Capacity Building Workshop on

“Leadership Capacity-Development for Improved Delivery of Public Services in Africa using Information and Communication Technologies”

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
23-25 July, 2012

Workshop Communiqué
I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Capacity Building Workshop on “Leadership Capacity-Development for Improved Delivery of Public Services in Africa using Information and Communication Technologies” took place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 23 to 25 July 2012. The workshop was organized by the Division of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in collaboration with the Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) and Information Science and Technology Division (ISTD) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the African Union Commission (AUC), the Secretariat of the Conference of African Ministers of Public/Civil Service (CAMPS) and the United Nations Development Program Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP/RBA). The workshop was hosted by the Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Ministry of Civil Service and it was generously supported by UNDP/RBA, UNDESA, UNECA, and Governments of African countries.

2. The overall objective of the workshop was to contribute to the development of the capacity of African governments to improve effectiveness, transparency, efficiency, openness and accessibility in the delivery of public services using information and communication technologies (ICTs).

3. Delegates from twenty nine (29) African countries numbering two hundred and sixteen (216) attended the workshop. Among the participants were Cabinet Ministers, Heads of Public/Civil Service and Secretaries to Cabinet, Permanent/Principal Secretaries, Under-Secretaries, Senior Public/Civil Service Officials and other high ranking Government Officials, Chairpersons and Commissioners of Public/Civil Service Commissions, Heads of Management Development Institutions, Representatives of Research Institutions, individual researchers, and representatives of computing and ICT development faculties of universities.

4. Delegates were from the following African countries: Algeria, Burundi, Côte d’Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, South Sudan, Swaziland, Tanzania, Tunisia, and Zimbabwe. Other delegates attending the workshop were from the following countries: Cuba, South Korea and the United States of America.

5. The following International, Regional, Sub-regional and Inter-governmental organizations also attended the workshop: the African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF), the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the Division of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), the Governance and Public Administration Division (GPAD) and Information Science and Technology Division (ISTD) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the
Secretariat of the Conference of African Ministers of Public/Civil Service (CAMPS), and the European Union (EU).

II. OPENING AND SUMMARY OF DELIBERATIONS

6. His Excellency Hon. Marco M. Hausiku, Deputy Prime Minister, Office of the Prime Minister, Namibia, delivered a key note speech and officially opened the workshop. Statements were also made by: H.E. Mr. Juneydi Sado, Minister of Civil Service of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Mr. Said Adejumobi, Officer-in-Charge, Governance and Public Administration Division of UNECA, Mr. Brian T. Kagoro, Governance Practice Leader a.i. UNDP Regional Service Centre for East and Central Africa. A Vote of Thanks was delivered by H. E. Ms. Celina Kombami, Minister of Public Service, United Republic of Tanzania.

7. Following the opening ceremony, Ms. Thuli Radebe, Chief Executive Officer, Centre for Public Service Innovation South Africa, launched the All Africa Public Sector Innovation Awards (AAPSIA), in representation of the Hon. Lindiwe N. Sisulu, Minister for Public Service and Administration of South Africa.

8. The workshop considered and discussed the following issues:

- Public service delivery and the role of Senior Public Service Leadership in promoting the use of ICT for improved public service performance in Africa.

- Harnessing the potential of Open Standards (OS) and Open Source Software (OSS) to improve the Delivery and management of Public Services.

- Sector Institutions and the delivery of services in Africa.

- Developing capacities for effective use of OS and OSS and applications to enhance delivery of public service in Africa.

- UNDP experience in supporting governments in Africa to promote the use of modern technologies for improved delivery of public service.

- Proposal for creating Centers of Excellence and Networks for effective development and use of OS and OSS to improve the delivery of Public Services.


III. KEY OBSERVATIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9. Participants made the following observations, conclusions and recommendations:
a) Observations

- In the current recessionary world climate, governments around the world have been harnessing the power of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for delivering much needed sustainability in social and economic services to their citizens. Underscoring the importance of technological advancements and the role of the government and sustainable development, the LTS highlights the importance of e-Government and ICT as integral to sustainable development.

- African countries are cognisant of the challenge of strengthening capacities to improve the delivery of services on the continent. As such two major steps have been taken: the adoption of the African Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, and the formulation of the Long-Term Strategy for African Governance and Public Administration and its implementation framework.

- Information and Communication Technologies have advanced considerably in most African countries and have broken through to social, gender and generational barriers. In view of the numerous advantages offered by these technologies, they are now crucial for the work of the public sector, for civil society organizations and for governments which use them for intra governmental communication and for providing services and communicating with citizens.

- Public administration reforms in most African countries are often only partially successful not because, once implemented, they yield unsatisfactory outcomes, but because they never get past the implementation stage at all.

- The African Long-term Strategy (LTS) for Governance and Public Administration identifies six pillars for improved capability and effectiveness of public administration. Prominent in this strategy is the use of information and communication technology to improve the performance of the public service especially in delivering citizen oriented service.

- The African LTS for Governance and Public Administration Program provides a framework for supporting public administration capacity development including ethics, professionalism, the fight against corruption in the public service and effective delivery of public services in Africa.

- The workshop noted with appreciation the commitments of African governments to implementing the Charter on the Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, and the LTS for African Governance and Public Administration.

- The UN E-Governance Survey adopted by Member States and economists as a useful tool to benchmark e-Government development, presents a systematic assessment of the use of ICT to transform and reform the public sector by
enhancing efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, access to public services and citizen participation.

- The workshop noted that lack and/or inadequate of ICT energy and infrastructure across the continent reduces the impact and role of ICTs in expanding state capacity and weakens the links and communication both intra and across countries and regions.

- Capacity constraints among African countries in the area of ICT are caused by the lack of awareness in the leadership, lack of appropriate institutional framework, lack of appropriate skills in the public service and lack of financial resources. There is need for public private partnerships in the sense that certain key public service deliverables be undertaken in partnership with professional experts outside the Public Service.

- The workshop has provided a great opportunity for establishing future direction for the implementation of the African Long-Term Strategy for Governance and Public Administration Program, specially in as far as it relates to the ICT pillar of the LTS.

b) Conclusions

10. Some of the key conclusions emanating from the workshop were that:

- Efficiency, cost-effectiveness and citizens’ participation are critical objectives for any governance and public administration agenda. Improving the delivery of public services is critical to the achievement of national and international development agenda including Millennium Development Goals and any other post 2015 agenda in Africa. In this respect, Information and Communication Technologies, if properly leveraged can provide the required efficiency and effectiveness thereby improving government processes (e-Administration), connecting citizens (e-Citizens and e-Services), and building external interactions (e-Society).

- Capacity building, including the development of human capital and leadership capacity, are crucial to the application of ICT to improve the performance of public sector institutions and without it, even past achievements could be reversed.

- The knowledge and information technology are tools and means for development, the application of which facilitates the daily transactions of citizens with government agencies and with their elected representatives.
Information and Communication Technology, one of the 6 pillars of the Long-Term Strategy, can potentially provide increasingly powerful process tools that can be deployed to address traditional development problems in innovative ways.

E-governance can facilitate better user-friendly service delivery, improved and economical links with business and more efficient and rigorous management of government business, by locating service centres closer to clients, customers and partners.

In addition to enhancing citizen participation by enabling them to interact better with each other, with the government and with their elected officials, e-government can also improve the internal working of an administration. Introducing Management Information systems within government departments, for example, can result in improved personnel procurement, better management of technical assistance funds and projects, and increase revenue collection.

Most African governments are taking the right steps in pursuing the Long-Term Strategy which emphasizes the use of ICT as an important conducive aspect contributing to the improvement of public service delivery on the continent. In fact, many countries have in general improved their online service delivery to cater to citizen’s needs. However, there still remains an imbalance in the digital divide between developed and the developing countries. The digital divide is rooted in the lack of e-infrastructure, which has hindered information use and knowledge creation.

If Africa is to be successful in modernizing and professionalizing its public service, the collective effort, mutually support systems, strengthening of communities of practice and common normative standards are critical. This will encourage citizens to participate with government entities in designing policies and services, promoting transparency and boosting public trust in government, and creating business opportunities and jobs.

Deployment of ICTs for governance and public administration requires careful resource planning, human capacity, ICT infrastructure and services, reengineering work processes, and security considerations. In this respect, formulation of Open Data framework, development of Open Data strategy and build capacity on Open Data within the government, requires the adoption and/strengthening of appropriate regulatory framework.

Rapid pace of technological progress coupled with the high cost of the regular acquisition and renewal of equipment and licenses, internet connectivity and ICT illiteracy, hinders developing countries to catch up with the developed countries.

As Ministers responsible for Public Service and Administration in Africa, we are fully committed to promote accessibility and availability of relevant technology for the application of ICT to enhance public service delivery in our countries.
c) **Recommendations**

11. The workshop recommended that:

- **African government** should expedite the signing, ratification and domestication of the Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration and the implementation of the Long-Term Strategy for African Governance and Public Administration.

- **Regional Economic Communities (RECs)** should play an important role in supporting Member States’ efforts toward the signing, ratification, domestication and implementation of the Charter and the Long-Term Strategy.

- **Development partners**, including, the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank, the African Capacity Building Foundation, UNDESA, UNDP, and the Africa Public Sector Human Resource Management Network, should continue to assist African countries in the popularization and domestication of the African Charter on Values and Principles in Public Service and Administration and in the implementation of the Long-Term Strategy on Governance and Public Administration.

- The CAMPS Secretariat must develop strong effective communication strategy to popularize the Charter and the Long-Term Strategy for their rapid and expedite domestication and implementation by member States.

- **African governments** should increasingly continue to rethink in terms of e-government and e-governance, thereby placing greater emphasis on institutional linkages between and among the tiered government structures in a bid to create synergy for inclusive sustainable development.

- Since technology is fast changing, the challenges facing Africa in this respect should be viewed as opportunities to develop/adopt and assimilate only that technology suited for the purpose of rejuvenating public service to play its rightful role.

- **Public Service in Africa** should be encouraged to adapt to changes taking place around the globe and to the demands of their citizens. To that end, the use of ICT and regular interactions with staff and the public to ensure efficient and effective service delivery, should be enhanced.

- **African countries** should put in place/enhance policies, strategies, and legislation to provide for the adoption and utilization of Open Data and Open source Software frameworks, development of strategies and build capacity on ODS and OSS within the government.
IV. WAY FORWARD: Strengthen coordination, coherence and improve the use of ICTs in Public Service and Administration in Africa

12. As part of continental wide approach to support the African Public Service improve service delivery using information and communication technologies, the meeting supports the strategy of AU CAMPS to fast track establishment of regional centres of excellence for developing open source applications and open source standards. This should be done through:

1. Establishment of four E-Government exchange hubs in Southern, East, West and Central Africa;

2. The hubs to be used to enhance service delivery by providing portal that citizen may use to give feedback on services, infrastructure development, information exchange and coordination;

3. To be centres for training civil servants gain more skills on ICT; and

4. Provide private sector, universities and public service with a forum for discussing challenges affecting service delivery and developing solutions to these challenges in a cost-effective manner.

13. The participants expressed their profound gratitude to the Government and people of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, specially the Ministry of Civil Service and the National Workshop Facilitation Committee, for hosting the Workshop and for the excellent arrangements and hospitality during the three-day workshop. The participants also commended the Ministers responsible for Public/Civil Service, with special recognition to H.E. Hon. Marco M. Hausiku, Deputy Prime Minister of Namibia, all of whom came all the way from their respective countries and stayed throughout the Workshop. The participants further expressed their appreciation to the international organizations and partners who provided human, financial, material and moral support that made the Workshop possible. These include: UNDESA, UNECA, UNDP/RBA, the CAMPS Secretariat, and the various African governments who funded their participants to attend the workshop. Finally, the participants expressed their gratitude to the hospitality extended to them by public and private organizations over the three-day period of the workshop and to all others who worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make the workshop a real success.

Done in Addis Ababa, the 25th day of July the year 2012.