

Why is Anticipatory Governance and Changing Mindsets Key to Addressing Current and Future Challenges?

Dr. Adriana Alberti, Chief, PMCDU, DPIDG, UN DESA

Overview of the Presentation

1

Highlights current governance challenges

2

Defines anticipatory governance and key agreements for change

3

Identifies why mindset change is needed

4

Examines five mindset shifts needed for anticipatory governance

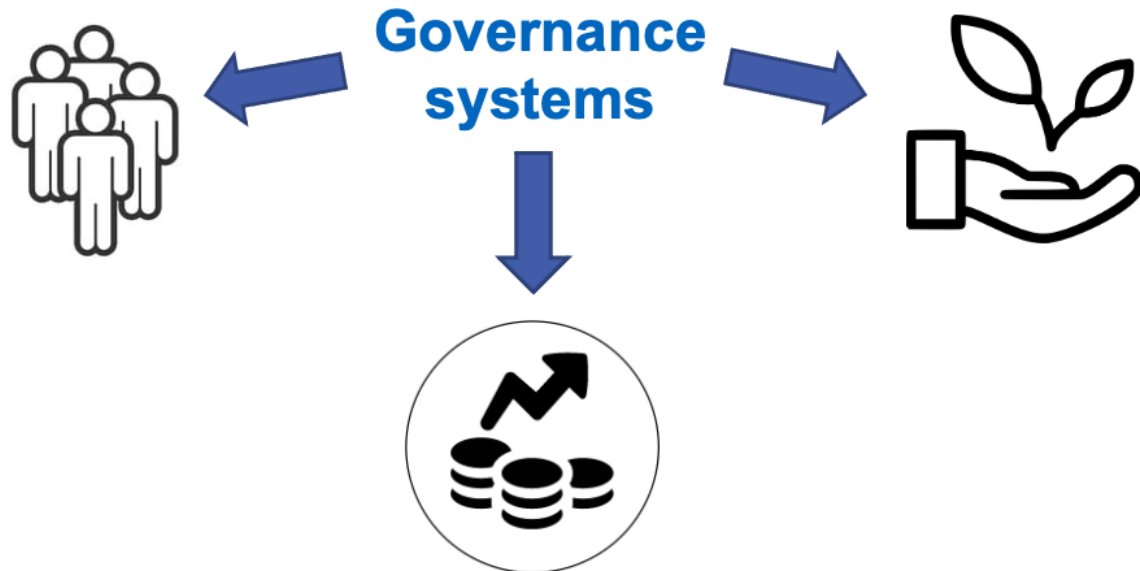
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Key takeaways



1. Why governance matters

Governance: plays a crucial role in determining the well-being of people and societies.



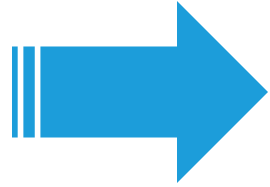
Global Governance

- Framework of multilateralism that
- Enables cooperation to
- Manage global challenges, including conflicts

National and Subnational Governance

- Provides a System of values, structures, mechanisms and processes for the interaction among the state, civil society, and private sector that helps manage economic, political, and social affairs

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Public Institutions are essential to achieve all the SDGs, especially through public service delivery.





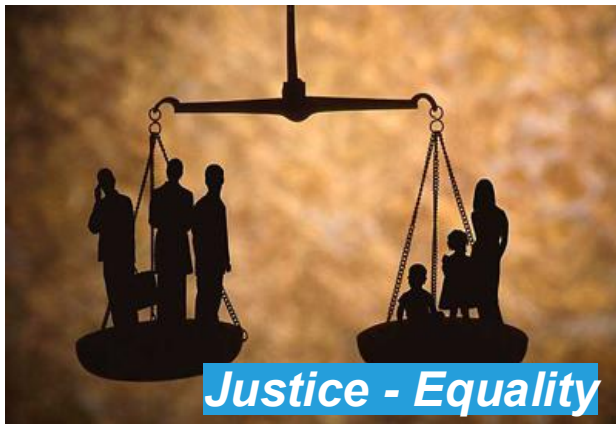
**Efficient and inclusive
healthcare**



**Access to quality
education**



Access to water



Justice - Equality



Happiness



Public transportation



Security



**Appropriate framework
for private sector
development**



**Environmental
Protection**

Why governance must adapt in a VUCA world

Current governance systems are facing many challenges

Growing number of complex international issues → Inability of governments to cope



*Today, we are at an inflection point for **governance systems at all levels**, fomented by a perceived disconnect between societal problems and the **capacity** of current governance systems to address them.*

What has changed?

We now live in an increasingly VUCA world resulting in multiple crises that are the manifestation of, and contributors to, inadequate governance systems.

World Context:

- **Volatile** due to existential crises, such as climate change, geopolitical tensions, economic instability, technological disruptions, etc.
- **Uncertain** due to emerging, unpredictable crises (pandemics, migration, climate, etc.)
- **Complex** with multiple crises, no ready-made solutions, and little margin for response
- **Ambiguous** including difficulty to agree on definitions of the problems and root causes and appropriate responses









PACT FOR THE FUTURE

2. Key Agreements and Frameworks for Change

- The Pact for the Future, which was agreed upon by United Nations Member States in **2024** during the **Summit of the Future**.
- It highlights the need for **anticipatory governance**, where decision-makers utilize **foresight** methodologies to predict and prepare for future challenges and opportunities.



Pact for the Future

ACTION 24

The Pact calls for “leveraging science, data, statistics, and strategic foresight to ensure long-term thinking and planning, and to develop and implement sustainable practices and the institutional reforms necessary for evidence-based decision-making, while making governance more anticipatory, adaptive, and responsive to future opportunities, risks, and challenges”.





Pact for the Future

ACTION 27

Emphasizes “**investing in capacity** to better prepare for and respond to future global shocks, crises, and challenges, and using **evidence-based planning and foresight** to avoid and mitigate risks, ensuring that the poorest and most vulnerable do not bear disproportionate costs and burdens of mitigation, adaptation, restoration, and resilience-building”.

ACTION 29

It calls for “**enhancing cooperation with stakeholders**, including civil society, academia, the scientific and technological community, and the private sector, and encouraging intergenerational partnerships by promoting a **whole-of-society approach** to share best practices and develop **innovative, long-term, and forward-thinking ideas** to safeguard the needs and interests of future generations”.

Global Digital Compact

Annexed to the Pact for the Future, the **Global Digital Compact** aims to advance to an open, free, secure and human-centered digital future for all, one that is anchored in **universal human rights** and that enables the attainment of the **Sustainable Development Goals**.

The purpose is to establish an **inclusive global framework**, essential for multi-stakeholder action required to overcome digital, data and innovation divides.

It highlights the importance of digital literacy, skills and capacities; digital public goods and digital public infrastructure and the key role of Governments in advancing towards the Common Agenda and a digital future for all.

Declaration on Future Generations

Annexed to the Pact for the Future, the **Declaration on Future Generations** aims to ensure that present generations act with responsibility towards **safeguarding the needs and interests of future generations** and to promote intergenerational solidarity, justice and equity.

It recognizes **children and youth** as agents of change and the need for intergenerational dialogue and engagement.

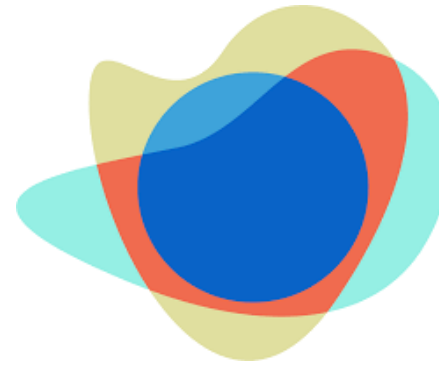
It highlights the importance of Human Rights, International law, peace and sustainability, leaving no-one behind.

Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS)

The SIDS Story

The 10-year Agenda recognizes that the SIDS remain a special case for sustainable development given their unique vulnerabilities.

“SIDS are facing the unrelenting and compounding impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, pollution, disasters and natural hazards, health and other social related challenges and economic vulnerabilities, as well as the progressive deterioration in their ability to withstand external shocks and enhance their resilience.”



4TH INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE ON
**Small Island
Developing States**
27-30 MAY, 2024
ST. JOHN'S, ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA



According to the **Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS)**, SIDS want to:

1. Build resilient economies
2. Foster safe, healthy and prosperous societies
3. Have a secure future
4. Ensure environmental protection and planetary sustainability



DESA

Division For Public Institutions and Digital Government

ABAS Recommendations to Strengthen Governance and Institutional Capacities

It outlines several key recommendations to strengthen governance, public services, and institutional capacity in Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

1. Promoting Good Governance and Inclusive Institutions
2. Enhancing Public Services and Social Protection
3. Building Institutional and Technical Capacity
4. Strengthening Data Infrastructure and Digitalization
5. Encouraging Civic Participation and Access to Information
6. Establishing Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks

It emphasizes the importance of anticipating risks and future shocks to enhance resilience and sustainable development in SIDS.

Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development

Effectiveness

- » Competence
- » Sound policymaking
- » Collaboration

Accountability

- » Integrity
- » Transparency
- » Independent oversight

Inclusiveness

- » Leaving no one behind
- » Non-discrimination
- » Participation
- » Subsidiarity
- » Intergenerational equity



Principles of effective governance for sustainable development

What are they for?

- » Building strong institutions at all levels
- » Serving as a reference point that brings together relevant standards and technical guidelines
- » Informing public sector reform initiatives for the SDGs

Where do they come from?

- » Developed by CEPA specifically for SDG implementation
- » Endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council
- » Based on United Nations agreements

How can countries benefit from them?

- » As an analytical framework in policy formulation
- » As a guide in assessing institutional capacities, processes and culture
- » As a foundation of SDG awareness raising and training initiatives

CEPA >> **Committee of Experts on Public Administration**
CEPA is an expert body of the United Nations that studies and makes recommendations to improve governance and public administration structures and processes for development.

<https://publicadministration.un.org>

dpidg@un.org

#UNCEPA



What are the Strategies to operationalize the principles of effective governance?

EFFECTIVENESS			ACCOUNTABILITY		
COMPETENCE --Promotion of a professional public sector workforce --Strategic human resources management --Leadership development, training of civil servants --Performance management --Results-based management --Financial management and control --Efficient and fair revenue administration --Investment in e-government	SOUND POLICY-MAKING --Strategic planning and foresight --Regulatory impact analysis --Promotion of coherent policymaking --Strengthening national statistical systems --Monitoring & evaluation systems --Science-policy interface --Risk management frameworks --Data sharing	COLLABORATION --Centre of government coordination under Head of State / Government --Collaboration, coordination, integration, dialogue across levels of government, functional areas --Raising awareness on SDGs --Network-based governance --Multi-stakeholder partnerships	ACCOUNTABILITY --Promotion of anti-corruption policies, practices and bodies --Codes of conduct for public officials --Competitive public procurement --Elimination of bribery, influence trading --Conflict of interest policies --Whistle-blower protection --Provision of adequate remuneration and equitable pay scales for public servants	TRANSPARENCY --Proactive disclosure of information --Budget transparency --Open government data --Registries of beneficial ownership --Lobby registries	INDEPENDENT OVERSIGHT --Promotion of the independence of regulatory agencies --Arrangements for review of administrative decisions by courts or other bodies --Independent audit --Respect for legality
INCLUSIVENESS					
LEAVING NO ONE BEHIND --Promotion of equitable fiscal and monetary policy --Promotion of social equity --Data disaggregation --Systematic follow-up and review	NON-DISCRIMINATION --Promotion of public sector workforce diversity --Prohibition of discrimination in public service delivery --Multilingual service delivery --Accessibility standards --Cultural audit of institutions --Universal birth registration --Gender-responsive budgeting	PARTICIPATION --Free and fair elections --Regulatory process of public consultation --Multi-stakeholder forums --Participatory budgeting --Community-driven development	SUBSIDIARITY --Fiscal federalism --Strengthening urban governance --Strengthening municipal finance and local finance systems --Enhancement of local capacity for prevention, adaptation and mitigation of external shocks	INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY --Multilevel governance --Sustainable development impact assessment --Long-term public debt management --Long-term territorial planning and spatial development --Ecosystem management	<p><i>For governments to be effective, they must embrace sound policymaking. One of the strategies to achieve this is strategic planning and foresight.</i></p> <p>For more information, please visit: booklet.pdf (un.org)</p>



3. What is anticipatory governance?

Anticipatory governance is a system of decision-making that proactively prepares for future challenges, risks, and opportunities by integrating foresight, scenario planning, early warning, and adaptive policymaking into public institutions and governance processes.

Key Components:

- **Foresight and Futures Thinking** – using tools like horizon scanning and scenario development to identify emerging trends and potential disruptions.
- **Early Warning and Monitoring** – detecting early signs of crises or systemic risks through data and analytics.
- **Adaptive Planning** – developing flexible strategies and policies that can evolve as conditions change.
- **Participatory Engagement** – involving diverse stakeholders (including youth, indigenous communities, and civil society) in shaping future-oriented policies.
- **Coordination and Integration** – aligning across sectors and governance levels to manage complexity and uncertainty effectively through **systems thinking**.

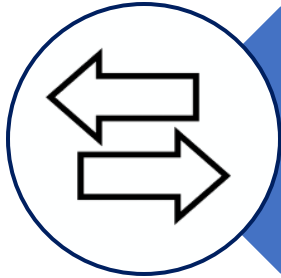
Goal: To make governance more resilient, inclusive, and responsive by enabling institutions to act before problems become crises and to seize opportunities.

Strategic Foresight



Strategic foresight is a systematic approach to anticipating and preparing for future challenges and opportunities. It involves analyzing trends, uncertainties, and emerging issues to inform decision-making and strategic planning.

Foresight is a tool to shape—not predict—the future



Deeper understanding of the critical drivers of change that will influence governance outcomes



Identifying the needs and aspirations of current and future generations



Understanding how different governance models can address the new challenges and aspirations

Case Study – Fiji’s Foresight for Climate Resilience

Context: Fiji is highly vulnerable to climate shocks like cyclones and rising sea levels.

Foresight Initiative:

- Partnered with the UN to conduct futures thinking and scenario planning workshops.
- Trained government officials to identify trends, imagine scenarios, and plan adaptive strategies.

Impact:

- Informed Fiji’s National Development Plan and climate adaptation strategies.
- Improved inter-ministerial coordination and embedded long-term thinking.

Lesson: Strategic foresight helped shift from crisis response to resilience planning.

Why Anticipatory Governance Requires Changing Mindsets

Anticipatory Governance = A New Way of Thinking

It’s not just a new set of tools—it’s a **new mindset** for how we govern in an age of complexity, risk, and rapid change.

“We cannot solve tomorrow’s problems with yesterday’s thinking.”

Key Mindset Shifts Needed:

From...	To...	Why it Matters
Reactive response	Proactive foresight	Anticipates risks before they become crises
Short-term focus	Long-term planning	Builds policies with future generations in mind
Policy silos	Systems thinking	Addresses complex, cross-cutting challenges
Technocratic control	Inclusive participation	Builds legitimacy and leverages diverse knowledge
Rigid procedures	Adaptive strategies	Responds effectively to uncertainty and change



Key Takeaways

1

Governance Systems Must Be Adaptive and Evolve to meet 21st-century challenges → Flexible strategies, diverse stakeholder engagement, and co-creation are needed to respond to uncertainty and complexity.

2

Anticipatory governance enables forward-thinking responses → Governments can take action early—before problems become crises—by using tools like foresight, data analysis, and scenario planning to prepare for future risks and opportunities.

3

Mindset shifts are central to public sector transformation → Anticipatory governance requires shifting from reactive, short-term, and siloed approaches to proactive, long-term, innovative and integrated strategies.

4

Strategic Foresight Enables Better Decision-Making and Planning → By analyzing trends, identifying risks, and envisioning futures, foresight helps shape more resilient and informed governance. Engaging people in collective visioning of the future can help to shape the governance of the future.

5

SIDS Need to Continue Building Institutional Capacity for Resilience → Through applying strategic foresight, data, digital infrastructure, and participatory processes, small island developing states can better anticipate and respond to future shocks.

