

Capacity Building Workshop

Changing Mindsets for Effective Governance: Advancing Responsive, Accountable, and Inclusive Institutions in Africa

held in the context of the 44th Annual Roundtable Conference of the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), themed Agile Public Administration: Partnership and Digital Transformation for Citizen-Centric Service Delivery

2 - 5 December 2025

Esibayeni Lodge, Matsapha, Kingdom of Eswatini

Overview

A capacity development workshop on “Changing Mindsets for Effective Governance: Advancing Responsive, Accountable, and Inclusive Institutions in Africa” will be convened under the umbrella of the [44th Annual Roundtable Conference of the African Association for Public Administration and Management](#) (AAPAM), to be held in Matsapha, Eswatini, from 2–5 December 2025. The workshop is organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), in collaboration with AAPAM.

Effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions are vital for advancing both the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the African Union’s Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want. UN DESA/DPIDG has long partnered with AAPAM to strengthen state capacities in Africa, promoting innovation and digital transformation in public sector institutions to enhance service delivery. This year’s workshop will build on that collaboration by underscoring the central role of changing mindsets in strengthening governance across the continent and advancing the successful implementation of all the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.

The workshop will draw on the [UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration \(CEPA\) Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development](#), endorsed by ECOSOC, and will explore how mindset shifts can strengthen governance in Africa by advancing responsiveness, accountability, and inclusivity. It will also emphasize transformational leadership and sustainable partnerships as key levers for building resilient institutions that accelerate progress toward the



SDGs and Agenda 2063. Both frameworks underscore the importance of effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions that foster innovation and transformative leadership as critical to building equal societies and supporting vulnerable groups, including women, youth, and children, in achieving sustainable development.

The workshop will also connect with UN DESA/DPIDG's broader workstreams, including the [Report on Changing Mindsets to Realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), which highlights how to promote new mindsets and behaviors in public institutions to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, the [UN Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs](#) and its [Toolkit on Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions](#), the 2023 [World Public Sector Report](#), which highlights the need to strengthen public administration capacities to leverage data, tools, and science-based methods such as systems thinking, strategic foresight, and interdependency analyses, and the [2024 UN E-Government Survey](#), which emphasizes inclusive, citizen-centric digital services and citizen engagement in digital governance.

Objectives

The DPIDG workshop will be organized as a series of thematic sessions integrated into the plenaries and breakout sessions spread across the four days of the AAPAM Conference.

Sessions will focus on the below topics:

1. Changing Mindsets and Transformational Leadership for Responsive Governance in Africa.
2. Applying the UN CEPA Principles in African governance contexts.
3. Practical Approaches to Changing Mindsets in Public Service: An Interactive Exchange on African Innovations, Past UNPSA Winners, and Emerging Pathways for Inclusive Governance.
4. Inclusive Digital Governance: Engaging Citizens in the Age of AI.

Expected Audience and Outcomes

- Ministers responsible for public service, innovation, and digital government in African countries
- Senior public servants from sectoral ministries
- Senior public servants from ministries of public service
- Young professionals from ministries of public service
- Representatives of development partners involved in supporting public administration capacity development



Key Messages from the Workshop will be made available on AAPAM and UN DESA's websites.

Proposed Programme

Time	Session	Room and organiser
Day one	Tuesday, 2 December 2023	
11:30 – 12:30	Messages of Solidarity from Development Partners	Main Hall UN DESA, AAPAM, APRM, IIAS, NASPAA, APS-HRMnet, CIG, SAAPAM, AUC
14:00 – 15:00	Keynote Address Agile Public Administration: Partnership and Digital Transformation for Citizen-Centric Service Delivery	Main Hall
Day two	Wednesday, 3 December 2023	
09:00 -10:30	Plenary 1 Changing Mindsets and Transformational Leadership for Responsive Governance in Africa	Main Hall UN DESA and AAPAM
15:30 -17:00	Specialised Breakaway Sessions Practical approaches towards Changing Mindsets for Effective Governance: Advancing Responsive, Accountable, and Inclusive Institutions in Africa	UN DESA
Day three	Thursday, 4 December 2023	
09:00- 10:30	Plenary 4 Inclusive Digital Governance: Engaging Citizens in the Age of AI.	Main Hall UN DESA and AAPAM
11:00 – 12:30	Plenary 5 Applying the UN CEPA Principles in African Governance Contexts	Main Hall UN DESA and AAPAM
Day Four	Friday, 5 December 2023	
11:30 – 12:00	Reporting Back	UNDESA

Contact Persons:

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Relevant Reading Material:

<https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/intergovernmental-support/cepa/principles-effective-governance-sustainable-development>, Principles of effective governance for sustainable development, July 2018

<https://publicadministration.desa.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2023/Changing%20mindsets%20report%20-%20201%20October.pdf>, Report on Changing Mindsets to Realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, New York, 2021

<https://unpan.un.org/capacity-development/curriculum-on-governance-for-the-SDGs/1>, Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, New York

<https://desapublications.un.org/file/20866/download>, UN DESA's World Public Sector Report 2023, New York, 2024

<https://desapublications.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2023-10/World%20Public%20Sector%20Report%202023.pdf>, UN E-Government Survey 2024, New York, 2024

