



2024 UN PUBLIC SERVICE FORUM AND AWARDS CEREMONY

Workshop 2

Young Public Servants: Engaging young people for a more innovative, effective, and future ready public service

24- 26 June 2024

Incheon, Republic of Korea

REPORT

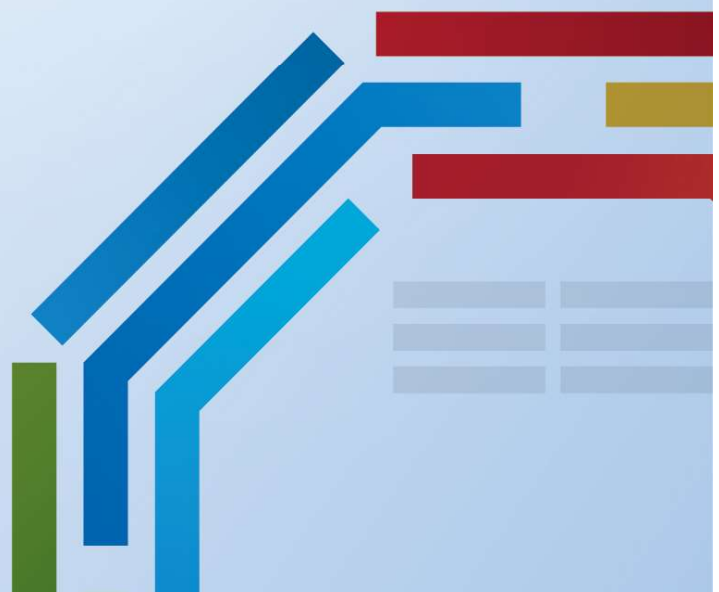


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Workshop 2 participants. Photo credit: UN DESA

Introduction

The 2024 United Nations Public Service Forum took place in Incheon, Republic of Korea from 24-26 June 2024, under the theme ‘Fostering Innovation amid Global Challenges: A Public Sector Perspective’.

The Forum was comprised of a series of workshops where various topics related to the overall theme were explored. Workshop 2 explored how to better engage young people in public service and focused on how young public servants’ capacity for innovation, skills and talents can be fostered and leveraged for a more effective and future ready public sector.

Context: Young people and the public service

In 2020, the global youth population (aged 15 to 24) totalled 1.20 billion people, or close to 16% of the world’s population¹. While this proportion is expected to slightly decrease over the coming decades, the figures hide widely varying regional realities. While some countries are experiencing declining and rapidly ageing populations, others, particularly those in the Africa region, are grappling with the realities of steady or increasing youth populations.

Reliable data on the share of young people in government, and public administration in particular, is difficult to come by. But where data does exist, the signs are that the proportion of young people in all forms of government remains low. For instance, the average share of young public servants aged 34 and under in central public administrations of OECD countries sits at 18%². In the US,

¹ United Nations World Youth Report 2020, pg. 40, <https://social.desa.un.org/sites/default/files/publications/2023-08/2020-World-Youth-Report.pdf>

² Governance for Youth, Trust and Intergenerational Justice: Fit for All Generations? <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/1a587081-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/1a587081-en>

only 7% of permanent public servants at the federal level are under the age of 30, compared to close to 20% in the private sector.³

There are many reasons behind such low representation, including budget cuts that limit the hiring of new employees and an inability of the public sector to compete with the private sector in job attractiveness, flexibility, and salaries. The COVID-19 pandemic brought in flexible work arrangements across many sectors and industries, including the public sector. However, return to 'business as usual' working methods and a failure of the public sector to pivot to more permanent flexible arrangements and innovations can act as a deterrent for younger recruits who may favour more flexible work schedules in other sectors.

When young people do enter the public service, they often start at the bottom of the ladder, their skills and talents being under-utilised until they reach seniority in both time served and age. Young public servants are often relegated to rudimentary tasks, excluded from decision-making, and can often face hierarchical barriers to taking the lead on innovative ideas and projects. This can sit in sharp contrast to careers in the private sector, particularly the tech industry, where young talent and ideas are lionised. As such, in particular for more motivated and creatively minded young people, a career in the public service can often be regarded as stifling, with an employer ill-equipped to foster the career aspirations and talents of its younger employees.

In many countries too, governments suffer from a bad image amongst young people. Interlocking social, economic, and political crises, including high levels of youth un- and under-employment, rising inequality, inflation and increasing living costs, coupled with concerns about government inaction on social and environmental matters, amongst other issues, have led many young people to doubt the effectiveness of, and trust in, government and, in turn, dismiss a life of public service.

The need to engage more young people for a future ready public service

As the world struggles with these increasingly volatile conditions, engaging young people in government is more crucial than ever. Not only does doing so help foster an active and engaged citizenry, for now and the future, but it also allows public administrations to exploit the vastly untapped resource of youth talent, skills, insights, and capacity to innovate, particularly, but not only, in the technological realm.

Through working to attract, hire and retain young and diverse talent, governments can better position themselves to tackle interlocking challenges from the local to global levels, now and in the future. As older public servants retire and hiring managers seek to fill vacant posts, rolling opportunities arise to regularly assess and take stock of the skills, talents and innovations needed for the public sector to meet these challenges and to develop the agility, flexibility and innovation needed to be future ready.

The public sector possesses increasingly unique strengths and advantages that can be used to attract more talented young people to its ranks. In today's precarious 'gig-economy'⁴ era,

³ <https://ourpublicservice.org/blog/redesigned-gogovernment-org-and-why-we-need-more-young-people-in-government/>

⁴ The gig-economy refers to a labor market characterized by the prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs.

temporary contracts, job insecurity and a lack of benefits have become the norm for many young people seeking employment. In this respect, the public sector has the edge over the private sector in terms of providing job security, paid leave, and social security benefits: entitlements which have become more highly coveted since the COVID-19 pandemic, which laid bare the vulnerabilities young gig-economy workers face.

In addition, while political apathy is rife amongst younger generations⁵, young people's engagement in civic and community life is robust, including both on and offline⁶. The public service, based on the core values of service to others, integrity, and accountability can offer young people meaningful and purposeful employment aligned with their personal values. Better showcasing the values, innovation and responsiveness of the public service to pressing development challenges from the local to the global level can speak to how young people engage in causes they care about and increase the attractiveness of the public service.

As public administrations look to the future and work to transform to meet current and future challenges, it is crucial that they adapt so that they are more attractive to young employees. This requires dynamic workforce planning with modernised recruitment processes, flexible workplace arrangements, attractive benefits, job security, and importantly, investment in and strategic use of young public servants' talents, skills, and innovations.

Workshop focus and structure

With the above context in mind, the workshop brought together a range of young public servants, government officials, representatives of schools of public administration, academics and other experts to look at how to better engage young people in a life of public service. The workshop was comprised of four core substantive sessions as follows:

- Session 1: The young public servant in context: Understanding the challenges, barriers, and opportunities young public servants face
- Session 2: Attracting and recruiting young public servants for a future ready public service
- Session 3: Retaining young public servants through an innovative and flexible public administration
- Session 4: Fostering dynamic leadership at all levels

The workshop was facilitated and moderated by **Ms. Elizabeth Niland**, Governance and Public Administration Officer, Public Service Innovation Branch, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), while,

⁵ United Nations World Youth Report 2016 'Youth Civic Engagement', Chapter 3, Political Engagement, https://www.un.org/development/desa/youth/wp-content/uploads/sites/21/2018/12/un_world_youth_report_youth_civic_engagement.pdf

⁶ Ibid, Chapter 4, Community Engagement

Ms. Alexa Iachelli, Communications Team Lead, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada, moderated session four on 'dynamic leadership at all levels'.

Ms. Alexa Iachelli served as the workshop rapporteur on day one, while **Ms. Julie Muia**, Program Manager, African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) served as the rapporteur on day two of the workshop.

Biographies of each of the speakers can be found in annex 2.

A detailed report of the workshop is set out below.

Session 1: The young public servant in context: Understanding the challenges, barriers, and opportunities young public servants face

Young public servants can face a range of challenges early in their careers, including being provided limited opportunities for participation in process and product innovation and decision-making, as well as few opportunities for leadership and growth. In countries where hierarchy in the public service plays a dominant role, younger public servants may often be relegated to work that does not fully utilise their skills, expertise, ingenuity, and capacity for innovation. This session discussed some of the key challenges faced by young public servants in their work, and how they relate to structural features of public institutions (including legal and regulatory frameworks and human resource policies, and institutional approaches to innovation). The session also discussed why and how more young people should and can be attracted to the public service and the necessity of their active engagement in driving transformation and innovation in the public sector.

Presenters:

- **Ms. Gcino Mlaba**, Director, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) National Secretariat; Vice President of the African Association for Public Administration and Management's (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for Southern Africa, South Africa.
- **Ms. Dominique Baquero**, General Manager, Municipal Public Company for Economic Development of Cuenca, Ecuador
- **Ms. Mariami Bregadze**, Head of International Relations Unit, Ministry of Justice, Georgia

Summary of Presentations

Ms. Gcino Mlaba, Director, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) National Secretariat; Vice President of the African Association for Public Administration and Management's (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for Southern Africa, South Africa.

Ms. Mlaba provided a presentation on the challenges and opportunities facing young public servants in the Africa region, with a focus on South Africa. She noted that most African countries,

including the African Union, define 'youth' as aged 15 to 35 years. 70% of the Sub-Saharan population is under the age of 30, making it the largest youth population in the world. This demographic is vital for driving economic growth and stability. However, many young people face social exclusion and limited opportunities, which impairs their ability to shape their own futures. This presents a significant challenge for the continent and its large youth population.

Ms. Mlaba focused on the case of South Africa where she noted that young people wishing to join the public service encounter several common obstacles. These include restrictive policies which can create barriers to entry and age discrimination, which can lead to a preference for older workers, sidelining younger talent. She explained that bureaucratic and rigid structures can serve to stifle innovation and creativity, making it difficult for young professionals to thrive. Additionally, Ms. Mlaba noted that many public institutions lack effective human resource strategies designed to support young professionals.

Ms. Mlaba focused on opportunities for improvement, guided by the "Our Future – Make it Work", South Africa's national development plan. Key strategies include revising outdated policies to promote youth inclusion, fostering visionary leadership that encourages forward-thinking management, and establishing structured mentorship programs to support young public servants. She explained that investing in flexible, agile departmental structures can enhance talent management and foster innovation, while training and technological development can improve the workplace experience and productivity.

Finally, Ms. Mlaba provided an overview of the Young Professionals Network (YPN) of the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), which serves as a platform for young public servants in Africa to connect, share ideas, and amplify their voices within AAPAM and promote the importance and the role of young public servants across Africa.

Ms. Dominique Baquero, General Manager, Municipal Public Company for Economic Development of Cuenca, Ecuador

Ms. Baquero provided an overview of the issues facing young people joining the public service in Latin America, with a focus on Ecuador. She noted that in Ecuador young people are seen as critical drivers of innovation and public sector growth, with 26% of the population consisting of youth, and this figure rising to 33% in cities like Cuenca.

She noted that young people play an essential role in shaping the future of global governance and policymaking. Recognizing this potential, Ecuador has focused on integrating its young population into the public service to harness their creativity and fresh perspectives.

However, she furthered that despite this impetus, the path for young people into Ecuador's public sector is not without challenges. Recruitment processes are highly competitive, often hindered by bureaucratic hurdles that can be discouraging for young people. Once in the system, many young professionals face a lack of mentorship programmes and professional development opportunities, leaving their talents underutilized. Furthermore, she noted that rigid hierarchies within public institutions can stifle innovation, making it difficult for young public servants to implement new ideas or take leadership roles.

To address these challenges, Ecuador has taken several steps. One key initiative is a policy introduced by the Cuenca mayor that mandates at least 10% of public servants be under the age of 35. This policy has not only opened doors for young people to join the public sector but also ensured that their voices and ideas are represented at all levels of government. Additionally, the government has created forums and discussions specifically designed for young people to share their innovative ideas and contribute to public service development.

Beyond recruitment, Ms. Baquero explained that Ecuador is also investing in strategies aimed at improving retention and development within the public sector. Training and professional development programmes are being rolled out to equip young public servants with the skills they need to grow in their careers, while inclusion and diversity policies have been implemented to ensure that young professionals from all backgrounds are given equal opportunities. The government is also leveraging emerging technologies to streamline public administration processes, creating an environment where young talent can contribute to modernizing the public sector.

In addition to these national strategies, initiatives are being promoted to encourage youth participation at the local level, which aim to provide a platform for young people to directly contribute to their communities.

While challenges remain, Ms. Baquero noted that Ecuador is making significant strides in creating a more inclusive and dynamic public sector where young people are involved in shaping the country's future.

Ms. Mariami Bregadze, Head of International Relations Unit, Ministry of Justice, Georgia

Ms. Bregadze provided a presentation on the work of the government of Georgia to better attract and engage young people in the public service. Ms. Bregadze noted that in Georgia, the public service is taking strategic steps to engage and empower its young workforce through a comprehensive 'Continued Learning Course'. This initiative is designed to equip young public servants with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in their roles and begins with a mandatory 5-day orientation course for all new public servants, providing a foundation in public sector responsibilities and expectations. Following this, participants have access to specialized training and scholarship programmes, tailored to both graduates and undergraduates, which are designed to foster their professional growth and development.

Ms. Bregadze noted that the government's commitment to increasing the number of young people in the public service is evident in the numbers. A recent survey showed that 42% of young people in Georgia expressed a willingness to work in the public sector versus 37% in the private sector. Furthermore, 43% of civil servants in the country are under the age of 35, reflective of Georgia's attempts to attract and retain young talent. The Ministry of Justice alone has retrained over 1,000 employees under the age of 25, demonstrating a proactive approach to developing the talents of the next generation. Additionally, all internships within the public sector are paid and recognized as professional experience, making it easier for young people to build their careers and transition into permanent roles.

One of the challenges Georgia faces is youth 'brain drain', the outflow of qualified young professionals to other sectors. To combat this, the government has introduced a 10% annual

salary increase for all public servants, helping to make public service a more competitive and attractive career path.

Ms. Bregadze stressed that young people in Georgia are catalysts for change in the public sector. By challenging the status quo, generating innovations, and fostering collaboration, they play a pivotal role in modernizing public administration. On this note, it was explained that the government's youth strategy is multifaceted, focusing on providing young employees with information on labor rights and the benefits of public service, offering internships and mentoring programs to encourage skill development, and creating a clear legal framework for promotions and career advancement.

Through a combination of education, mentorship, and competitive incentives, Georgia is positioning its young workforce to lead the future of public service, ensuring that the country remains adaptable, innovative, and responsive to the challenges ahead.

Summary of group discussion

Following the presentations, a discussion with all workshop participants took place. A summary of the discussion is set out below.

- The presence of a large youth workforce in public service can bring significant benefits, as seen in Georgia, where the government has successfully attracted young people by offering competitive salaries and improved career prospects. These incentives have made public service an appealing career choice, with young recruits finding it more attractive compared to other sectors. However, while Georgia demonstrates the positive impact of youth engagement in government roles, other countries face hurdles in promoting and advancing young talent within the public sector.
- In Canada, young public servants often encounter a slow and cumbersome promotion process. This can take up to 18 months and involves multiple stages of testing, exams, and interviews, which creates frustration among those eager to advance their careers.
- Ecuador, on the other hand, has a highly competitive public service system. Once young people are hired, they typically remain in the system for life, with structured pathways for career progression. While this offers stability, it can also limit the fluidity and innovation that young professionals might bring.
- In South Africa, it was remarked that promotions are often based on years of experience rather than merit, making it challenging for younger employees to move up the ladder, especially those with fresh ideas and the motivation to lead. This rigid structure has led to calls for a review of minimum requirements for promotions to create a more dynamic and youthful leadership within public service.
- Declining trust in public institutions was also identified as a significant factor affecting youth interest in government careers.

- Countries like the Republic of Korea have worked to enhance the appeal of public service by streamlining the entry process and offering attractive benefits. Benefits like competitive salaries, family leave, flexible working hours, and the option to work from home have been making the public service a more desirable option for a younger workforce, who value work-life balance and job security.
- The importance of 'buy in' from existing leaders in the public sector was also highlighted. It was noted that in Ghana job security and career progression are heavily dependent on the involvement and support of senior leaders. Without this support, young public servants face significant challenges in advancing their careers, particularly compared to their peers in the private sector. This gap highlights the need for more structured mentorship and engagement from senior officials to help young employees grow and succeed in public service roles.
- The importance of creating safe and formal channels for young public servants to voice their concerns within the public sector was also stressed. In many countries, young civil servants lack the space to share complaints or raise issues without fear of reprisal. Establishing clear communication channels and ensuring that responses are given without endangering careers is critical to fostering a more inclusive and supportive environment for the next generation of public service leaders.

Key Messages of Session One

- **Better promote the values of the public service:** It is essential to instill a sense of pride and purpose in representing the government. By positioning public service as a prestigious and meaningful career path, young people will be more inclined to consider it as a viable option.
- **Offer attractive salary and benefits:** Competitive wages, clear promotion opportunities, and broader skill development programs will help attract and retain talented young professionals.
- **Ease regulations and qualification requirements:** Simplifying entry into public service will open doors for more young talent and reduce unnecessary barriers.
- **Create youth-specific programmes:** Tailored initiatives like internships, mentorship schemes, and leadership development programs are essential to help young people build their careers and feel supported within the public sector.
- **Shift perceptions among supervisors and senior officials:** It is crucial to foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment by encouraging senior leaders to recognize and value the contributions of young public servants. This cultural shift will help young employees feel empowered and motivated to contribute to the government's success.

Session 2: Attracting and recruiting young public servants for a future ready public service

As public administrations work to replace those retiring, they are presented with a continuous opportunity to take stock of the skills (or lack thereof) within the public sector and actively hire young public servants with the expertise needed to meet the current and future demands of public administrations. The first step to increasing the number and quality of young public servants is attracting and recruiting the right people. Better showcasing the unique advantages, values and work of the public service is critical to increasing its appeal and relevance to young people.

However, in many cases, governments' hiring processes are not designed for bringing in new talent. From rigid application procedures to stringent academic requirements, many hiring processes are not meeting young people where they are at – which is often online. Mobile device-based applications and use of social media platforms to advertise and promote careers in the public service, amongst other outreach methods, represent a shift away from traditional hiring approaches, which potentially serves to reach not only more young people, but young people with a greater diversity of skills and backgrounds.

In a rapidly changing technological landscape, skills-based hiring is also a way to ensure that young people with non-traditional academic backgrounds have a gateway to the public service, which may help ensure a more dynamic mix of competencies, expertise, and skills to reflect the changing demands on the public sector. This session explored concrete actions, initiatives and strategies that have been implemented to better attract and recruit young people to the public service.

Presenters:

- **Ms. Ciata Stevens d'Almeida**, Executive Director of the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP), Liberia and Vice President for the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for West Africa.
- **Ms. Lamia El Moubayed**, Vice Chair, UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), and steering committee member of 'Youth4Governance', Lebanon
- **Ms. Barbara Amaro**, Executive Secretary of the General Secretariat, Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD), Spain

Summary of Presentations

Ms. Ciata Stevens d'Almeida, Executive Director of the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP), Liberia and Vice President for the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for West Africa.

Ms. Stevens d'Almeida focused her presentation on young people and the public service in post-conflict Liberia. The aftermath of 14 years of civil war (which ended in 2003) left a profound impact on the nation, with a significant portion of the population—14%— having fled the country.

Many young Liberians grew up without regular schooling, resulting in a stark lack of qualified youth to contribute to public service. This situation was further compounded by widespread patronage after the war, which resulted in the public service hiring unqualified former fighters.

To combat these challenges, Liberia embraced a method of 'intentional leadership' focused on professionalizing the recruitment process and seeking out qualified people to join the service. In this context in 2009, the government launched the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP), which aimed to attract and nurture young talent. The initiative established a strategic mandate centered on meritocratic recruitment, mentorship, and career development support, while also engaging alumni to foster a sense of community and continuity.

Ms. Stevens d'Almeida noted that over 245 young professionals have been recruited with a retention rate of 76%, achieving near gender parity with 52.9% male and 47.1% female participants. The programme has also shown to be well embedded in the public service, having survived through two political transitions, demonstrating its neutrality, resilience and effectiveness.

It was noted that, inspired by Liberia's success, other countries—such as Ghana, Kenya, and Malawi—are now replicating the PYPP model in Africa. Upcoming initiatives in Liberia include decentralization efforts, the Future Home Project, and in-service training programs for young civil servants. These initiatives are designed to attract and retain young talent through intentional leadership, career development, mentoring, and innovative recruitment processes.

Ms. Stevens d'Almeida noted that Liberia has not only worked on rebuilding its public service after a civil war, but also on empowering a new generation of leaders, ensuring a brighter future for the country.

Ms. Lamia El Moubayed, Vice Chair, UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), and steering committee member of 'Youth4Governance', Lebanon

Ms. El Moubayed provided a presentation on how Lebanon's public administration has been working to better attract and recruit young people to its ranks. She noted that since 1975, the country has been plagued by recurrent crises, leading to a struggling economy and a pervasive desire among young people to leave. As a result, Lebanon has faced significant challenges in retaining its youth and encouraging them to join the public service.

To counter these trends, Lebanon has implemented initiatives, such as the 'youth4governance' initiative, which was aimed at making public service more appealing and fostering a culture of civic engagement amongst youth. These programmes promote the idea of serving the public good, while also developing strategies to address the fragility and crises that have hindered the country's progress.

To build a sustainable future in public service, it is crucial to invest in youth early on by creating initiatives that attract them to the state and nurture a culture of public service. Key strategies include enhancing transparency in public spending and management, providing young people with role models, and demystifying the notion of corruption in public service. Programs like "Dictée des Finances" aim to bring government operations closer to citizens, while outreach at university fairs and the development of self-guided learning tools promote civic engagement. Additionally, building robust internship programs and establishing comprehensive induction initiatives for new recruits can foster a sense of belonging and purpose.

She noted that while these programmes are important, political instability remains a pressing concern in the region, which negatively impacts on their success and the broader desire to pursue government careers.

However, she stressed that despite the negative perceptions surrounding government and public service—both from within Lebanon and outside—it is vital to instill hope and a long-term vision for the future of public service. By prioritizing youth engagement and addressing these challenges head-on, she remarked that Lebanon can work towards a more stable and prosperous future.

Ms. Barbara Amaro, Executive Secretary of the General Secretariat, Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD), Spain

Ms. Amaro provided a presentation on young people and the public service in the Latin American region. She highlighted that while young people are uniquely positioned to drive innovation and effect disruptive change, youth unemployment in Latin America remains alarmingly high. She noted that the challenges facing young people in public service are multifaceted. Recruitment processes are often sluggish, and the scarcity of entry-level positions exacerbates the situation. Additionally, high levels of corruption contribute to a significant lack of trust in government. Low wages further deter youth from pursuing careers in public service, while the formal communication style prevalent in these institutions does not resonate with younger generations.

To tackle these issues, Ms. Amaro noted, it is essential to restore confidence in public institutions, encourage mobility between different organizations, and create a democratic, inclusive, and transparent framework within public administration that appeals to young talent. She stressed that intergenerational inclusion in the public sector is crucial, as it can enhance innovation through strategic oversight and the integration of technology, such as AI.

Ms. Amaro pointed to several initiatives that are working to improve these conditions. In Argentina, the “Fomentar Empleo” programme offers job orientation training and internships to help young people gain valuable experience. Colombia’s “Establo Joven” programme facilitates the transition of young individuals into the job market through internships in the public sector that last up to five months. Similarly, Chile’s “Prácticas” program provides internships in public entities, promoting equal opportunities. In the Dominican Republic, the “Pasantías Públicas RD” initiative offers internships without requiring prior work experience, further lowering barriers for youth engagement.

To conclude, Ms. Amaro set out recommendations to better attract and recruit young people to the public service in the region:

1. Restore citizen confidence in public institutions
2. Position public administration at the forefront of technological advancements.
3. Utilize social networks and digital tools for recruitment of young people
4. Invest in young public servants’ skills
5. Promote job mobility between institutions.
6. Actively seek out and recruit highly qualified young people

By addressing these challenges and implementing these strategies, Ms. Amaro noted that Latin America can harness the potential of its youth, transforming public service into an attractive, dynamic and innovative field.

Summary of group discussion

Following the presentations, a discussion with all workshop participants took place. A summary of the discussion is set out below.

- Transparency is essential for rebuilding trust in public institutions. To achieve this, governments must revamp their communication strategies, particularly in their engagement with young people.
- The narrative surrounding public service needs to evolve, portraying it as a desirable career choice rather than merely a job. This vision should encompass competitive salaries and a comprehensive package that includes a sense of mission, opportunities for professional growth, status, and the ability to drive change. Messaging should reflect that public service is a significant privilege, inspiring individuals to aspire to it and enhancing recruitment and retention efforts within the sector.
- Concerns about transparency and wage issues in Africa highlight the necessity of balancing these challenges with the core values of service. Addressing these challenges is vital for fostering a healthy public sector.
- Advocating for the inclusion of young people's rights in the constitution, particularly regarding employment and career advancement within government, is crucial in many developing countries. In environments where transparency is limited and competition is fierce, these rights can empower youth significantly.

Key Messages of Session Two

- **Ensure transparent and fair recruitment:** Recruitment processes must be both transparent and equitable. Leveraging digital technology can significantly enhance these processes, helping to rebuild trust in government institutions.
- **Offer pre-service learning programmes:** Before young people enter the public service, offering structured learning programmes that include capacity building, mentorship, and constructive feedback can be highly beneficial. This preparation will equip them with the skills and insights needed for effective public service.
- **Develop internship opportunities:** Implementing robust internship programmes can help attract more young people to the public sector. These programmes allow young individuals to establish connections with colleagues and gain valuable hands-on experience before officially joining the workforce.
- **Inspire a sense of service:** Ultimately, it is necessary to cultivate a desire among young people to serve their nation. This can be achieved by providing them with a clear sense of mission, enhancing their status, and creating meaningful opportunities for growth and development.

Session 3: Retaining young public servants through an innovative and flexible public administration

Attracting, training, and recruiting new public servants can be a lengthy and costly endeavour. High levels of job turnover amongst younger public servants can raise recruitment costs and lead to the loss of valuable talent and skills, in turn impacting productivity. Retention is therefore critical to an effective and efficient public service. However, young recruits can often become jaded with a public sector job when it seems out of step with the expectations they had upon recruitment. Efforts to make public service jobs more attractive to young recruits must be matched with systemic change that utilises their skills and talents as advertised.

Recently, digitalisation and Artificial Intelligence (AI) have been rapidly transforming the public sector and how public servants work. Delivery of public services, data collection, hiring processes, institutional procedures and decision-making are all becoming increasingly automated. These advances require an agile and adaptable workforce that embraces innovation and creativity and fosters an environment where curiosity, experimentation and new ideas and approaches can be explored and tested. As young people, many of whom are 'digital natives'⁷, transition into the public service, the public sector must adapt and grow in ways that recognise and leverage both the formal and informal digital skills of younger generations throughout their structures, to enhance the delivery of public services and institutional innovation.

Nurturing the careers of public servants from entry-level onwards is central to ensuring retention of talent. As well as offering competitive salaries and benefits, providing spaces for career development and mobility via different pathways and trajectories that value different skills, approaches, and expertise equally, can help ensure workforce diversity, approaches, and retention overtime.

Rethinking working methods, and structures, including through the opening of spaces for participation, collaboration, co-creation, trainings, leadership opportunities, and innovative schemes aimed at leveraging the skills and talents of young public servants, is necessary for a future ready public service that prioritises innovation and responsiveness, and safeguards against a 'brain drain' of young talent to other sectors.

Presenters:

- **Mr. Kenneth Sim**, Managing Director, Chandler Institute, Singapore
- **Ms. Aziza Umarova**, Head of the Delivery Unit, Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President, Republic of Uzbekistan
- **Ms. Hayley Ellis**, Events and Partnership Coordinator, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada

⁷ Digital natives typically describe those born into the 'information age', or after the year 1980.

Summary of Presentations

Mr. Kenneth Sim, Managing Director, Chandler Institute, Singapore

Mr. Sim provided a presentation of the work of the Chandler Institute on developing public servant talents and leadership skills throughout their career cycle and stressed the need for comprehensive systems for development and training that are aimed at nurturing talent, especially among younger public servants. He provided examples of initiatives of early-career talent development in Kenya and mid-career talent development in Vietnam, focused on the importance of continuous learning and growth throughout the public servant's career.

Mr. Sim noted that training programmes are essential not just for imparting skills and knowledge, but also for fostering a shared sense of purpose and ethos across the entire government. By cultivating a cohesive understanding of the organization's mission and values, young public servants are empowered to make meaningful contributions to their roles, igniting a collective commitment to serve the public good.

Central to this vision is an effective performance management system designed to provide regular feedback to younger public servants. This system should not be merely about evaluation; but about supporting personal and professional growth. It could include mechanisms to assess the ability of senior managers to mentor and develop their staff, ensuring that leadership is equipped to nurture talent effectively. By prioritizing ongoing feedback and development, the organization can create a culture of continuous improvement and accountability, where everyone feels supported in their journey.

However, Mr. Sim noted that in large and often monolithic bureaucracies, many public servants—particularly those just starting their careers—could easily feel disconnected or lost. To counter this, he stressed that it is vital to help younger employees understand how their individual contributions link to the broader goals of the organization. He stressed that by emphasizing the significance of their work within the larger framework, leaders can instill a profound sense of purpose and belonging. This connection can help motivate young public servants to engage fully with their roles and embrace the mission of public service, helping to foster a new generation of committed and inspired leaders.

Ms. Aziza Umarova, Head of the Delivery Unit, Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President, Republic of Uzbekistan

Ms. Umarova outlined the work being undertaken by the government of Uzbekistan to combat 'brain drain' of young public servants and retain youth talent in the public sector. Central to these efforts is offering competitive compensation, particularly for those relocating to the capital. This financial incentive is part of a broader strategy to instill a sense of meaning and purpose within the public service. In addition, by emphasizing the importance of public service, the government aims to attract and retain talent that is committed to the nation's development.

Ms. Umarova explained how the government is dedicated to recognizing achievements and promoting career progression based on merit. This commitment to meritocracy is crucial for motivating young professionals; however, implementing such changes requires a profound shift in organizational culture—a challenge that necessitates both time and persistent effort.

In tandem with these initiatives, the government is leveraging social media platforms to engage with young people and reimagine service delivery. By reconfiguring their approach to create a one-stop-shop scheme, they aim to meet the needs of the younger generation more effectively. This innovative strategy not only enhances accessibility but also aligns public services with the expectations and preferences of today's tech-savvy youth, ensuring that they feel valued and connected to their government. In turn, this positions the government as a more in tune and attractive employer and helps meet young people where they are (online).

Ms. Hayley Ellis, Events and Partnership Coordinator, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada

Ms. Ellis provided an overview of the Federal Youth Network, an initiative within the government of Canada dedicated to fostering engagement and career development for young public servants within the first 5 to 10 years of their careers. She explained that this network serves as a vital resource for new professionals, offering a wide range of training opportunities, networking events, and resource-sharing platforms across various departments and offices.

Among its key activities are the Career Boot Camp, which equips participants with essential skills, and comprehensive training sessions available both in-person and online throughout every province and territory. The Network also produces engaging content through YouTube and podcasts, addressing a diverse array of topics relevant to young public servants, and providing valuable insights into career opportunities across different government departments.

Ms. Ellis highlighted that the Network's workshops and training sessions create a unique space where young public servants can learn, experiment, and innovate in a 'safe' environment. This approach not only nurtures individual development but also fosters broader innovation and leadership skills, empowering the next generation of leaders within the public sector. Through these initiatives, the Federal Youth Network is playing a crucial role in shaping a motivated and capable workforce that is well-equipped to meet the challenges of public service.

Summary of group discussion

Following the presentations, a discussion with all workshop participants took place. A summary of the discussion is set out below.

- Governments around the world are increasingly recognizing the need to compete with the private sector for recruitment and retention of talent. A prime example is Singapore, where the government actively seeks out the brightest students to join the public sector. To attract these individuals, the government offers to cover the costs of their master's programs, under the condition that they commit to working in the public sector for a specified period after graduation. This initiative not only alleviates financial burdens for students but also fosters a deep sense of duty and commitment to serving their country. In addition to financial support, Singapore's approach includes rotation opportunities across various ministries. This cross-training enhances skill development and promotes a holistic understanding of government operations, reinforcing the idea of working for the greater good through a whole-of-government approach.

- Mentorship and networking opportunities were underscored as vital components in fostering professional growth. Having a mentor can provide guidance, encouragement, and invaluable insights for young professionals navigating their careers in public service.
- Uzbekistan has introduced its own young professional program aimed at candidates under 30 years old from selective universities, offering additional compensation as an incentive. This initiative reflects a broader understanding of the importance of attracting and retaining young talent in the public sector.
- In some countries, the mismatch between the placement of public servants and their education or expertise can pose challenges. In such cases, it becomes essential to emphasize transferable skills. By focusing on the skills that candidates bring to the table, governments can ensure that they maximize the potential of their workforce, creating a more adaptable and effective public service. Through these strategies, governments are working to build a more competitive and engaged public sector, capable of meeting the evolving needs of society.

Key Messages of Session Three

- **Provide incentives:** While financial incentives are undoubtedly important, organizations can make compensation packages more attractive through various complementary approaches. Education grants can alleviate the financial burden of advanced studies, empowering employees to pursue further qualifications that enhance their skills and expertise. Additionally, fostering a strong sense of purpose within the organization can significantly boost employee motivation, as individuals recognize that their work contributes to the greater good.
- **Provide support for career progression:** Clear pathways for advancement and mentorship opportunities—can increase job satisfaction and loyalty among public servants.
- **Offer continuous training and Networking:** Continuous training and education is essential for career development and retention. Ongoing education equips employees with the latest skills and knowledge, fostering a culture of growth and innovation. Meanwhile, networking opportunities allow public servants to build connections with colleagues across various departments, encouraging collaboration and the exchange of ideas. Together, these initiatives not only enhance individual career trajectories but also contribute to a more engaged and committed workforce, ultimately strengthening the public sector's ability to meet the evolving needs of society.

Session 4: Fostering dynamic leadership at all levels

Young public servants can play a pivotal role in driving innovation in the public sector, bringing new perspectives, ideas, and renewed energy to addressing pressing challenges. Their willingness to embrace change can reinvigorate outdated systems and drive progress and innovation. However, creating the space and opportunity for the effective leadership of young public servants is crucial to ensuring these contributions are recognised, sustained, and maximised.

At every career stage, leadership skills are essential, and opportunities exist for them to be fostered and developed. Allowing the autonomy of younger workers to lead on initiatives and projects, big and small, is a core component of creating a culture where public servants can continue to learn, grow, and innovate, and can help cultivate a sense of ownership and commitment to their work. In this context, leadership means more than just learned managerial skills and abilities; it requires mentorship, empowerment, and the establishment of an inclusive atmosphere where young public servants are encouraged to propose ideas and take the lead on projects with the support of their managers. In many places, however, such an approach can often be felt to threaten existing systems of hierarchy and, as a result, are often actively resisted. Cultural views regarding leadership and hierarchy can be at play, while dismissive and outdated views on the lesser capabilities of young people can undermine young public servants' attempts to take the lead.

This session focused on how leadership can be fostered throughout the career of the public servant with a focus on entry through mid-level, while also examining the mindset changes needed for those in higher positions, or current leaders, to embrace and enable such change.

Moderator: Ms. Alexa Iachelli, Communications Team Lead, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada.

Presenters

- **Ms. Kelly Folz**, Director General, Canada School of Public Service, Canada
- **Ms. Aya Tamayo**, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, Bayi Inc., Philippines
- **Dr. Kilkon Ko**, Associate Dean and Professor of Global Public Administration, Seoul National University, Republic of Korea

Summary of Presentations

Ms. Kelly Folz, Director General, Canada School of Public Service, Canada

Ms. Kelly Folz highlighted the significant role of the government as the largest employer in Canada and the role of the Canada School of Public Service (CSPS) in supporting its workforce. She explained that the CSPS is dedicated to fostering a culture of continuous learning and professional development among public servants. It provides a comprehensive array of educational opportunities, including orientation programmes for new employees, mandatory training sessions that cover critical areas of public service, and transition programmes designed to support employees as they navigate career changes.

She noted that one of the key aspects of the CSPS's approach is its emphasis on forward-thinking topics that are increasingly relevant in today's world. These include pressing issues such as climate change, artificial intelligence, and the promotion of equity, diversity, and inclusion across all levels of government. By integrating these themes into their training curriculum, the CSPS ensures that public servants are not only equipped with the necessary skills for their current roles but also prepared to address the complex challenges facing society in the future.

Ms. Folz also discussed the specific leadership development framework that the CSPS has established, which is designed to cultivate leadership skills at every level of the organization. This framework acknowledges that leadership is not confined to senior management but is essential throughout the public service hierarchy. By empowering individuals at all levels to take on leadership roles, the CSPS fosters a culture of shared responsibility and innovation. This inclusive approach not only enhances the effectiveness of public service but also encourages a more dynamic and responsive government.

Ms. Aya Tamayo, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, Bayi Inc., Philippines

Ms. Tamayo shared insights from the Philippines and its experience of having historically low participation of young people in public service. She highlighted that traditional and rigid processes, coupled with a hierarchical structure, have served to hinder young people's entry to the public service and stifle their engagement in decision-making processes. She noted that this lack of inclusivity creates barriers for young individuals who may feel disconnected from the public sector and its operations.

To address these challenges, Ms. Tamayo emphasized the need to make the public sector work appealing and accessible to the youth. She proposed several strategies aimed at breaking down existing barriers. One approach is to promote flexible organizational structures that encourage collaboration and input from younger employees. By fostering environments where young voices are valued and integrated into decision-making processes, the government can enhance engagement and inspire a sense of ownership among the youth.

Ms. Tamayo also discussed the critical role of organizations like Bayi Inc., of which she is co-founder, which focus on empowering elected female leaders in the Philippines. This initiative aims to amplify their voices and maximize the spaces they occupy within the public and political spheres. By providing training and support, Bayi Inc. helps these leaders navigate the complexities of governance, ensuring that their perspectives and priorities are recognized and addressed.

Ms. Tamayo illustrated how creating pathways for both young people and women can lead to more inclusive governance. By enabling diverse voices to participate actively in the public service, governments can cultivate a more vibrant and representative political landscape.

Dr. Kilkon Ko, Associate Dean and Professor of Global Public Administration, Seoul National University, Republic of Korea

Dr. Kilkon Ko introduced the Seoul National University Global Management and Public Administration programme (SNU-GMPA), and its initiative that integrates three distinct KOICA (Korea International Cooperation Agency) scholarship programmes designed to enhance capacity and governance in developing countries.

- **KOICA-SNU Master's Degree Programme in Capacity Building for SDGs (Asia):** This programme focuses on equipping participants with the skills and knowledge necessary to drive sustainable development goals across Asia. It emphasizes practical strategies and innovative approaches that civil servants can implement in their home countries, fostering a new generation of leaders committed to sustainable development.
- **KOICA-SNU Master's Degree Programme in Public Management and Administrative Reform:** This programme is tailored for individuals seeking to enhance their understanding of public management principles and administrative reform practices. Participants will engage with contemporary theories and methodologies that can be applied to improve efficiency and accountability within government institutions.
- **KOICA-SNU Doctoral Degree Programme in Public Management and Administrative Reform:** Aimed at those pursuing advanced research, this doctoral programme allows scholars to delve deeply into public management issues and reform strategies. This rigorous academic environment encourages critical thinking and innovation, preparing graduates to contribute significantly to the field.

In addition, Dr. Ko addressed the broader impact of the GMPA programme on improving human resources for civil servants in developing countries. He highlighted how these programmes not only provide academic knowledge but also foster practical skills that are essential for effective governance. He explained that by focusing on capacity building, the GMPA programme aims to empower public servants with the tools they need to navigate complex challenges, implement effective policies, and enhance service delivery.

Finally, Dr. Ko emphasized that investing in education and professional development for public servants is crucial for fostering resilient governance structures.

Key Messages of Session Four

- **Promote and recognize the value of youth leadership:** Young public servants have the potential to drive meaningful innovation within the public sector by offering new perspectives and a readiness to embrace change. To fully leverage their contributions, it is crucial to foster an environment that nurtures effective leadership.
- **Support leadership skills at all careers stages:** It is critical to provide space and opportunity for leadership at all levels and stages of career growth. Providing opportunities for younger employees to lead initiatives is critical to promoting a culture of continuous learning and innovation.

- **Leadership extends beyond mere managerial skills:** it includes mentorship, empowerment, and cultivating an inclusive environment where young public servants feel encouraged to share their ideas and take the lead with support from their managers.
- **Tackle hierarchical barriers and attitudes to foster dynamic leadership:** Entrenched hierarchical structures and cultural attitudes that underestimate the capabilities of younger public servants, along with resistance to change can act as barriers to creating a public service that embraces youth leadership. Changing these attitudes and mindsets, by gaining 'buy in' from existing leaders, is critical.

Conclusion and recommendations

Over the course of the workshop participants explored how to better engage young people in a life of public service, highlighting the unique talents and insights that young recruits can bring to the public service. They examined the barriers to young people's recruitment and career growth and from this perspective explored how to better attract and retain young public servants. The workshop also focused on how to foster and leverage young people's distinct perspectives and capacity to innovate and lead in government settings.

The workshop speakers, many of them young public servants, provided examples from different public administrations on innovative ways to outreach to and promote the benefits of joining the public service to young people. Some also showcased dynamic and innovative recruitment and hiring mechanisms that have been implemented in recent years. Notably, the workshop focused on the importance of intentional and systematic talent management and growth strategies for retaining young public servants once hired, and on the necessary shift in mindsets from senior leaders in the public service to enable meaningful engagement of young public servants.

It was agreed that, as the world struggles with increasingly volatile conditions, engaging young people in government is more crucial than ever. Not only does doing so help foster an active and engaged citizenry, for now and the future, but it also allows public administrations to exploit the vastly untapped resource of youth talent, skills, insights, and capacity to innovate, particularly, but not only, in the technological realm. Key messages arising from the workshop are outlined below.

Key Messages of the Workshop

- To **attract young talent to the public service**, governments need to restore trust in public institutions and promote transparent recruitment by utilizing digital technology and innovative outreach methods to meet young people where they are.
- To help **retain young public servants**, strategic talent and growth management is imperative. Enhancing conditions in the public service, including decent wages, flexible working arrangements, opportunities for talent development and leadership are central to attracting and retaining the best talent and safeguarding against brain drain.
- To **foster dynamic leadership at all levels of government**, it is essential to focus on two key areas: developing the skills of emerging young public servants and shifting the mindsets of current leaders. This involves not only equipping young professionals with

the tools they need to excel but also encouraging existing leaders to recognize and embrace the value of youthful perspectives and innovative approaches in the public service.

Finally, participants noted the importance of further exploring the topic of 'young public servants' and requested UN DESA to consider hosting an expert group meeting in the near future.

Annex I: Workshop Agenda

Day 1: 24 June 2024

Time	Session
14:30- 14:35	Welcome and Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Elizabeth Niland, Governance and Public Administration Officer, Public Service Innovation Branch, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
14:35- 15:45	<u>Session I: The young public servant in context - Understanding the challenges, barriers, and opportunities young public servants face</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Gcino Mlaba, Director, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) National Secretariat; Vice President of the African Association for Public Administration and Management's (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for Southern Africa, South Africa.- Ms. Dominique Baquero, General Manager, Municipal Public Company for Economic Development of Cuenca, Ecuador- Ms. Mariami Bregadze, Head of International Relations Unit, Ministry of Justice, Georgia
15:45 – 16:00	Coffee Break
16:15 – 17:30	<u>Session II: Attracting and recruiting young talent to the public service for a future ready public service</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Ciata Stevens d'Almeida, Executive Director of the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP), Liberia- Ms. Lamia El Moubayed, Vice Chair, UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), and steering committee member of 'Youth4Governance', Lebanon- Ms. Barbara Amaro, Executive Secretary of the General Secretariat, Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD), Spain

Day 2: 25 June 2024

Time

11:15 – 12:30	<p><u>Session III: Retaining young public servants through an innovative and flexible public administration</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Kenneth Sim, Managing Director (Strategy & Research), Chandler Institute, Singapore- Ms. Aziza Umarova, Head of the Delivery Unit, Agency for Strategic Reforms under President, Uzbekistan- Ms. Hayley Ellis, Events and Partnership Coordinator, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 – 15:15	<p><u>Session IV: Fostering dynamic leadership at all levels</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Ms. Kelly Folz, Director General, Canada School of Public Service, Canada- Ms. Aya Tamayo, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, Bayi Inc, Philippines- Dr. Kilkon Ko, Associate Dean and Professor of Global Public Administration, Seoul National University, Republic of Korea
15:15 – 15:45	<p><u>Session V Recap: Conclusion and recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Group recommendations on key measures public administrations can take to better attract, retain, and foster innovation amongst young public servants-

Rapporteurs

- **Ms. Alexa Iachelli**, Communications Team Lead, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada
- **Ms. Julie Muia**, Program Officer, African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), Kenya

Annex II: Presenter Biographies

Workshop Facilitator



Ms. Elizabeth Niland, Governance and Public Administration Officer, Public Service Innovation Branch, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

Ms. Elizabeth Niland is Governance and Public Administration Officer at the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UN DESA. The focus of her work includes the coordination and organization of the annual UN Public Service Forum, engagement in the UN Public Service Awards Programme, as well as the organization of various capacity development workshops. Substantively she focuses on innovation in public administration, prioritizing the engagement of women and young people in public administration. Prior to joining the Division, she worked both in and outside the UN on youth development issues (UN Programme on Youth, European Youth Forum, Youth for Understanding), with a focus on youth participation in decision making, including overseeing the UN Youth Delegate Programme and coordinating the publication of numerous World Youth Reports. She holds a Bachelor of Social Science and Master of European Economics and Public Affairs from University College Dublin, Ireland.

Session I: The young public servant in context - Understanding the challenges, barriers, and opportunities young public servants face



Ms. Gcino Mlaba, Director, African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) National Secretariat; Vice President of the African Association for Public Administration and Management's (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for Southern Africa, South Africa.

Ms. Gcino Queeneth Mlaba is Director: African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) National Secretariat in South Africa. Her career in the public service career began with an exceptional internship opportunity at the Presidency where she was later absorbed an Assistant Policy Analyst. Ms. Mlaba is an experienced policy analyst and project manager in the fields of youth development; good governance and state capacity building; STI; international development cooperation; and African development. As the AAPAM Young Professionals Network's Vice-President for Southern Africa, she advocates for transformation in the public service to be more agile, effective, and responsive to societal needs. Also, a public service that is effective at talent management, infusing technology and innovation, and building productive partnerships.



Ms. Dominique Baquero, General Manager, Municipal Public Company for Economic Development of Cuenca, Ecuador

Ms. Dominique Baquero is 33 years old and holds a Master of Science in Advanced Engineering of Production, Logistics and Supply Chain from the Polytechnic University of Valencia (Spain) and in Industrial Engineering, University of Cuenca (Ecuador). Ms. Baquero is CEO of the Public Economic Development Company of Cuenca, Ecuador. and Co-Founder of Bothaniker Alchemist Company. An entrepreneur at heart, she has eight years of experience in the public sector and two years in the private sector. She is the leader of the project for young entrepreneurs and creator of the first public company for young people. She is also creator of an Agency to attract investments and seed capital for innovation and technology for young high school and university students. As General Secretary of the Economic Development Commission of Cuenca, she focuses on public policies and tax benefits for young entrepreneurs of the City. A native Spanish speaker, she is also fluent in English and speaks advanced Danish.



Ms. Mariami Bregadze, Head of International Relations Unit, Ministry of Justice, Georgia

Ms. Mariam Bregadze serves as a Head of International Relations Unit, at the Ministry of Justice of Georgia. She is a qualified lawyer with a background in public international law and human rights, and possesses skills in project management, monitoring and evaluation, adopting and developing national strategic and policy documents, national and international country reports, participation, and presentation of state reforms at various international and multi-governmental platforms.

Session II: Attracting and recruiting young talent to the public service for a future ready public service



Ms. Ciata Stevens d'Almeida, Executive Director of the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP), Liberia and Vice President for the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) Young Professionals Network for West Africa.

Ms. Ciata Stevens d'Almeida is the Executive Director of the President's Young Professionals Program (PYPP), a prestigious competitive two-year fellowship designed to prepare young and talented college graduates as future public service leaders. In this role, she collaborates with the government and partners to support the President's Young Professionals Program and motivates young professionals to join public service.

Ciata holds a Master of Arts in Development Studies from the Institute of Social Studies, Erasmus University, in the Netherlands and Bachelor of Arts in Political Science (Cum Laude) from the University of Liberia.



Ms. Lamia El Moubayed, Vice Chair, UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), and steering committee member of 'Youth4Governance', Lebanon

Ms. Lamia El Moubayed is a development specialist. She currently serves on the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA) as Vice Chair and leads a center of excellence in public financial management in Lebanon with a regional portfolio.

A fervent supporter of South-South cooperation, she contributed to creating six institutes of public Finance and the foundation of two knowledge networks in the Middle East and Africa. She publishes regularly. Fluent in four languages, she holds a master's degree in development economics, and certifications in Strategic Planning. She was awarded the prestigious distinction of "Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur".



Ms. Barbara Amaro, Executive Secretary of the General Secretariat, Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD), Spain

Ms. Barbara Amaro has been the Executive Secretary of the General Secretariat of CLAD since 2024. Her journey at the Latin American Center for Development Administration (CLAD) began in 2019 when she joined as an intern. She has been working alongside the Latin American governments, leading projects in best practices in HR in the public sector and public innovation. Her areas of expertise are socio-political development and foresight. She holds a Bachelor of Political Sciences from the Central University of Venezuela and a Master of International Cooperation and Development from the International University of La Rioja (UNIR) in Spain.

Session III: Retaining young public servants through an innovative and flexible public administration.



Mr. Kenneth Sim, Managing Director (Strategy & Research), Chandler Institute, Singapore

Mr. Kenneth Sim oversees strategy development and communications at the Chandler Institute of Governance (CIG), a non-profit organisation headquartered in Singapore. He also leads CIG's research work, including the Chandler Good Government Index which measures the capabilities and effectiveness of 114 countries across the world.

Prior to joining CIG, Kenneth spent almost 20 years working in the Singapore public service, where he held leadership positions in several portfolios including energy policy, environmental sustainability, education and skills training. He had also served as Special Assistant to the Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore.



Ms. Aziza Umarova, Head of the Delivery Unit, Agency for Strategic Reforms under the President, Uzbekistan

Aziza is the Head of Delivery Unit. She brings nearly a decade of invaluable experience from her tenure at UNDP, at the Global Center for Public Sector Excellence in Singapore and leading governance portfolio in Uzbekistan. She authored the chapter in the book "Public Service Evolution in 15 Post-Soviet Countries: Diversity in Transformation" (Palgrave, 2021). Fellow at the Davis Center for Eurasian Studies, Harvard University (2022). Member of the Boards

at two major state companies and charities, embodying her commitment to public service and social impact. Public speaker. Recognized as one of Central Asia's 30 most influential women leaders in 2023.



Ms. Hayley Ellis, Events and Partnership Coordinator, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada

Ms. Hayley Ellis is the Events and Partnerships Coordinator for the Federal Youth Network, where she organizes events tailored for new and young public servants. Her career in public service began in 2008 as a student, followed by a role as an auditor for the Canada Revenue Agency. Throughout her career, she has been actively involved with building communities and supporting the professional development of new and young public servants, and strongly believes in advancing

equity, and inclusion.

Session IV: Fostering dynamic leadership at all levels



Ms. Aya Tamayo, Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director, Bayi Inc, Philippines

Ms. Aya Tamayo is the Co-Founder and Co-Executive Director of Bayi, an NGO enabling women elected leaders in transformative feminist leadership. As Program Manager of Young Public Servants' Taumbayan Project, she engaged various young people in socio-political advocacies. Aya has extensive experience as a Gender and Disability Policy and Program Management Consultant with the UP Center for Women's Studies Foundation and The Asia Foundation.

She also served as a National Sectoral Coordinator for Women, Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities during the 2022 Presidential Campaign of Former Vice President Leni Robredo.



Ms. Kelly Folz, Director General, Canada School of Public Service, Canada

Kelly joined the federal public service in 2006 from the municipal government and has held management positions in areas such as Indigenous health, health promotion, intergovernmental affairs, public health emergency response, regional operations, social innovation, policy and strategic planning. Kelly is responsible for learning in

support of greater equity, diversity and inclusion for over 300,000 public servants in her role at the Canada School of Public Service. She is passionate about human-centred leadership and design, and contributing to healthy, thriving teams. She holds a Master of Sociology and a Bachelor of Social Sciences in Psychology and Sociology.



Dr. Kilkon Ko, Associate Dean and Professor of Global Public Administration, Seoul National University, Republic of Korea

Dr. Kilkon Ko is a professor at the Graduate School of Public Administration, Seoul National University. He specializes in public policy, governance, AI, data analytics, and performance management. Dr. Ko earned his Ph.D. from University of Pittsburgh and is the editor-in-chief of the Asian Journal of Political Science. His research focuses on the intersection of public administration and policy evaluation, with a particular emphasis on improving

governmental performance and accountability. Professor Ko has received several awards for his contributions to the field and continues to influence both academic and practical aspects of public administration through his innovative research and teaching

Moderators and Rapporteurs



Moderator Session IV and day one rapporteur: Ms. Alexa Iachelli, Communications Team Lead, Federal Youth Network, Indigenous Services Canada, Canada

Alexa Iachelli is a Project Officer for the Federal Youth Network at Indigenous Services Canada, where she uses her skills to coordinate events, write communications, and design products. She graduated in 2020 from the University of Ottawa with a Bachelor of Science with a specialization in Psychology in the French Immersion Stream. Alexa has a passion for people and languages. She learned French, Italian, Spanish, and Arabic. She loves meeting new people and public speaking. In her free time, she plays football (soccer).

Her passion for languages and collaboration led her to study in Venice, Italy, for a semester in 2018. Alexa never stops building meaningful connections with others, learning from them, and exploring everything the world has to offer.



Day two rapporteur: Ms. Julie Muia, Program Officer, African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM), Kenya

Ms. Julie Muia is the officer in charge of programmes at the African Association for Public Administration and Management (AAPAM). She is an international relations professional with over 10 years of experience in designing capacity building programmes on good governance in the African Continent. Julie serves as the liaison between AAPAM and African governments as well as development partners. Ms. Muia holds a Master of International Relations and is trained in peacebuilding and conflict resolution from the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC). She is also a published author in the African Journal of Public Administration and Management (AJPAM) with an article focusing on Economic Integration: The Impact of Conflict on Economic Development of Africa. Ms. Muia brings a wealth of experience in public sector innovations having served at both the national level, as an adjudicator for Kenya public service awards, and on the continental level, under the continental AAPAM innovative management awards (IMA) held annually.