



# Workshop on “Changing Mindsets for Innovation and Public Sector Transformation”

23 October 2025  
Bridgetown, Barbados

Concept Note



## 1. Context

The world is undergoing a period of unprecedented change. At the same time, the rapid pace of emerging technologies requires an improvement in management capabilities. Indeed, the digitalization of societies is globally recognized as an enabler for the achievement of human progress as defined by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). While enabling benefits are recognized, so too are the associated risks. Public institutions therefore play a critical role in establishing the appropriate policy frameworks to maximize the benefits, while mitigating the risks, to support digital societal transformation. The public sector in the Caribbean region continues to face a capacity challenge in delivering change and transformation, with particular challenges being experienced in relation to mindsets, capacity, processes, and right skill sets.

The Caribbean's commitment to the SDGs, the priorities for the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), as well as the national vision of the CARICOM member states, all require more innovative, responsive, and transformed public services. The Caribbean region must be prepared to take advantage of these developments as well as to create an environment which will lead to adaptability in mindset, resilience, and innovation.

Much has been said about the implementation deficit in the Caribbean region and its vulnerability. In addition, the loss of talent particularly at the leadership and senior levels caused by retirement, resignations, and migration, creates a need for the development and sustaining of relevant capabilities to address the emerging challenges and interlocking crises, such as climate change, food insecurity, energy access, jobs and social protection, and digital connectivity.

## 2. Objectives

The workshop on Changing Mindsets for Innovation and Public Sector Transformation seeks to explore practices and approaches to support changing mindsets for innovation and digital transformation of public services, different mindsets, the role of changed mindsets and capacity building strategies (aimed not only to the public sector but society as a whole), to support this transformation. The Workshop will build on the results and key messages of the capacity development workshop held in Barbados in May 2025 which highlighted the importance of senior leadership involvement at the Permanent Secretaries level to ensure long-term sustainability of the public sector reforms sought to transform public service delivery making it more innovative, effective, and inclusive.

It will examine the relevance of adopting new mindsets to accelerate innovation and the implementation of digital government to improve the delivery of public services to citizens. By changing our mindset, we can leverage the potential of emerging technologies and foster a culture of innovation and resilience and respond to the needs and expectations of our citizens.

The workshop will also be an opportunity to highlight the project on “Developing Capacities for Innovation, Digital Government Transformation and Changing Mindsets in the Caribbean Small Island Developing States (SIDS)”. The project is being spearheaded by UN DESA/DPIDG and the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG) in collaboration with CARICAD, the Economic Commission for



Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and the UN Resident Coordinator Offices in the region. The project aims to strengthen the capacity of selected countries in the Caribbean SIDS to mobilize their institutions and public servants to enhance effectiveness and institutional coordination, public accountability, and engagement of key stakeholders in the implementation and review of the SDGs. Lessons learned and experiences will be shared among colleagues in the region during the life of the project.

### 3. Format

The one-day workshop will feature presentations by experts and discussions on innovative practices for peer-to-peer learning, public sector transformation, and creation of public value in the Caribbean. It will be conducted in-person. The workshop will consist of:

- Presentations by featured speakers
- Q and A segment

### 4. Target Audience

Government of Barbados's Permanent Secretaries, Senior Public Officers at the level of Director Generals, CEOs and Heads of Agencies.

### 5. Expected Results

The workshop aims to increase awareness and foster a shift in mindsets that are essential for innovation and digital transformation of public services. By the end of the workshop participants will have:

- Learned about the changes that are required at different levels (individual, organizational, and institutional) to successfully change mindsets.
- Gained insights to inspire and guide their actions to address the challenges of promoting innovation in the public sector and of implementing digital public services in their contexts.

## Organizers

### The Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD)

The Caribbean Centre for Development Administration was formed in 1979 as the Caribbean Sub-Centre of the Latin American Centre for Development Administration (CLAD). The Centre became fully operational in 1980 with Headquarters established in Barbados and is an Institution of the Caribbean Community under Article 21 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas. The Agreement Establishing CARICAD charges the Centre with the general objective of “rendering... assistance to the countries of the Caribbean area for the purpose of improving their administrative capability to accelerate their social and economic development”. In keeping with this mandate, CARICAD is the Region's focal point for transforming and



modernising the public sectors of Member States to better formulate and implement public policy towards the achievement of good governance which is indispensable to sustainable development.

### **The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat (UN DESA)**

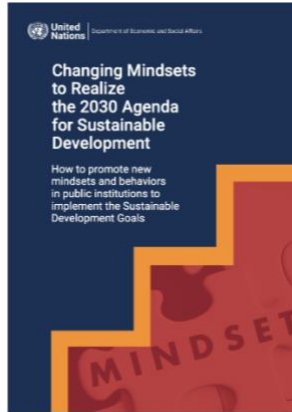
The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat is a vital interface between global policies in the economic, social and environmental spheres and national action. The Department works in three main interlinked areas: (i) it compiles, generates and analyses a wide range of economic, social and environmental data and information on which States Members of the United Nations draw to review common problems and to take stock of policy options; (ii) it facilitates the negotiations of Member States in many intergovernmental bodies on joint course of action to address ongoing or emerging global challenges; and (iii) it advises interested Governments on the ways and means of translating policy frameworks developed in United Nations conferences and summits into programmes at the country level and, through technical assistance, helps build national capacities.

### **The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)**

ECLAC is one of the five regional commissions of the United Nations which was established to promote economic and social development through regional and subregional cooperation and integration. To that end, through its substantive divisions, subregional headquarters and national offices, it undertakes studies, research and other support activities within the terms of reference of the Commission; gathers, organizes, interprets and disseminates information and data relating to the economic and social development of the region; formulates and promotes development cooperation activities and projects of regional and subregional scope commensurate with the needs and priorities of the region and acts as an executing agency for such projects; provides advisory services to Governments at their request and plans, organizes and executes programmes of technical cooperation; assists in bringing a regional perspective to global problems and forums and introduces global concerns at the regional and subregional levels; organizes conferences and intergovernmental and expert group meetings and sponsors training workshops, symposia and seminars; and provides substantive secretariat services and documentation for the Commission and its subsidiary bodies. Further, it coordinates activities with those of the major departments and offices at United Nations Headquarters, specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations with a view to avoiding duplication and ensuring complementarity in the exchange of information.

### **Useful Readings and References**

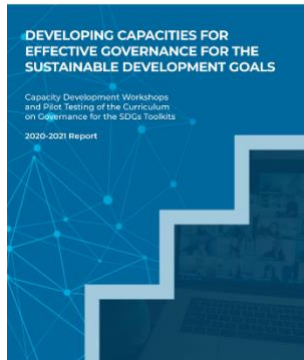




## Report on Changing Mindsets to Realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The idea of producing a publication on Changing Mindsets to Realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was conceived in 2019 as a follow-up to the workshop on “Mobilizing and Equipping Public Servants to Realize the 2030 Agenda”. The workshop brought together worldwide experts on the subject matter of changing mindsets and allowed for insightful discussions with many schools of public administration. It was organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) during the United Nations Public Service Forum in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan.

The publication is intended as a companion document to the Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals and its Toolkit on Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development developed by UN DESA, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG). UN DESA/DPIDG’s mission is to support governments in strengthening their capacities to translate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other internationally agreed goals into institutional arrangements, strategies, and programmes for effective service delivery and participatory, accountable, and inclusive decision-making processes.



## Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions”. Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda specifically calls for effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Indeed, institutions play a critical role in the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets. However, public sector reforms needed to implement the SDGs continue to be a major and vexing challenge in many countries. The 11 Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development, developed by the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and endorsed in 2018 by the Economic and Social Council, provide practical, expert guidance to interested countries in a broad range of governance challenges associated with implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Curriculum Toolkits address the 11 Principles of Effective Governance. The Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals aims to provide a holistic and integrated framework for capacity development in the area of governance and public institutions. It aims to promote critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.

Sustainable Development, developed by the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and endorsed in 2018 by the Economic and Social Council, provide practical, expert guidance to interested countries in a broad range of governance challenges associated with implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Curriculum Toolkits address the 11 Principles of Effective Governance. The Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals aims to provide a holistic and integrated framework for capacity development in the area of governance and public institutions. It aims to promote critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, and strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs.



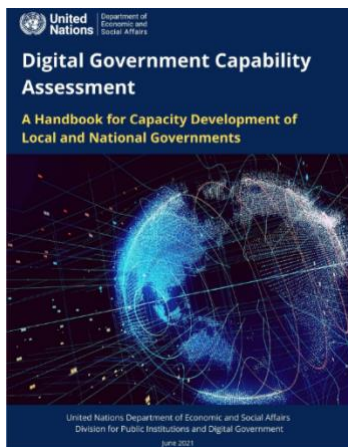




## UN E-Government Survey 2024

This thirteenth edition of the United Nations E-Government Survey, released in 2024, provides a comprehensive assessment of the digital government landscape across all 193 Member States. The 2024 Survey highlights a significant upward trend in the development of digital government worldwide, with increased investment in resilient infrastructure and cutting-edge technologies. The global average value of the E-Government Development Index (EGDI) shows substantial improvement, with the proportion of the population lagging in digital government development decreasing from 45.0 per cent in 2022 to 22.4 per cent in 2024. Despite significant progress in digital government development, the EGDI averages for the African region, least

developed countries, and small island developing States remain below the global average, underscoring the need for targeted efforts to bridge existing gaps. At the local level, the Survey continues to assess city portals using the Local Online Services Index (LOSI). The LOSI findings reflect steady progress but also highlight persistent disparities between national and local e-government performance, pointing to the need for focused initiatives to strengthen digital government at the municipal level. This edition introduces the new Digital Government Model Framework, providing countries with a comprehensive road map for the effective planning, implementation and assessment of digital government initiatives. A short addendum explores the integration of AI in digital government development, emphasizing the importance of maximizing benefits and minimizing risks to achieve balanced governance.



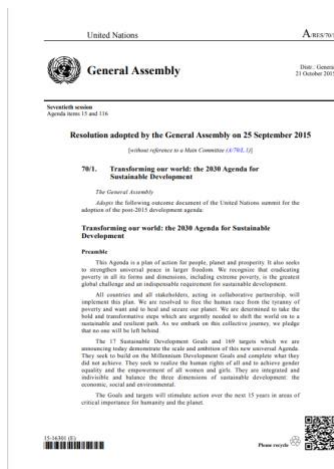
## Digital Government Capability Assessment Handbook

The Digital Government Capability Assessment (DGCA) is a six-dimension framework of enablers to engage governments in discussions towards digital government transformation. Considering that digital government requires a multifaceted response from governments, the dimensions of the DGCA contain various statements which could guide governments in understanding gaps and policy entry points.

Completing a DGCA will help civil servants build new understanding of the level of digital government capability that exists in a country as a foundation for continued efforts to innovate and lead in the area of digital government and public service delivery. A DGCA is not meant to be used

to benchmark capability, but rather to develop an understanding of current capability and to inform decision making about where investments are needed to increase innovation and digital government capability leading to improvements in public service delivery.



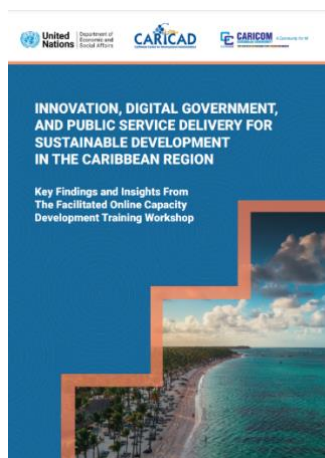


## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015: Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

This Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity. It also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. We recognize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.

All countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently

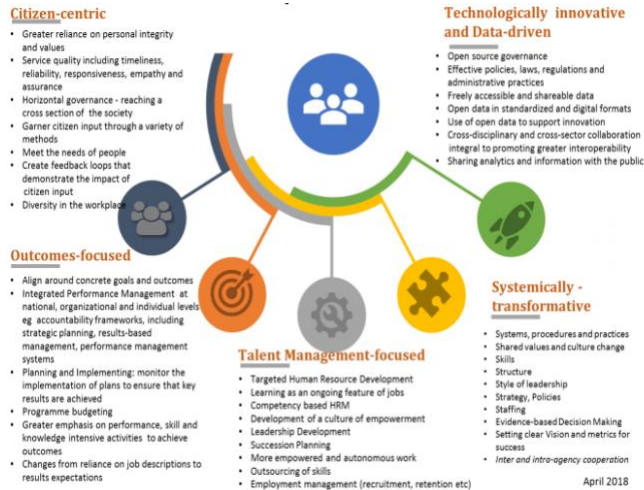
needed to shift the world on to a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind.



## Innovation, Digital Government and Public Service Delivery for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean Region

This report summarizes presentations and outcomes of a facilitated online training workshop on Innovation, Digital Government and Public Service Delivery for Sustainable Development, which was jointly organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, through the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (UN DESA/DPIDG) and the SIDS Unit of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), in collaboration with the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and with the participation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC), among others.





## Building a Resilient 21st Century Public Sector in the Caribbean

This article recognises the contextualised nature of public sector transformation in a complex, frequently intransient and change-averse system, and identifies some factors that are necessary in order for public sector organisations to attain resilience status. These include the importance of: citizen centricity, technology, human capital development, systemic transformation and a focus on outcomes.  
(CARICAD, 2018)

