



## United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)

### UNPAN Partners Meeting Report Towards a Renewed Network to Support UN Member States Deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

*Venue: Room S-2724, UN Secretariat Building  
Wednesday, 10 April 2019  
1:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.*



#### **I. Background**

In 1999 the UN General Assembly emphasized the importance of a global information network (A/RES/54/231, para 11) and in 2001 it welcomed the establishment of UNPAN as a powerful internet-based network for Member States for the exchange of information and experience in public administration (A/RES/56/213, para 1). UNPAN has over 30 Partner institutions around the world and comprises (a) the physical network of practitioners and experts in public administration who collaborate with DESA/DPIDG on joint activities and (b) unpan.org, the virtual home of the network for knowledge sharing. The Network has been in existence for 18

years and is one of the most visited platforms of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

UNPAN is designed to help countries, especially developing countries, to respond to the challenges that governments face in bridging the digital divide between the 'haves and have-nots' and to achieve their development goals. It consists of institutions in every region of the world. The Partners' expertise in areas such as transforming public sector; good governance; leadership; anti-corruption; innovation for improved service delivery; efficient, effective and ethical public service; information society; smart sustainable cities; human resource management; capacity building, and regional co-operation links closely with the work of DESA/DPIDG.

The immediate objective of UNPAN is to establish an internet-based network that links regional and national institutions devoted to public administration, thereby facilitating information exchange, experience sharing, and training in the area of public sector policy and management. The long-term objective of UNPAN is to build the capacity of these regional and national institutions, so that they can access, process and disseminate relevant information by means of up-to-date information and communication technologies (ICTs) for the promotion of better public administration.

## II. Summary of Discussions

The United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) met during the 18th Session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) held at the UN Headquarters in New York. 7 UNPAN Partners and institutions took part in the meeting. These were the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), the Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA), International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS), Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA), the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee), the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-A), the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) as well as KEAN University.

The meeting was opened by **Mr. Juwang Zhu**, Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) of UN DESA. Mr. Zhu welcomed UNPAN members and mentioned that he had the pleasure of meeting many of the Partners in the UNPAN Partners meeting in 2015, when he was the Director of this Division. He emphasized that even though DPIDG and UNPAN Partners collaborate online throughout the year, meeting in person carries special value and importance. He mentioned that the Division has gone through a restructuring process to re-align its work with the 2030 Agenda and thanked all members for their continued collaboration and ideas on how to revamp the UNPAN website to make an even stronger network. Mr. Zhu expressed that it is timely to ask how UNPAN can play an important role in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs, notably goal

16 on effective, accountable and inclusive institutions, since UNPAN continues to be a unique portal on public administration and one of the most visited in UN DESA. He mentioned that UNPAN has been a success story in UN DESA and that the Under-Secretary General is very committed to revitalize the work of the Division. He mentioned that because UNPAN is mandated by the General Assembly, all partners should think how to re-align UNPAN to implement the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

He concluded by saying that with the help and continued collaboration of Partners, UNPAN can become an even more relevant network in supporting countries' efforts to advance sustainable development for all, especially to leave no one behind, which is at the core of the 2030 Agenda.

**Ms. Adriana Alberti**, Chief of the Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit of DPIDG, joined the director in welcoming the UNPAN Partners to this important meeting to share information on what each partner has done this year, and to discuss how synergies can be established to better help member states build their governance and institutional capacities to achieve the SDGs. She stated that DPIDG has continued its collaboration and partnership with UNPAN throughout 2018. Namely, the Division worked together with the Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA) on the Global Initiative on equipping public servants with the capacities to implement the SDGs. The Division held a meeting of public administration schools during the Regional Symposium on Developing Capacities of Public Institutions and Partnerships last November in the Republic of Korea. The Division collaborated with the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), particularly through the organization of capacity development workshops on ethics during their annual conference which took place in Botswana in 2018. It also continued collaboration with CLAD through participation and capacity development presentation on integrity and prevention of corruption during the 18th Iberoamerican Conference of Ministers of Public Administration and Reform (26-27 July 2018) which took place in Guatemala. Additionally, DPIDG collaborated with the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) recently through remote participation in the Research and Professional Development Academy conference which took place in March 2019.

Ms. Alberti mentioned that DPIDG collaborated with NISPACEE through participation in their annual meeting; and with RESPA and ALGA during the 2018 UN Public Service Forum in Morocco. She highlighted the partnership with the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa through capacity building activities devoted to local governments; and with the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences under which the Regional Cooperation Office for City Information (RCOCI) operates, particularly through the organization of a learning Conference on a Holistic Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which was held in January in Shanghai. The meeting was jointly organized with ESCAP and UNITAR.

Ms. Alberti mentioned that last year UNPAN Partners discussed the need to revitalize the UNPAN website and to better align it with the SDGs and with the thematic areas of the Division. Following an online survey sent to all UNPAN Partners, RCOCI from the Shanghai Academy of

Social Sciences has offered to revamp the website to upgrade its features and make it much more interactive. The idea is to build a more effective and dynamic global knowledge hub to serve as a reference for public institutions worldwide on governance and institutions-related matters. Ms. Alberti expressed that UNPAN is committed to integrity and excellence, and that it is the only network of its type in the world today. Through knowledge exchange and peer to peer learning on governance and institutions issues, UNPAN can contribute to SDG17 on “Strengthening the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”. In particular, UNPAN can help to promote Goal 17.9 to “Enhance international support for implementing effective and targeted capacity-building in developing countries to support national plans to implement all the sustainable development goals, including through North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation”.

She concluded by highlighting the need to think about how to make the collaboration among UNPAN partners more systematic and how to build sub-thematic networks to capitalize on UNPAN’s respective knowledge and capacities in various fields related to public administration.

### **III. Presentation of Key activities by UNPAN Partners**

**Ms. Ratka Sekulović**, Director of the Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) spoke about her organization which was established in 2010. She mentioned that ReSPA is organizing many regional activities, conferences, seminars and study visits. She also highlighted that ReSPA adopted a new strategy for 2019-2024 with three main objectives: 1) policy development and coordination; 2) professionalization and de-politization of public service; and 3) promoting the highest quality of public service and public management. Ms. Sekulović stated that ReSPA is very interested in digitalization, especially to provide better services in the areas of open government, gender budgeting, accountability, leadership and innovation in the public sector. She concluded by saying that ReSPA is considering organizing bi-annual public service awards for the Balkan region to promote and reward innovation in public service delivery, and would welcome the collaboration of DPIDG.

**Professor Juraj Nemec**, Immediate past president of the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) noted that his organization has been a long-term partner of UNPAN. He stated that NISPAcee covers post-soviet countries in central Europe and cooperates greatly with ReSPA on many issues. He mentioned that their main goal is to improve public administration as a system, but also public administration education and training in the region, through various types of activities, including conferences, seminars, and projects. He stated that NISPAcee conducts advisory and ERASMUS projects to improve the quality of education in public administration; the latest one focusing on the Central European region and preparing education institutions for accreditation.

**Dr. Orlando S. Mercado**, Secretary-General of the Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) expressed his appreciation for the UNPAN partners and mentioned

that his organization was established in 1960 and was the first of its kind in the region. He expressed his enthusiasm about the revamping of the UNPAN website. He also mentioned that EROPA is currently establishing an e-Government Centre in Beijing and established a policy study centre in Indonesia. He noted that these centres have been conducting very interesting activities but haven't been able to project these activities outside the region. He highlighted that there is a need for assistance in the area of institutional building in Eastern Asia, and UNPAN Partners could hold a very interesting dialogue on this matter.

**Dr. Alex Brillantes**, President of the Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA) mentioned that his organization has over 20 years of experience in public administration and is currently organizing conferences throughout the region of East Asia, especially on the SDGs. He highlighted the need to incorporate the teaching of the SDGs in the curricula of the schools of public administration. AAPA focuses on the role of education, the digital divide and local governance, and these are themes that the organization is discussing during the CEPA meeting. AAPA is also focusing on the role of leaders in public sector, and how can effective leadership help change mindsets in cooperation with universities and institutes of public administration within the context of implementing the SDGs.

**Dr. Najat Zarrouk**, Director of the African Local Governments Academy (ALGA) of the United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (UCLG-Africa) mentioned that UCLG-Africa is a network of 48 local authorities and about 16000 cities in Africa as members. The scope of the organization covers over 150 million inhabitants. The UCLG-Africa's mission is to advocate for decentralization and local governance, and to strengthen local authorities in Africa. UCLG-Africa identifies institutes in the region who provide capacity development and training and has a network of 23 institutes covering all regions of Africa. She also mentioned that the organization is engaged in academia, is a member of IIAS and has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with ICAPA to promote standards of excellence in local governance. Dr. Zarrouk highlighted that UCLG-Africa is organizing trainings on localizing the SDGs, on local leadership and on human resource management; and offering 2 online courses. She also stated that a group of students from the Florida International University is visiting Morocco to learn about local authorities and local governance, as well as participate in cultural activities. She mentioned that last year, UCLG-Africa published a report on human resource management at the local level because the situation in Africa on this subject requires a lot of help and attention. Dr. Zarrouk highlighted that there is a discrimination between those who work for the state at the national level, and those who work in public administration at the local level. she noted that last year, UCLG-Africa organized a side event during the Public Service Forum in Marrakech on corruption at the local level. She mentioned that her organization would like to disseminate all this information on UNPAN. During the Public Service Forum in Baku this year, UCLG-Africa is also organizing a side event on promoting public service delivery at the local level, and Dr. Zarrouk took the opportunity to suggest having a framework on collaboration and partnerships between UNPAN Partners to move from an informal and ad hoc to a more formal and structured approach.

**Dr. Sofiane Sahraoui**, Director General of the International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) thanked the Division for organizing CEPA and inviting IIAS to the meeting. He mentioned that 3 CEPA members are also members of IIAS and said that unfortunately not enough attention has been given to UNPAN in the past, but that his organization is re-looking at its strategy and UNPAN is very strategic for IIAS. He also mentioned that IIAS would like to strengthen its collaboration with UNPAN and develop strategic partnerships with many groups of schools of public administration from all regions of the world, including EUPAN and MENAPAN. He stated that his organization has 3 major upcoming events, the first being the IIAS conference, which will be the biggest one, the second is the IASIA conference in Lisbon where DPIDG is involved, and the third is the conference of the Euro Group on Public Administration which will take place in Belfast, to also include every major European university. Dr. Sahraoui mentioned that IIAS also organized a conference for the Latin America in Quito and a conference for the MENAPAN in Morocco. 2 other regional conferences are planned in Lithuania and Qatar. He highlighted that IIAS is preparing an international review on administrative science and is running accreditation activities, and most recently started bidding for EU projects. Dr. Sahraoui noted that many major players participated in the Governance Week Conference held in Belgium in late February 2019, including DPIDG. He concluded by mentioning the need to integrate efforts and work closely to promote UNPAN and would like to invite UNPAN to have a presence on the board of IIAS, as well as develop a panel with UNPAN Partners on core issues related to public service.

**Dr. George Scott**, Secretary General of the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) mentioned that AAPAM is organizing country-level training programmes and workshops on SDGs in different countries, including Kenya, Zambia and South Africa; however, the key challenge that they are facing is funding. He mentioned that young professionals are being invited to these workshops to cultivate their abilities and ideas. He highlighted that AAPAM is engaged in the integration of women in public administration. AAPAM presents awards to governments as an incentive to boost public administration in Africa. This year a female received the awards based solely on merit. He states that the key partners of AAPAM are IIAS, UCLG-Africa, the University of Victoria and institutes of public administration management in the region. He also mentioned that AAPAM partners with local academics in developing workshops, including the American Society of Public Administration, with which AAPAM is signing a Memorandum of Understanding soon, as well as the public administration institutions in Palestine.

#### **IV. UNPAN Website Revamping – Updates on the new platform**

**Ms. Alberti** presented the timeline of the revamping of the UNAPN website and mentioned that a prototype should be ready in June. She invited UNPAN Partners to be engaged in the process through consultations and sharing of ideas to better support the network and look at UNPAN not only as a website, but also as a platform for partnerships and capacity development.

She also stated that an invitation to the Public Service Forum in June in Azerbaijan will be sent out to all UNPAN Partners where the network will have an opportunity to discuss the revamping along with SASS. She invited partners to reflect on how they can build an innovation exchange platform through peer to peer learning, and how they can we work better together sustainably from now until June.

**Dr. Zarrouk** highlighted the importance of structuring collaboration by having minutes of the UNPAN meetings to ensure a thorough follow up on commitment made. She mentioned that UNPAN needs to be a platform to share innovation and empower each other. She stated that one of the challenges facing the UNPAN website was the language limitation as most of the content are in English.

**Dr. Mercado** noted that an important aspect of UNPAN could be sharing success stories and experiences from practitioners in a manner that is attractive and captures a large audience. He emphasized the focus on success stories of human experience and innovative stories.

**Dr. Scott** mentioned that AAPAM has developed an electronic library linked to various other libraries with a wealth of knowledge. He invited partners to examine what kind of link could also be established with UNPAN.

**Ms. Sekulović** proposed the establishment of sub-committees and to receive a proposal from the Division on how to concretize UNPAN's work in a more efficient way.

**Dr. Brillantes** suggested making available on the UNPAN website short videos on the SDGs geared towards students to raise awareness of the 2030 Agenda. He also suggested dividing the work of UNPAN into research, practice, and education so that partners can share stories and innovations that could be used in the classroom.

## **V. UNPAN Status Update for the Past Year**

**Ms. Xiao Wang** of DPIDG present the status of UNPAN for the past year. She mentioned that the UNPAN website received 15,668,191 visits in 2018, representing a 127% increase from 2017. There were 1205 new registered users in 2018, 67% were male and 23% female. The majority of users were from India (20%), Tanzania (18%), Nigeria (13%), the United States (10%) and Egypt (8%). She highlighted that the almost all users (98%) used a desktop to access the UNPAN website, and this is because the website is not mobile friendly.

Ms. Wang noted that out of the 2,099,383 webpage views, more than half (945,499) were for case studies. She highlighted that the top 3 most downloaded documents were 1) Rethinking Public Administration; 2) Increasing Trust in Government through more Participatory and Transparent Government; and 3) Performance Contracts in Kenya. The top 3 document contributors to UNPAN in 2018 were DPIDG, CPSI and RCOCI. In addition, the top 4 news contributors were RCOCI, CPSI, EROPA and DPIDG.

## VI. Annexes

### Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

# United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

## Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)

### UNPAN Partners Meeting

Venue: Room S-2724, UN Secretariat Building

Wednesday, 10 April 2019

1:15 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

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**Chair:** Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

**Secretariat Resource Person:** Ms. Adriana Alberti, UNDESA/DPIDG

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1:15 – 1:20 p.m.	<b>Opening Remarks</b> Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director, UNDESA/DPIDG
1:20 – 1:30 p.m.	<b>Introduction</b> Ms. Adriana Alberti, UNDESA/DPIDG
1:30 – 2:20 p.m.	<b>Presentation of Key activities by UNPAN Partners</b>
2:20 – 2:30 p.m.	<b>UNPAN Website Revamping – Updates on the new platform</b>
2:30 – 2:40 p.m.	<b>Follow-up actions</b>
2:40 – 2:50 p.m.	<b>UNPAN Status Update for the Past Year</b> Ms. Stefania Senese, UNDESA/DPIDG
2:50 – 3:00 p.m.	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Ms. Adriana Alberti, UNDESA/DPIDG

## Annex 2: List of Participants

### UNPAN Partners Meeting

Organization	Participant(s)
 <p data-bbox="272 575 370 604"><b>AAPAM</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 436 708 466"><b>Dr. George Scott</b> Secretary General African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) Kenya <a data-bbox="505 575 740 604" href="mailto:aapam@aapam.org">aapam@aapam.org</a></p>
 <p data-bbox="285 791 354 821"><b>AAPA</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 653 1105 785"><b>Dr. Alex Brillantes</b> President Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA) <a data-bbox="505 751 792 781" href="mailto:abbrillantes@up.edu.ph">abbrillantes@up.edu.ph</a></p>
 <p data-bbox="293 1005 345 1035"><b>IIAS</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 867 1154 1035"><b>Dr. Sofiane Sahraoui</b> Director General International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS) Belgium <a data-bbox="505 1005 786 1035" href="mailto:s.sahraoui@iias-iisa.org">s.sahraoui@iias-iisa.org</a></p>
 <p data-bbox="261 1184 375 1213"><b>NISPAcee</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 1083 1370 1215"><b>Prof. Juraj Nemec</b> Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe <a data-bbox="505 1184 760 1213" href="mailto:juraj.nemec@umb.sk">juraj.nemec@umb.sk</a></p>
 <p data-bbox="282 1373 354 1402"><b>RESPA</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 1266 1084 1398"><b>Ms. Ratka Sekulović</b> Director Regional School of Public Administration (ReSPA) <a data-bbox="505 1367 813 1396" href="mailto:r.sekulovic@respaweb.eu">r.sekulovic@respaweb.eu</a></p>
 <p data-bbox="233 1514 412 1543"><b>UCLG - AFRICA</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 1417 1214 1585"><b>Dr. Najat Zarrouk</b> Director of the African Local Governments Academy(ALGA) United Cities and Local Governments of Africa(UCLG-Africa) Morocco- Rabat <a data-bbox="505 1554 802 1583" href="mailto:najat_zarrouk@yahoo.fr">najat_zarrouk@yahoo.fr</a></p>
 <p data-bbox="277 1745 363 1774"><b>EROPA</b></p>	<p data-bbox="505 1631 1289 1799"><b>Dr. Orlando S. Mercado</b> Secretary-General Eastern Regional Organization for Public Administration (EROPA) The Philippines <a data-bbox="505 1768 737 1797" href="mailto:secgen@eropa.co">secgen@eropa.co</a></p>