

PUBLIC SERVICE FORUM

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AIDE-MEMOIRE

The 2018 United Nations Public Service Forum will take place in Marrakech, in the Kingdom of Morocco from 21- 23 June 2018, on the theme of “Transforming governance to realize the Sustainable Development Goals”.

The 2018 United Nations Public Service Forum will meet as countries are mid-way through their third year of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which was adopted by all Heads of State and Government in 2015. It will allow Ministers and other senior decision makers to discuss how to transform governance and how governments, institutions and public administrations can best get organized and work to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Forum will also look at how governments and public institutions can become more effective, inclusive and accountable as World Leaders committed to Sustainable Development Goal 16. Participants will have the opportunity to debate emerging issues and trends, as well as good practices, strategies and innovative approaches for transforming governance, implementing the SDGs and leaving no one behind, which is the key principle of the 2030 Agenda.

This Forum is organized by the Ministry of Administration and Civil Service Reform of the Kingdom of Morocco and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG). Several partners will also be engaged in organizing parallel workshops or side events.



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1. THEMATIC FOCUS

The Forum's discussions will focus on two inter-twined themes: governance transformation and public administration innovation. Both are critical to the realization of the SDGs.

In fact, the 2018 United Nations Public Service Forum comes at a time when the world has realized the urgency of adopting a transformative governance approach to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Many countries across the world have been taking a range of actions to implement the Agenda. 64 countries presented voluntary national reviews at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in 2016 and 2017 and shared their achievements and challenges.

Transformation and inclusion are at the center of the 2030 Agenda. The Agenda is a call for action to change our world and includes 17 highly ambitious Sustainable Development Goals. Based on a transformative vision, it calls for ending poverty in all its forms everywhere. It also calls for equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels, to health care, to social protection; and to safe drinking water and sanitation, among others. At the same time, the Agenda aims to promote well-being for all at all ages and build a better future for all people. It envisions a future where sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development, and environmental protection are achieved in a balanced and integrated manner.

Governments have a lead role in implementing the SDGs through the policies they make or the public services they are responsible for. Many of these ambitious goals are also delivered to people through public services. The fundamental purpose of all Governments is to address basic human needs: jobs, clean water, education, transport, housing, infrastructure, and basic health care. Access to and quality of public services is therefore a critical determinant of whether we will reach the SDGs. It needs to be done with a particular concern for the furthest left behind.

Beyond this, transforming the world and realizing the SDGs by 2030 will require a paradigm shift in the way societies govern themselves. It will require rethinking the role of government and the way it interacts with civil society and the private sector in managing a country's public affairs and responding to people's needs. There is a need for new governance models with new approaches to leadership, geared towards consultations, engagement and responding to people's needs. New efforts are needed to improve effectiveness, inclusiveness and accountability. Also critical is reinforcing public administration's commitment to network with other institutions, civil society and private partners, understand their needs, engage them in devising policies and innovative partnerships. Harnessing the potential and synergies among the different governance actors can bring about much change and help promote prosperity for all. New models of social innovation, and new forms of business action are needed in support of the SDGs. By partnering with the government, civil society organizations can play an essential role in raising awareness of the SDGs, including among the furthest left behind, and in co-designing programmes and services to ensure that the poorest and most vulnerable are included in solving problems that affect them



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directly.

Transforming our world will also require new ways of delivering services based on a culture of innovation and a concern for the poorest and most vulnerable. Innovation should be seen as part of a process to transform government to better respond to people's needs and aspirations crystallized in the national policies, programmes and strategies that reflect the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

Realizing the SDGs requires new approaches and new ways of working in public institutions at all levels. Sustainable development calls for integrated policies that are mindful of their impact on other sectors and build on synergies. Working in silos and confronting complex challenges exclusively from sectoral perspectives will not help to realize the SDGs. Both whole-of-government and whole-of-societies approaches are needed.

Many governments have been creating institutional mechanisms and undertaking actions to move in this direction since the SDGs were adopted. The SDGs cover many of today's key challenges and thus require new professional competencies and expertise in public administration. Also important is to look to the future and envision the impact of policies and actions not only on related sectors but also on future generations. The core principle of the 2030 Agenda "Leave no one behind" also has major implications for public institutions and public administration. The SDGs compel us to think about how governments should evolve, to look at the long term, and the SDGs and e-government in the future.

There are no "one-size fits all" recipes on how to transform governance and innovate. But there are new ideas, approaches, mechanisms and lessons that will be shared at the Forum. Countries can be inspired by the innovative experiences and practices taking place in various parts of the world. The Forum will also benefit from the innovative practices of the 2018 winners of the United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA). The UNPSA promotes the role, professionalism and visibility of public service and governments to realize the SDGs through delivery of services.

The Forum will also provide the opportunity to promote enhanced cooperation and partnerships. Its ultimate goal is to contribute to developing the capacity of governments to anticipate the various challenges posed by the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Drawing from the strategies that different countries are implementing and their related successes and difficulties, the Forum can inspire participants to develop their own solutions and pathways to realizing the SDGs. Partnerships and peer-to-peer learning can help in driving change that supports people and planet.



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2. EXPECTED RESULTS

- Enhanced understanding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the kind of transformation required for governance.
- Enhanced knowledge of challenges, trends, best practices and tools for transforming governance and innovating for realizing the SDGs and delivering public services;
- Increased capacity and peer-to-peer learning in those areas;
- Networking and building partnerships with government officials, experts, academics and practitioners from around the world during and beyond the event;
- Renewed public sector leadership commitment and inspiration to promote creativity and innovations in public sector institutions and increase effectiveness, inclusiveness and accountability of institutions to achieve the SDGs leaving no one behind.
- Enhanced awareness (i) of the SDG community about the role and needs of public servants and (ii) of the public administration community about the implications of the SDGs for governments and public servants.

3. ORGANIZATION

Participants. Around 600 to 800 participants are expected to attend the Forum, including world leaders, ministers, senior government officials, mayors, supreme audit institutions, civil society representatives, the academia, the private sector, and representatives from international and regional organizations. Participants will come from both the sustainable development and the public administration communities and from other areas.

Official Languages. The official languages of the plenary session of the meeting will be Arabic, English and French.

Electronic Networking. All the documents of the meeting will be posted online at the United Nations, DPIDG website of the UNPSA/Forum.



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4. ACTIVITIES

The Forum will include plenary sessions, round-tables, group trainings and workshops where participants will witness successful innovations, discuss and share good ideas and practices. A ministerial roundtable will take place on the last day of the event where Ministers provide their views on how governments are readying themselves for the future and how they envision tomorrow's governance systems.

An international innovations exhibition will also be organized during which the UNPSA winners alongside other innovators will showcase their successful innovations. The event will conclude with the 2018 United Nations Public Service Awards Ceremony where the winners of the UNPSA will be awarded during the celebration of the United Nations Public Service Day.

5. CONTACT INFORMATION

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