23 – 25 June 2025

Silkroad Resort, Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan

Five-years to 2030: Accelerating Public Service Delivery for a Sustainable Future

Concept Note

Introduction

The [2025 United Nations Public Service Forum](#) will take place in Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan from 23 to 25 June 2025, under the theme *'Five years to 2030: Accelerating public service delivery for a sustainable future'*. Opening on United Nations Public Service Day [1] (celebrated annually on 23 June), the Forum provides a platform for public administrators and those working in the field to come together to build capacity and share experiences in the realm of public administration and service delivery.

The Forum is co-organized by the [United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs](#) (UN DESA) through its [Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)](#) and the [Ministry of Digital Technologies](#) of the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Context

With five years remaining to the deadline for achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the need to accelerate action is more urgent than ever. Governments globally face increasing and interconnected challenges, including rising inequality, climate change, health crises, declining trust in public institutions, and economic volatility. To address these realities and prepare for tomorrow's challenges world leaders gathered at the [Summit of the Future](#) in September 2024, to adopt the Pact for the Future and its annexes: the Global Digital Compact and Declaration on Future Generations. This agreement, the culmination of years of inclusive dialogue and collaboration aims at modernizing international cooperation and finding solutions to common concerns.

Public administration plays a pivotal role in addressing these challenges, including by translating global commitments into tangible actions at the national and local levels. By strengthening public institutions, fostering innovation, harnessing digital technology, and building strong partnerships, governments can ensure inclusive public service delivery that reaches all communities, closing the 'last mile gap'.

Objectives of the Forum

The primary objective of the Forum is to strengthen the institutional, human, and technological capacities of public sector institutions and civil servants, thereby supporting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. In doing so, it aims to build the future capabilities of the public sector, ensuring it remains responsive, effective, and equipped to address evolving challenges.

The Forum will serve as a dynamic platform for Ministers, senior decision-makers, and public servants to develop the essential skills needed to drive innovation and transformation at both local and national levels. It will focus on addressing emerging issues, exchanging best practices, and discussing strategies, accelerated actions, and innovative approaches to improving service delivery and transforming institutions. Additionally, the Forum will foster enhanced cooperation

---

[1] https://www.un.org/en/observances/public-service-day

and partnerships, offering opportunities for experience sharing, peer-to-peer learning, and cross-sector collaboration to promote collective progress in public sector development.

Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced understanding of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the actions needed over the next five years for its realization;
- Enhanced understanding of how the public sector can embrace innovation and develop its capacities and resources for future challenges;
- Increased capacity to meet the challenges and opportunities in realizing the SDGs through an effective focus on innovation and transformation in the delivery of services and in institutions, including on the means and methods of advancing gender responsive public service delivery;
- Increased understanding of the various issues surrounding the ethical use of emerging technologies, such as AI, and an understanding of how governments can enhance public service delivery in the digital age while safeguarding privacy;
- Increased understanding of innovative public service delivery solutions to close the last mile gap and ensure equitable access to public services for all;
- Renewed public sector leadership commitment and inspiration to promote creativity and innovations in public sector institutions and increased effectiveness, inclusiveness, and accountability of institutions to achieve the SDGs, leaving no one behind;
- Exchange of information on innovative practices through networking and building partnerships with government officials, experts, academics and practitioners in attendance.

Focus and Structure

Five-years to 2030: Accelerating Public Service Delivery for a Sustainable Future

Focusing on critical actions required over the next five years, the 2025 United Nations Public Service Forum will delve into strategies for fostering innovation and transformation in the public sector to advance the SDGs before their 2030 deadline. In particular, the forum will explore how to accelerate public service delivery towards a sustainable future through three subthemes: **Digital Transformation, Last Mile Delivery, and Accelerating Innovation**.

Digital transformation is reshaping public administrations, allowing governments to use technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and cloud computing to improve decision-making, service delivery, and inclusivity. However, while e-governnment plays a key role in streamlining processes, enhancing transparency, and responding to crises, challenges such as the digital divide can significantly hinder access to the benefits of e-governance and digital transformation, particularly for vulnerable and hard to reach populations. At the same time, the rapid expansion of AI in service delivery raises ethical and privacy concerns which must be

urgently addressed. Governments must ensure equitable access to online services while establishing strong privacy and data protection measures, all while promoting inclusive last-mile delivery to reach underserved communities.

Key to addressing many of these challenges and ensuring no one is left behind is the development and **acceleration of innovative** governance models that promote experimentation and context-specific solutions to public administration challenges. By promoting innovation, collaboration and participatory governance, governments can create flexible and responsive approaches that improve service delivery, reduce inequalities, and enhance resilience.

Over the course of three days, the Forum will delve further into the above themes and issues over a series of plenary sessions, capacity development workshops, a Ministerial Roundtable and an E-Government recognition segment.

Substantive Plenary Sessions

Plenary 1: Transforming the public service in the era of AI (23 June)

In recent years, the role of AI in transforming public service delivery has become a key topic of discussion. AI holds immense potential to reshape the way public institutions work, from automating routine tasks to improving the collection, analysis, and use of data for evidence-based decision-making to supporting the interactions between public servants and the public. Importantly, AI can transform public service delivery by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of public services and better tailoring them to individual needs, including those of the most vulnerable. However, as AI becomes more deeply embedded in the ways of working of the public service, it raises ethical concerns. Issues such as data privacy, algorithmic bias, and the respect of human rights must be addressed to ensure AI is deployed safely and fairly. It is also important to ensure that the deployment of AI in public administration does not negatively impact accountability, including by ensuring transparency, explainability and providing ways of recourse for people affected by administrative decisions. International rules that seek to address both the benefits and risks of AI have started to multiply in recent years.

This plenary panel will bring together key stakeholders from government and the private sector to explore how AI can be harnessed to transform public institutions and public service delivery. Discussions will delve into the use of AI to enhance data collection and analysis, enable evidence-based decision-making, and highlight recent innovations in the delivery of public services through AI. The panel will also tackle critical concerns, including the ethical and responsible use of AI, data privacy, and bias, as well as practical challenges such as bridging the digital divide and ensuring that public services are accessible to all.

Plenary 2: Reaching the last mile: making public services accessible to all (24 June)

Leaving no one behind is a central promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. With only five years left to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the need to "reach the last mile" and provide inclusive and equitable public services to all is more urgent than ever, including in areas such as education, healthcare, public utilities and social services. Lack of access to public services stems from gaps at multiple levels, including poverty, location, digital divides, age, and gender, to name a few.

This panel discussion will explore strategies undertaken by public administrations in different countries and regions to ensure that services are made accessible to the most marginalized and vulnerable in society. Panelists will discuss innovative approaches to reaching the furthest behind, including leveraging digital tools, fostering participatory mechanisms for service design and delivery, and enhancing multi-stakeholder partnerships. By focusing on practical and scalable solutions, the discussion aims to inspire action by public administration in all countries to leave no one behind.

Plenary 3: Innovation labs in action (25 June)

Accelerating progress on the SDGs necessitates innovative approaches to public service delivery. Innovation labs – physical or virtual centres of creativity, technology, and collaboration dedicated to developing new solutions for public service challenges – have emerged as incubators with the potential to offer innovative solutions in areas such as healthcare, education, employment, and poverty reduction and can provide a powerful tool for rethinking and reshaping public service delivery. By focusing on agile, community driven solutions, innovation labs can foster multi-stakeholder collaboration and find new ways to bridge gaps in service delivery, especially in remote or underserved areas.

By fostering collaboration and experimentation, innovation labs can enable public institutions to develop and test solutions to challenges and ensure that services remain adaptable, relevant and accessible to all. In doing so, innovation labs can help foster sustainable, inclusive, and local solutions adapted to directly address the needs of specific target groups which can be scaled as needed.

This plenary panel will bring together key stakeholders and representatives from various innovation labs and hubs to explore how these centres can foster innovation in public administration and enhance public service delivery. Featuring participants from both local and national level innovation labs, the discussion will highlight recent successes and notable advancements in public service innovation. Panelists will also share strategies for establishing, sustaining, and scaling innovation labs so as to maximize their impact. The session will delve into partnership models that bring together the public sector, private sector, academia, and civil society, leveraging their collective strengths to develop responsive, resilient solutions that advance public services and contribute to achieving the SDGs.

Capacity Development Workshops (23 and 24 June)

Eight capacity development workshops will focus on the following thematic areas:

Workshop 1: Creating an Enabling Environment for Public Sector Innovation
Organized by: DPIDG/UN DESA

Governments today face complex and evolving challenges, from improving service delivery and policy effectiveness to constrained budgets, shifting societal demands, and the need for greater transparency and accountability. To address these challenges, public sector innovation is essential—not just in adopting new technologies but in rethinking processes, public service delivery models, and organizational culture and working methods to enhance efficiency, responsiveness, and effectiveness. However, fostering innovation within government institutions can be challenging, often butting up against high levels of bureaucracy, rigid legal and regulatory frameworks, an aversion to risk, and siloed structures and working methods that can discourage transformative change.

The workshop aims to discuss some of the key barriers that public institutions and public servants face in creating an enabling environment for innovation from the institutional level down to the day-to-day work of the public servant, and how those barriers can be addressed. Through a focus on key enablers, such as leadership, institutional structures, funding mechanisms, and legal and regulatory frameworks, and human resources policies and practice, participants will gain practical insights into practical ways to foster a culture of innovation and creativity within public institutions. The role of public servants as change agents will be highlighted, with discussions on building skills, fostering collaboration, and overcoming resistance to change. By focusing on the broader systemic conditions that enable public sector innovation, this workshop will help participants move beyond individual initiatives and toward creating institutions that are more agile, inclusive, and responsive.

Workshop 2: Digital Government advancing Inclusive Public Services
Organized by: DPIDG/UN DESA

The Global Digital Compact, adopted in September 2024 as part of the UN Member States' Pact for the Future, commits to closing all digital divides and accelerating progress across the SDGs. In many parts of the world innovation and proliferation of technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), cloud computing and blockchain have already transformed the public services delivery making it more efficient, accessible, responsive and citizen centric. For the first time since early 2000s, when the United Nations began tracking the progress of E-Government Development through global ranking index (EGDI) the number of countries with high and very high level of digital development has reached 138 (or 72 per cent of the UN Member States). At the same time, the 2024 Survey underscores that digital divides remain substantial and disparities in access to digital technologies and services continue to impede equitable progress toward the SDGs.

The workshop will focus on strategies to overcome digital divides through promoting delivery of equitable and inclusive public services for all based on the key findings of the 2024 E-Government Survey. Country cases and examples of excelling in online services delivery, despite challenges and limitations, will be presented and countries recognized during the UNPSF for their progress in E-Government will be showcased. Participants will learn about methodologies to assess the overall e-government development in their countries at national and local levels and identify gaps impeding the progress by utilizing the national and local e-government toolkits. The workshop will also collect feedback form country-representatives on E-Government Survey methodology to be used for 2026 assessment.

Workshop 3: Leading Change: New Mindsets and Approaches for Resilient, Forward-Looking Governance

Organized by: DPIDG/UN DESA

Promoting innovation and transformation in the public sector is essential to accelerating progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly for those in vulnerable situations. Yet many governments struggle to adapt to complexity and uncertainty due to deeply rooted ways of thinking, limited institutional capacity, and fragmented planning and reform processes.

This workshop focuses on mindset change as the foundation for institutional transformation. It introduces practical tools such as systems thinking and strategic foresight to help public officials improve coordination across government functions, strengthen planning−budgeting linkages, and adopt more anticipatory and inclusive approaches to governance.

Through guided exercises, peer exchange, and action planning, the workshop will support public service leaders and practitioners in identifying capacity development priorities and outlining practical steps for institutional improvement at individual, organizational, and systemic levels. Participants will explore strategies to shift mindsets, apply new tools and concepts, and foster resilient and forward-looking governance aligned with emerging global commitments such as the Pact for the Future.

Workshop 4: Skilling and Upskilling the Public Sector Workforce – What's Next after GenAI?

Organized by: UNPOG/UN DESA

Advances in both traditional and generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) are reshaping the public sector and creating new opportunities for innovation, while also widening the skills gap faced by many public workforces. The rapid pace of technological change, particularly in the field of AI, calls for a proactive and coordinated approach to workforce development. To build strong institutions, the public sector entities must invest in targeted skilling and upskilling initiatives to ensure effective and efficient service delivery. These efforts are essential to align with the aspirations of the Pact for the Future and its Global Digital Compact.

This workshop aims to equip the public sector workforce with the knowledge, skills, and practical tools needed to navigate and lead in the era of AI transformation, while also exploring what comes next. Participants will examine how to identify and address evolving skills gaps, strengthen digital and data literacy, and understand the transformative potential of emerging technologies such as generative AI and agentic AI. Through forward-looking discussions, the workshop will support the development of an AI-ready public workforce capable of leveraging frontier technologies to enhance public service delivery and advance the Sustainable Development Goals.

Workshop 5: Foresight and Creativity in Public Service

Organized by: The Delivery Unit, Agency for Strategic Reforms under President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

In the face of accelerating global crises, the need for forward-looking, adaptive, and participatory governance has never been more urgent. As the UN celebrates its 80th anniversary and the world mark the halfway point to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, public service institutions stand at a crossroads. Now is a moment to inspire and empower senior public servants to champion foresight, creativity, and long-term governance as essential tools to accelerate progress and safeguard the future.

This workshop, in partnership with the School of International Futures (SOIF) and the Creative Bureaucracy Festival (CBF), will deliver a dynamic two-part intervention designed to breathe creativity, imagination, and future-oriented leadership into the Forum. These elements are designed to inspire public servants to embed long-term thinking and creativity into public service reform as a cornerstone for achieving the SDGs. The session will aim to mobilize senior public servants to embrace foresight and creativity as essential elements of public service reform, and spark a wave of peer learning and international collaboration on future-fit governance innovations.

Workshop 6: Motivating the Public Servant: Challenges in the Digital Age

Organized by: Agency for the Development of Public Service of the Republic of Uzbekistan / ACSH

In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, public service organizations face unprecedented challenges in inspiring and leading their workforce. The intersection of cutting-edge technological innovation and effective human capital management has created a dynamic and complex ecosystem that demands bold, forward-thinking strategies to enhance employee engagement, nurture skill development, and foster a resilient organizational culture. Digital transformation has fundamentally redefined the nature of work, compelling public servants to navigate an ever-changing landscape of emerging technologies, modernized workflows, and increasing performance expectations. This seismic shift not only presents remarkable opportunities for growth and innovation but also introduces significant challenges for civil service human resource management.

This workshop aims to engage participants in identifying practical strategies to strengthen public servant motivation and capacity amidst digital transformation. Through interactive discussions and experience-sharing, it will explore innovative approaches to leadership, skill development, and employee well-being in the digital era, ensuring public sector organizations can adapt and thrive while fostering an empowered, resilient workforce.

Workshop 7: Data Governance for Digital Transformation

Organized by: Ministry of Digital Technologies of the Republic of Uzbekistan / UN ESCAP

Across the globe, governments are striving to modernize through digital transformation, leveraging technology and data to improve operations, enhance services, and address the evolving needs of citizens. At the core of these efforts is government data, a vital asset that, when managed effectively, can unlock efficiencies, enable data-driven decision-making, and transform service delivery. However, to fully realize its potential, this data must meet the necessary standards of quality, reliability, and usability. Additionally, governments must balance the transformative use of data with their obligations to uphold privacy, security, ethical practices, and transparency. This makes strong data governance not just an enabler of innovation but also a safeguard against the risks associated with managing vast and sensitive datasets.

The workshop will provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of how effective data governance underpins successful digital transformation in the public sector. It will explore the distinct characteristics of government data governance compared to private sector models, highlighting key components such as cross-agency data sharing, integration challenges, and the critical role of statistical agencies within the government data ecosystem. Through practical tools, case studies, and experiences from the Asia-Pacific region and beyond, the session will equip participants with strategies for implementing robust data governance frameworks. It will also address the delicate balance between maintaining data confidentiality and utilizing identifiable data to meet operational needs, ensuring ethical and transparent use of government data.

Workshop 8: The Next Generation of Public Service: Innovation, Technology, and Citizen-Centric Solutions

Organized by: Digital Government Projects Management Center of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Governments worldwide are under increasing pressure to modernize public services and deliver them more effectively, transparently, and inclusively. Emerging technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), blockchain, big data analytics, and cloud computing present significant potential to improve administrative efficiency, citizen engagement, and service delivery quality. However, leveraging these technologies requires more than technical upgrades—it demands a citizen-centric mindset, participatory design approaches, strong policy frameworks, ethical considerations, and inclusive digital environments that prioritize marginalized groups. Moreover, public institutions must develop agile capacities and foster ecosystems that encourage continuous innovation and cross-sector collaboration.

Recognizing these priorities, the workshop titled "The Next Generation of Public Service: Innovation, Technology, and Citizen-Centric Solutions" will provide a platform to deliberate on key challenges and opportunities and share successful practices for transforming public services globally.

Ministerial Roundtable (23 June)

A Ministerial Roundtable will take place on the first day of the event. During a question-and-answer roundtable, Ministers will discuss the key themes of the Forum and highlight what follow-up actions they will take in their countries.

E-Government Survey Recognition Segment (25 June)

The United Nations E-Government Survey[2] is a biennial report published by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It assesses the progress and effectiveness of e-government in promoting public sector innovation, improving public service delivery, and advancing transparency, accountability, and citizen participation in governance. The survey provides rankings of countries based on their e-government development index (EGDI), which includes indicators such as online services, digital infrastructure, and human capital in the public sector.

The 13th edition of the E-Government Survey was launched in September 2024 and provides a comprehensive assessment of the digital government landscape across all 193 Member States. The 2024 Survey highlights a significant upward trend in the development of digital government worldwide, with increased investment in resilient infrastructure and cutting-edge technologies.

On the last day of the UN Public Service Forum, a set of countries having achieved progress in the area of E-Government between 2022 and 2024 will be recognized.

Study Tours (24 June)

The government of the Republic of Uzbekistan has organised a set of study tours on the afternoon of the second day of the Forum (24 June), where participants can learn more about the innovations in public service delivery being undertaken in Uzbekistan. More information can be found on the website www.unpsf2025.org

---

[2] See UN DESA, E-Government Survey 2024, https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/Reports/UN-E-Government-Survey-2024

Organizational Details

Venue

Silkroad Resort, Samarkand, Republic of Uzbekistan

Participants

Around 1000 participants are expected to attend the Forum, including world leaders, ministers, senior government officials, mayors, supreme audit institutions, civil society representatives, academia, the private sector, and representatives from international and regional organizations.

Languages

Simultaneous interpretation for the plenary sessions of the meeting will be available in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Uzbek. Simultaneous interpretation for workshops will be available in English, Russian and Uzbek.

Contact Information

Substantive details

Ms. Elizabeth Niland
Governance and Public Administration Officer,
Public Service Innovation Branch,
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government,
Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat,
nilande@un.org

Logistical details

Ms. Nadine Manket
Programme Management Assistant,
Public Service Innovation Branch,
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government,
Department of Economic and Social Affairs United Nations Secretariat,
manket@un.org