

Rebuilding Trust in Government by Advancing Innovation in Public Service Delivery for Social Inclusion in the Global South

Second World Summit for Social Development

Solutions Sessions

Wednesday 5 November 2025

10.00 – 11.15 a.m. AST

Qatar National Convention Center, Doha

Exhibition Hall 5 - Room 4

Concept Note

A Solutions Session on “**Rebuilding Trust in Government by Advancing Innovation in Public Service Delivery for Social Inclusion in the Global South**” will be organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its [Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government \(DPIDG\)](#) and its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), in collaboration with the Republic of Maldives and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) within the framework of the Second World Summit for Social Development to be held in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 6 November 2025.

The multiple crises that humanity faces today—ranging from economic shocks to climate change and pandemics—have disproportionately affected people in vulnerable situations, deepening inequalities and undermining social cohesion across the world. Groups including the poorest, children, youth, women, older persons, persons with disabilities, refugees, migrants, and Indigenous Peoples often face barriers to accessing essential public services such as education, healthcare, water and sanitation, as well as meaningful participation in social, economic, and political life.



Inequitable access to services weakens the social contract, erodes trust in government, and hampers collective action. It undermines people's confidence in the capacity and the willingness of government to serve them, which weakens legitimacy and citizen mobilization in times of crisis. As trust declines, people may become less likely to comply with policies (e.g., health measures, tax obligations, environmental regulations), which in turn undermines government effectiveness and reinforces the cycle of mistrust. As highlighted by the *World Social Report 2025*, trust in institutions and trust among people are central determinants of social resilience. The *Global Sustainable Development Report 2025* further underscores that getting SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) back on track requires additional support to vulnerable groups, measures to combat discrimination, and structural reforms to ensure inclusive growth. Governments that deliver more inclusive, effective, and innovative services are better placed to rebuild public trust, enhance legitimacy, and accelerate progress toward the 2030 Agenda.

Effective public institutions and inclusive service delivery are crucial to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS) and Agenda 2063: the Africa we want. Without effective, accountable, and inclusive public service delivery, progress across the SDGs and other development frameworks will remain limited. Indeed, all 17 SDGs contain elements related to public service delivery: 59 of the 169 targets (35%) and 66 of the 230 indicators (29%) require specific public services to be delivered by the public sector. ABAS underscores the importance of effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions, in achieving safe, healthy, and prosperous societies. In particular, the importance of boosting State capacity in public sector is underscored, as a means to enhance transparency and inclusivity. Electronic government, or E-government and digital solutions are highlighted as a means for overcoming accessibility, scale, and dispersion of the population in Small Island Developing States. Moonshot 3 of Agenda 2063 equally embraces responsive public institutions as the cornerstone for accelerating the implementation of all aspirations of Agenda 2063.

Evidence shows that countries with the most inclusive institutions and services, higher trust in government, and a strong sense of community are also those with the happiest people, according to the 2024 World Happiness Report¹. Afrobarometer's 2024 findings show a general decline in trust in African governments and institutions, with only majorities trusting religious leaders, the army, and traditional leaders. Trust in political institutions like Parliament, the president, and courts has dropped significantly since 2011. Accordingly, rebuilding trust in government by advancing inclusive public service delivery and embracing a shared purpose of development and social progress is therefore of paramount importance. Since service delivery is the most visible aspect of government action for citizens, its inclusiveness and reliability are critical drivers of public trust.

¹ World Happiness report 2020, available at: <https://worldhappiness.report/ed/2020/>



Objectives

The solutions session will offer a platform for sharing innovative experiences and strategies to enhance trust in government with a focus on promoting inclusiveness and better quality and access to public services, particularly for those living in vulnerable situations.

Through a mix of presentations, peer learning interactions and discussion, the session will:

1. **Deepen understanding** of inclusiveness as one of the 11 Principles of Effective Governance and its role in rebuilding trust in government.
2. **Facilitate peer learning between countries and other partners from the North and Global South** on innovative strategies and solutions to enhance trust in government for social inclusion, including by advancing innovation in public service delivery
3. **Generate actionable outcomes**, policy messages and good practices to inform follow-up discussions at the Summit.

Format

The session will take place in person and will be structured as follows:

- **Opening session:** Framing the challenges of trust in government and the role of inclusiveness.
- **Interactive dialogue:** Peer-to-peer exchange among government officials, civil society, academia, and development partners to identify strategies to enhance trust in government and enablers of inclusive service delivery.
- **Synthesis and way forward:** Summary of key action-oriented insights and solutions for enhanced trust in government.

Expected Outputs

- A summary brief capturing key lessons, innovative practices, and policy recommendations emerging from the session.
- Dissemination of findings and key takeaways through UN DESA/DPIDG knowledge platforms.



Participants

The session will bring together:

- High-level Government representatives and policymakers
- Civil society organizations and representatives of vulnerable groups
- Academia and research institutions
- Private sector
- International organizations and development partners

