Facilitated Online Training Course
on
Changing Mindsets and Strengthening Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence for a Holistic Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region

Organized jointly by
The United Nations Economic Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)

26 and 28 January, and 2 and 4 February 2021
03:00 PM – 05:45 PM (Beirut Time)
08:00 AM – 10:45 AM (EST, New York Time)

1. Background

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN ESCWA) are co-organizing an Online Training Course on "Changing Mindsets and Strengthening Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence for a Holistic Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Arab region". The Online Training Workshop will be held on 26 and 28 January and 2 and 4 February 2021 for 2 hours and 45 minutes each day (8:00 AM – 10:45 AM New York time).

The Facilitated Online Training Course aims at raising awareness and developing capacities among senior public officials from the Arab region on the need for effective institutional arrangements for holistic policy coherence to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It also aims at highlighting the importance of changing mindsets and key competencies needed for effective policy coherence.

2. Thematic Focus

The Facilitated Online Training Course builds upon the Capacity Development Webinars on "Leveraging Public Governance & Exploring Innovative Solutions to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Arab Region: Building better institutions, towards a brighter future" organized by UN ESCWA, UN DESA and UNESCO in June and July 2020.

The Capacity Development Webinars have highlighted that the Arab world faces an unprecedented challenge that could lead an already volatile region into complete relapse. 8.3 million people in the region are expected to fall into poverty because of COVID-19.

The pandemic affects in particular those Arab countries where years of conflict and unrest have destroyed the health infrastructure. At the same time, the pandemic has exacerbated institutional

vulnerabilities to address poverty and socio-economic challenges and lack of coordination among levels of government.

In various Arab countries, COVID-19 has highlighted the challenges faced by public institutions in dealing with the crisis. In some instances, measures were not taken seriously by the citizens and the health crisis was poorly handled. However, some other countries have managed, to a various extent, to leverage a comprehensive approach to tackle the pandemic by engaging and partnering with non-state actors, such as civil society organizations and the private sector. Other groups of countries – some of them in a conflict situation – took swift actions and responded very quickly. They were able to coordinate policy responses across government levels notwithstanding the institutional fragmentation and divisions. Successful countries in fighting COVID-19 had in place clear lines of authority and responsibilities and had strategic plans for responding both during the outbreaks and the recovery.

The crisis is undermining the achievement of all the SDGs by hitting all segments of the population, all sectors of the economy, and all regions of the world. Its impact has extremely affected the poor and the vulnerable and caused million job losses globally. Also, the effects of the pandemic and the measures taken to mitigate its impact have overwhelmed health systems globally[1].

Strengthening the capacities of government and their public servants is needed more than ever since national and local governments are at the frontline of addressing the pandemic. Policy coherence, collaborative leadership, strategic thinking and planning, evidence-based decision making, and enhanced partnerships with academia and the private sector are all critical measures that can help governments elaborate immediate responses to uplift the poor and the vulnerable and reduce inequalities, including the one in gender. Also, investing in data essential to respond to the crisis and accelerate SDG implementation.

Despite some progress prior to the pandemic, countries were not on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[2]. As the pandemic lingers on worldwide and poverty and unemployment are likely to increase in the aftermath of the pandemic, business as usual will no longer be sufficient to overcome the pandemic (crisis response) and build back in a sustainable manner. The multitude and complexity of issues having an impact simultaneously calls for transformational change and enhanced whole-of-government approaches through coordination across sectors and levels of government to ensure more inclusive, equitable and resilient societies. This requires, among other measures, capacity for organizing (government) institutions and other stakeholders engaged in SDG implementation to promote policy coherence. It also calls for strengthening public servants' capacity to implement the SDGs through the development of new mindsets, skills, and behaviours and through new ways of working together across organizational boundaries.

Developing policies on a short term to respond swiftly to the crisis, without considering the inter-generational effects, can run the risk of increasing the impacts of climate change (e.g., further water shortages), which in turn can potentially trigger conflict, and aggravate volatility and fragility. Coher-ent policies and effective institutional arrangements for coordination are essential to respond suc-cessfully to the challenges posed by the pandemic. A sustainable response will also require the re-configuration of social systems, new ways of thinking, and approaches that can lead to a new social contract where trust between citizens and public institutions can be enhanced.

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1 https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desa-policy-brief-81-impact-of-covid-19-on-sdg-progress-a-statistical-perspective/
[2] https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/sg_policy_brief_covid-19_and_arab_states_english_version_july_2020.pdf

3. Objectives

In embarking on a sustainable recovery from the pandemic, UN Member States have an opportunity to accelerate SDG implementation and implement the 11 principles of effective governance for sustainable development endorsed in 2018 by the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). One of the 11 principles is related to sound policymaking.

In line with the above, UN DESA is developing a Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals. The Curriculum contains a capacity development training-of-trainers toolkit on "Institutional Arrangements and Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence" and one on "Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions to Implement the SDGs". The objective of the Training Course is to pilot test selected modules of the toolkits and provide hands-on activities to identify priorities and action plans on how to change mindsets and promote policy coherence.

More specifically, the Online Training Course aims to:

1. Sensitize senior public officials from the Arab region about the need for effective institutional arrangements for holistic policy coherence (e.g., to address water challenges and food security) as a vehicle for cooperation.
2. Promote awareness of the importance of changing mindsets for more effective coordination and collaboration.
3. Enhance knowledge about governance capacities for policy coherence and changing mindsets for sustainable development; planning and systems thinking; cross-governmental, and inter-ministerial collaboration, and multi-stakeholder engagement.
4. Identify key priorities and follow-up actions to promote policy coherence and changing mindsets in public institutions.
5. Receive feedback from the participants on the relevance of the toolkits to their national context.
6. Ascertain Member States' demands for follow up capacity development on these issues at the national level.

4. Methodology and Session Themes

The Facilitated Online Training Course will feature presentations by experts, interactive activities, group discussions and innovative practices for peer-to-peer learning. It will focus on group discussions, which will enable participants to transform in-depth learning into practice.

The Online Training Course will be composed of four sessions:

Session 1 will focus on an overview of governance capacities needed for policy coherence and changing mindsets. It will include the following key elements:

1. Assessment of a country's needs regarding institutional arrangements for policy coherence and changing mindsets (based on a pre-questionnaire).
2. Understanding of the building blocks for policy coherence and the importance of institutional arrangements.
3. Overview of the role of public institutions in changing mindsets and tackling the SDGs.
4. Understanding of the mindset shifts that should occur at multiple levels (individual, organizational and institutional) to promote policy coherence.

Session 2 will focus on planning and systems thinking. It will include the following:

1. Discussion among participating countries about policy priorities, linking them to system thinking and discussion about the importance of politics in the policy cycle.

2. Discussion about the importance of long-term planning and system thinking: the need to develop, plan and monitor policies in an integrated manner.
3. Understanding the importance of an experimental and strategic mindsets to implement the SDGs and realize the principles of the Agenda 2030.

Session 3 will focus on cross-governmental and inter-ministerial collaboration. It will include the following elements:

1. The importance of different types of mindsets needed for collaboration.
2. Peer-to-peer learning among countries that have promoted policy coherence through a round-table discussion on institutional arrangements for policy coherence and changing mindsets.

Session 4 will focus on multi-stakeholder engagement. It will include the following elements:

1. Discussion of the gaps, challenges and strategies of multi-stakeholder engagement (based on the readiness assessment)
2. Activity on changing mindsets
3. Action planning as a take- away and a trigger to proceed upon completion of the Online Training Course.

For each session and between sessions, participants will undertake pre-webinar assignments individually and/or in country teams.

5. Format

The Facilitated Online Training Course will be composed of four webinars that will each run for two hours and forty-five minutes. Discussions during the meeting will adhere to the Chatham House Rules. The follow-up actions, including key recommendations and the summary of the discussion, will be disseminated through the UN DESA and UN ESCWA websites.

The Training will be conducted in English, through the online platform Zoom. Breakout group discussions can be conducted in Arabic and French.

Participants should commit to participating in all four sessions as they are inter-connected and build on each other.

6. Target Audience

Senior public officials, including policy makers, heads of planning departments, coordinators for the implementation of the SDGs or for the implementation of national development plans, ministry of finance, chief innovation or information officers, parliamentarians, and schools of public administration, among others.

Participating countries: Bahrain, Morocco and Oman

7. Expected Results

The Online Training Course will promote critical understanding of sustainable development issues, enhance governance capacity, strengthen public servants' awareness of their active role in contributing to the achievement of the SDGs and develop the knowledge and capacities required to

promote policy coherence to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The piloting of the toolkits intends to support concrete outcomes and lasting impact.

8. Agenda

Session 1 – Governance Capacities for Policy Coherence and Changing Mindsets for Sustainable Development

26 January 2021: New York 8:00 AM, Rabat 2:00 PM, Beirut 3:00 PM, Manama 4:00 PM, Muscat 5:00 PM		
TIME	**AGENDA**	**SPEAKER**
8:00 AM	Welcome remarks by Moderator	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
8:02 AM	Welcome address and presentation of the Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs	Ms. Adriana Alberti Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
8:10 AM	Address by UN ESCWA representative	Mr. Youness Abouyoub Chief, Governance and State Building Section, UN ESCWA
8:20 AM	Ice-breaking/ Kahoot quiz	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
8:30 AM	Policy coherence: What, Why and How Overview of the Toolkit on Governance Capacities and Institutional Arrangements for Policy Coherence	Ms. Veronique Verbruggen Senior Inter-regional Advisor on Institutional Development DPIDG, UN DESA
8:40 AM	Institutional arrangements for policy coherence: gaps and challenges Presentation of the Building Blocks of the Readiness Assessment	Ms. Veronique Verbruggen Senior Inter-regional Advisor on Institutional Development DPIDG, UN DESA
8:55 AM	Why is it Important to Change Mindsets in Public Institution to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development? Overview of the Toolkit on Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions for the implementation of the SDGs	Ms. Adriana Alberti Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)
9:05 AM	Break-out sessions (one group will be formed for	3 Rapporteurs (one from each

	each country). The objective of this session will be to take stock of the current situation in each country in relation to selected building blocks using the readiness assessment	participating country) and 3 Facilitators (Karam Karam for Bahrain, Veronique Verbruggen for Morocco, and Youness Abouyoub for Oman)
9:45 AM	Break	
9:55 AM	Rapporteurs' key findings (3 X 5 min)	Rapporteurs from participating countries
10:10 AM	Open discussion/ Kahoot quiz	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
10:35 AM	Closing remarks	Mr. Youness Abouyoub Chief, Governance and State Building Section, UN ESCWA
10:45 AM	Program ends	Moderator

Session 2 – Planning and Systems Thinking

28 January 2021: New York 8:00 AM, Rabat 2:00 PM, Beirut 3:00 PM, Manama 4:00 PM, Muscat 5:00 PM		
TIME	**AGENDA**	**SPEAKER**
8:00 AM	Welcome remarks by Moderator	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
8:05 AM	Long term planning and system thinking: the need to develop, plan and monitor policies in an integrated manner	Ms. Thurid Hustedt Professor of Public Administration and Management, Hertie School, Germany
8:20 AM	Video/ Systems-thinking & initial reactions from participants	
8:30 AM	Addressing the political dimension of policy coherence	Mr. Rolf Alter former Director Public Governance, OECD, Senior Fellow at the Hertie School, Germany
8:45 AM	The importance of an experimental mindset to implement the SDGs and realize the principles of the Agenda 2030	Mr. Jesper Christiansen Co-founder and Director at States of Change
9:00 AM	Leveraging a systems-thinking mindset	Mr. James Landale, Head of content and partnerships for Strategic Intelligence, World Economic Forum (WEF) Mr. Abhinav Chugh, Content and

TIME	AGENDA	SPEAKER
		Partnerships Specialist, Strategic Intelligence, World Economic Forum (WEF)
9:10 AM	Common Arab Regional Job Competencies Framework for Senior Public Servants	Mr. Karam Karam, Senior Regional Advisor on Governance and Peacebuilding, Emerging and Conflict related Division, UN ESCWA
9:20 AM	Break	
9:30 AM	Break-out sessions (one group will be formed for each country). The objective of this session will be to take stock of the current situation in each country in relation to planning and systems thinking	3 rapporteurs (one from each participating country) and 3 facilitators (Karam Karam for Bahrain, Veronique Verbruggen for Morocco, and Youness Abouyoub for Oman)
10:20 AM	Open discussion/ Kahoot quiz	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
10:40 AM	Closing remarks	Ms. Veronique Verbruggen Senior Inter-regional Advisor on Institutional Development DPIDG, UN DESA
10:45 AM	Program ends	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development

Session 3 – Cross-Governmental and Inter-Ministerial Collaboration

02 February 2021: New York 8:00 AM, Rabat 2:00 PM, Beirut 3:00 PM, Manama 4:00 PM, Muscat 5:00 PM		
TIME	**AGENDA**	**SPEAKER**
8:00 AM	Welcome remarks by Moderator	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
8:15 AM	Gaps and challenges in promoting cross-ministerial collaboration	Mr. Louis Meuleman Member of the UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)
8:30 AM	Exploring a leadership mindset (activity included)	Mr. Jesper Christiansen Co-founder and Director at States of Change

TIME	AGENDA	SPEAKER
9:00 AM	Digital skills for institutional interoperability	Mr. Georges Lobo DIGIT D.2 – Interoperability European Commission
9:15 AM	Creating an Evidenced-based Mindset Implementing an Evidence-based Mindset	Mr. David Alzate Senior Policy Associate at J-PAL Ms. Hana Lakhdar Senior Manager, at J-PAL
9:30 AM	Break	
9:40 AM	Round-table discussion: Mexico and Singapore	Ms. Diana Alarcón González Chief of Policy Development, Mexico City Government
		Mr. Sherman Tan Desk Officer (Climate Change & Sustainable Development), International Organisations Directorate Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore
10:35 AM	Questions and Answers: Open discussion	Moderator: Ms. Veronique Verbruggen, Senior Inter-Regional Advisor, DPIDG, UN DESA
10:40 AM	Kahoot quiz	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
10:45 AM	Closing remarks	Moderator
10:50 AM	Program ends	Moderator

Session 4 – Stakeholders Engagement

04 February 2021: New York 8:00 AM, Rabat 2:00 PM, Beirut 3:00 PM, Manama 4:00 PM, Muscat 5:00 PM		
TIME	**AGENDA**	**SPEAKER**
8:00 AM	Welcome remarks by Moderator	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
8:05 AM	Discussion of the gaps, challenges and strategies of multi-stakeholder engagement (based on the readiness assessment) Finland	Ms. Marja Innanen Chief Officer, Deputy Secretary General National Commission on Sustainable Development Finland
8:20 AM	Case study on changing mindsets through Empathy-building: Bangladesh	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information

		Literacy and Sustainable Development
8:30 AM	Break-out sessions: participants will be divided into three groups to work on an Action Plan.	3 rapporteurs (one from each participating country) and 3 facilitators (Karam Karam for Bahrain, Veronique Verbruggen for Morocco, and Youness Abouyoub for Oman)
9:20 AM	Break	
9:30 AM	Plenary session: Presentation by three Groups	Designated rapporteurs to present
9:55 AM	Kahoot quiz	Mr. Aslam Alam Chairman and Executive Director, Bangladesh Institute for Information Literacy and Sustainable Development
10:05 AM	Remarks by one participant from each country on the usefulness of the training course, how will you apply the knowledge gained in your own context and key take-aways from the training	Each country group will propose a volunteer
10:20 AM	Remarks by ESCWA on the regional dimension	Mr. Youness Abouyoub Chief, Governance and State Building Section, UN ESCWA
10:40 AM	Closing remarks	UN DESA
10:45 AM	Program ends	Moderator

9. Reading material

- ECOSOC Principles of effective governance for sustainable development
  https://publicadministration.un.org/Portals/1/Images/CEPA/Principles_of_effective_governance_english.pdf

- UN DESA (2018) World Public Sector Report - Working Together: Integration, Institutions and the Sustainable Development Goals
  https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/PDFs/World%20Public%20Sector%20Report2018.pdf

- Curriculum on Governance for the Sustainable Development Goals – Training of Trainers Toolkits
    - Toolkit on Institutional Arrangements and Governance Capacities for Policy Cohrence
    - Toolkit on Changing Mindsets in Public Institutions to Implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

  (The toolkits will be available soon on unpan.un.org)

- United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) Website
  unpan.un.org

- Teaching silos to dance: A Condition to Implement the SDGs, I. Niestroy & L. Meuleman
  [Guest Article: Teaching Silos to Dance: A Condition to Implement the SDGs](#) | SDG Knowledge Hub | IISD

- Building a coherent response for a sustainable post-COVID-19 recovery, preliminary version, updated 13 July, OECD
  [PRELIMINARY VERSION_PCSD_Policy-Response-Covid19_13 July 2020.pdf (oecd.org)](#)

10. UN DESA/DPIDG Focal Points

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