



Nicholas Wintle is an economist at the United Nations Resident Coordinator Office in Guyana. He previously worked as an economist for the United Kingdom Department for International Development with roles covering the Caribbean and Myanmar, and before that as an ODI Fellow at the Papua New Guinea Department of Treasury and a Visiting Fellow at the Australian National University.

CARICAD

Devon Rowe

Executive Director, Caribbean Centre for Development Administration, Barbados



Mr. Rowe is Executive Director of the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration. In 2014, he was acknowledged for his work and contribution to public service by the Government of Jamaica and received the Order of Distinction, Commander Rank. His career has spanned various government organizations and he has represented the Government of Jamaica at high-level international meetings. A career public servant, he was appointed Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development in 2005, where he played a lead role in local government reform in Jamaica. Mr. Rowe was later assigned as Director General in the Office of the Prime Minister. In 2010, he was assigned as Director General in the Ministry of Finance and Planning, with the main responsibility of centralizing treasury management operations. Between 2011 and 2012, he briefly performed dual roles as Commissioner at the Jamaica Customs Department and Director General of the Ministry of Finance and Planning. He later returned to the Ministry of Finance and Planning as Director General. Mr. Rowe served as Financial Secretary in the Ministry of Finance and Planning between 2012 and 2016. During his career, he has been appointed to the boards of several public sector companies in investment, development finance, infrastructure and health. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Management from the University of the West Indies and a Master's degree in Public Administration from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Lois Parkes

Leadership Development and Institutional Strengthening Specialist, CARICAD



Dr. Lois Parkes is currently the Leadership Development and Institutional Strengthening Specialist with CARICAD since August 2019. She was engaged between 2016-2019 as the Regional Project Manager with the Caribbean Leadership Project. Prior to that, she served for over 20 years in the Public Service in Jamaica, in varying capacities, in the Office of the Prime Minister, the Office of the Cabinet and the Office of the Services Commissions. Some of the key positions she has held include that of Chief Technical Director with responsibility for the development of the Strategic HR capacity of the public sector, and Chief Personnel Officer in the Office of the Services Commissions, where she had overall responsibility for providing leadership to the Office of the Services Commissions to ensure the provision of quality policy advice to the Police, Public, Judicial, Municipal and Parish Councils Services Commissions in relation to appointments, training, discipline and retirement of employees in the Public Service, the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the local authorities and the Judiciary.

She is a graduate of the University of the West Indies, where she earned the M.Sc. in Human Resource Development with Distinction. In 2007, she was awarded the Commonwealth Scholarship tenable in New Zealand, where she completed her doctoral studies in Human Resource Management and Industrial

Relations at the Victoria University of Wellington. She is also a published researcher, and included in her publications are the “State of Industrial Relations in the Jamaican Public Sector”, commissioned by the Inter-American Development Bank, and “Gender: The Not-So-Hidden Issue in Language Arts Materials Used in Jamaica” in Caribbean Journal of Education, Vol. 17, No. 2, September 1995, along with numerous conference papers on public sector reform, HR, and vocational education and training.

She has facilitated/lectured in the field of HR and Public Sector Management and numerous leadership development interventions for the past 17 years, at the post-graduate levels at the Management Institute for National Development, the University College of the Caribbean, and CARICAD. She is also a Certified Executive Coach.

CARICOM

Jennifer Britton

Deputy Programme Manager, ICT for Development (ICT4D), Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat



Ms. Jennifer Britton’s has over 20 years of experience in the Information Technology. This includes: Local and wide area networking (LAN/WAN), systems analysis, business process re-engineering, project management and policy formulation. Current Position: Regional Coordinator and Lead Technical Adviser on ICT for Development (ICT4D) for/at the CARICOM Secretariat. Ms. Britton’s responsibilities include regional Policy formulation, coordination and oversight of implementation, technical assistance – related to ICT4D, the Information Society and Digital Economy; development of the CARICOM Single ICT space; focal point for the CARICOM Girls in ICT partnership; initiating programmes for strengthened coordination and interaction among Member States and associated members, regional and International Agencies with respect to ICT/ Information Society/ Digital Economy; proposal writing for presentation to International Development partners. Ms. Britton’s interests include empowering women and youth through ICT; Socio-economic research in ICT, Information design and organization, coaching, Meeting management, Cooking, teaching herself Spanish, Ms. Britton’s received Masters of Science – Electrical Engineering with a minor in Computer Science. She also received variety of IT Related courses, Project Management, Strategic management, Coaching for Success, NTL Human Behaviour, Trained Trainer (Canada and CDB), Counselor -domestic violence; Business process reengineering (Six Sigma); Communication for Diplomats, and Leadership.

CLAD

Raquel González Díaz

Project Manager, Latin American Centre for Public Administration and Development (CLAD)



Graduate in Political Sciences. Project Manager, Latin American Centre for Public Administration and Development (CLAD). Coordinator of the Inter-American Congress of CLAD on State and Public Administration Reform. Teacher of the Workshop-CLAD on leadership, teamwork and ethics in public administration.

J-PAL

Anna Mysliwicz

Policy Manager, J-PAL Global



Anna Mysliwicz is a Policy Manager at J-PAL Global, where she manages the Political Economy and Governance sector. In her role on the Policy team, she writes policy Mysliwicz publications, cultivates new research partnerships, and conducts policy outreach for evidence dissemination.

Prior to joining J-PAL, she worked with Innovations for Poverty Action in Liberia, where she managed an [evaluation](#) on the long-term impact of cognitive-behavioral therapy on crime and violence. She previously worked at the National Democratic Institute, supporting democracy and governance programs in Tunisia, Syria, and Mauritania. She also interned with Precision Agriculture for Development, helping start up the organization's work in Bangladesh.

She holds a BA in Middle East Studies from Middlebury College and an MPP from the Harvard Kennedy School.