



## Capacity Development Workshop

### *“Importance and Relevance of the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training”*

*Within the framework of the 2024 IASIA Conference on  
“Alternative Service Delivery and Sustainable Societal Responsiveness”*

Bloemfontein, South Africa – 1<sup>st</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> July 2024

## CONCEPT NOTE

### Background

In 2023, 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), working in close collaboration with the International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) initiated a worldwide initiative to review and update the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training which were first approved in 2008 through a collaborative and consultative process.

The Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training, aspirational in nature, aimed at facilitating organizations in the public sector to be high performing through the highest quality of public servants. The 2008 Standards are:

- (1) Public service commitment;
- (2) Advocacy of public interest values;
- (3) Combining scholarship, practice and community service;
- (4) The faculty are central;
- (5) Inclusiveness is at the heart of the program;
- (6) A Curriculum that is purposeful and responsive;
- (7) Adequate Resources are critical;

## (8) Balancing collaboration and competition.

While the Standards are still relevant today, they do not refer to recent inter-governmental agreements and to the insights from the work undertaken by UN DESA/DPIDG and IASIA in the area of public administration education and training.

Most notably, the Standards were issued before the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was adopted by 193 UN Member States. The 2030 Agenda recognizes the importance of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all (Goal 4). It also highlights the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on the respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels. Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda specifically calls for effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels. Indeed, public institutions play a critical role in the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets.

The 2008 Standards of Excellence also do not refer to the 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development, which were developed by the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council in 2018. UN DESA also developed a Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs which is being used by schools of public administration.

Working closely with schools of public administration, institutes of public management and universities, who are responsible for training public servants, is critical to mainstreaming the SDGs into their curricula. To ensure that the review process is as inclusive as possible, UN DESA and IASIA established a global Task Force, since March 2023, composed of 30 academics and practitioners from around the world as well as CEPA members, and representatives of international and regional organizations.

Several regional online workshops were held to gather inputs and views on how to review and/or update the Standards. The online consultations were open to all schools and institutes of public administration, networks, academia and representatives of international, regional and national organizations were invited to be part of the initiative.

Besides the regional workshops, UN DESA in collaboration with IASIA, developed several other communication materials to both disseminate the initiative and collect data. These include flyers in five languages (Arabic, English, French, Portuguese, and Spanish), as well as a survey (also available in five languages) which allows practitioners and academics of public administration around the world to provide their inputs on how the Standards should be reviewed and/or updated.

As of January 2024, over 1,000 people have participated in this process with 735 people in regional workshops. The proposed capacity development workshop, taking place within the framework of the IASIA annual conference, will provide an opportunity to include more voices in the review and update process, as well as to provide opportunities to discuss how the SDGs can be mainstreamed – through the updated Standards of Excellence in Public Administration Education and Training – into the curriculum of their institutions and schools thus supporting the development of a public sector workforce aware of the important role it plays in the implementation of the SDGs.

## Objectives

The 2030 Agenda highlights the need to build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels, in line with Goal 16. General Assembly resolution 60/34 of 17 March 2006 also emphasized “the need to improve the efficiency, transparency and accountability of public administration”. Strong public institutions and efficient service delivery are crucial to the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Thus, the importance of building transparent, accountable, innovative, and citizen-oriented institutions to accomplish sustainable development. DPIDG’s mission is to advance effective, accountable, and inclusive governance and public institutions for sustainable development.

The ever important and essential role of government in establishing boundaries and setting the rules of society call upon public administration professionals in the field to provide guidance to schools, programs, and individuals working or teaching in public administration. The revision of the standards of excellence is especially valuable in terms of providing aspirational goals and standards for programs in the fields throughout the world, and particularly programs that are in countries where the quality of governance is not as strong as it might be in other places.

Governance at all levels must be fit for the conditions and challenges of our times and our future. Institutions have to be able to address shortfalls in SDG achievement, to deal with uncertainties and rapid change including new technologies, to build more resilient societies, and to address inequalities and vulnerabilities. In this period of doubt, uncertainties, and division, governance also has the imperative of generating trust and strengthening social contracts. Governments at all levels, citizens, civil society, academia, and other actors joined forces to design and implement effective and innovative practices to enhance governance during the pandemic and these need to inform changes going forward.

The capacity development workshop aims to:

1. Enhance capacities of the public administration schools and institutes of training to strengthen public institutions and public services delivery to support the implementation of the SDGs through a better understanding and use of the updated and reviewed Standards of Excellence in Public Administration Education and Training.
2. Enhance the understanding of the fundamental role that institutes and schools of public administration have in preparing the future public sector workforce and how implementing the Standards of Excellence can support SDGs implementation.
3. Increase participants understanding on how to mainstream the SDGs and the Principles of Effective Governance into the curricula of their public administration education and training institutions.
4. Participants benefit from the opportunity to provide feedback to the review and update process thus making it even more inclusive.

## Format

The workshop will be held in person in Bloemfontein, South Africa, in the framework of the 2024 annual Conference of the IASIA, in close partnership with Free State University. It will be conducted in English. The follow-up actions, including key recommendations and summary of the discussion, will be disseminated through the UN DESA website.

## Targeted Audience

Public administration educators and trainers of schools and institutes of public administration and civil service attending the annual IASIA Conference, as well as youth participants and civil servant practitioners.

### Capacity Development Workshop: Importance and Relevance of the Standards of Excellence for Public Administration Education and Training

**Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024**

2:00 pm – 3:30 pm South Africa

8:00 am NY – 9:30 am NY

## AGENDA

<b>2:00pm to 2:10pm</b>	<b>Welcome and Objectives of the Session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mr. Juwang Zhu, Director, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), United Nations Department of Economics and Social Affairs (UNDESA).</li><li>• Dr. Najat Zarrouk, Director of Development, Knowledge Management and African Local Governments Academy (ALGA) of UCLG Africa, President, International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA), UN-CEPA member, Morocco.</li><li>• Prof. Hamid Ali, ICAPA-Steering Committee Acting Chairperson (Online).</li></ul>
<b>2:10pm to 2:30pm</b>	<b>Moderator:</b> Mr. Cesar Alfonso, Executive Secretary of IASIA.  What are the Principles for Effective Governance for Sustainable Development and how can they help improve governance, and why is it important to integrate the SDGs in the curricula of schools of public administration? Ms. Cristina A. Rodriguez-Acosta, Inter-Regional Adviser, DPIDG/UNDESA  What new capacities are needed in the public sector to achieve the SDGs? Presentation of UNDESA Framework <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ms. Adriana Alberti, Chief, Program Management &amp; Capacity Development Unit (PMCDU), DPIDG/UNDESA.</li></ul>
<b>2:30pm to 2:55pm</b>	Why is it important to have Standards of excellence in education and training on public administration? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dr. Ra'ed BenShams, Task Force Member; President of International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS)</li><li>• Prof. Ludmila Gajdosova, Task force Member; Executive Director, NISPACee.</li><li>• Dr. Jurac Nemeč, Professor, Masaryk University, Czechia.</li><li>• Dr. Rachel Emas, Task force Member; Associate Teaching Professor and Director of Master of Arts in Environmental Resource Policy, George Washington University (Online) (TBC)</li></ul>

	What are the UN DESA/IASIA Standards of Excellence in Public Administration Education and Training and how are they being updated? <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• UNDESA/IASIA</li></ul>
<b>2:55pm to 3:25pm</b>	<b>Questions/Comments from audience</b>
<b>3:25pm-3:30pm</b>	<b>Wrap up and Closing remarks by UNDESA &amp; IASIA.</b>