

Workshop on 'sound policymaking for sustainable development'  
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The CEPA principles for effective governance have been endorsed by the ECOSOC-Council.

CEPA wants to contribute to realizing the SDGs by 2030, by ensuring that the set of eleven principles around the three clusters of 'effectiveness', 'accountability', and 'inclusion' become a leverage in reaching the desired outcomes in countries and regions.

CEPA developed 'principles', not 'guidelines'. The strategic difference is that principles may be applied in such a way that implementation may and should depend on differences in culture and legal frameworks, and that starting positions and resources should be taken into account.

It is clear that the African continent has its own culture, starting positions and resources to be taken into account to realise the SDGs in Africa as a continent, and in Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa and Uganda in particular.

To move from governance principles to SDG outcomes requires these principles to affect institutional realities, organizational realities to delivery services, and also policy realities.

For that purpose, CEPA defined 62 policy strategies which help to operationalize these eleven principles which are clustered as effectiveness, accountability and inclusion.

Within 'effectiveness' as a cluster, three principles are defined: Competence, Collaboration, and 'Sound Policy Making' which is the focus of this seminar.

Ultimately, 'sound policy making' as a process should ensure 'sound policies' which means three things:

- these policies should be effective and have visible and real results and outcomes for citizens and target groups.
- there should be responsibilities allocated for these policies and the making of these policies; and obviously, these responsibilities should match accountabilities for these policies and the making of these policies
- these policies should be inclusive, but also the making of these policies should be inclusive.

For 'sound policies' and 'sound policy making' to be effective, to be embedded in a logic of responsibilities and accountabilities, to be inclusive, it is crucial that there is culture, infrastructure and frameworks

- a culture of planning and foresight, of accepting risk and uncertainty, of listening and adjusting to be coherent, openness to science and society,
- an infrastructure for monitoring and evaluation, for impact analyses, of statistics, of research,
- a framework of collaboration and sharing of data and information,

The challenge, for all countries, but starting positions and capacity do matter, the challenges are to shape 'ownership' for 'sound policy making', to guide and translate this ownership into a changed concrete, visible and recognizable practice, to spread this concrete, visible and recognizable practice to other parts of government, and to stay motivated and focused.

Let us look at these four elements of 'ownership', 'translate', and 'spread', and 'stay motivated and focused'.

*How to create 'ownership' of 'sound policy making'?*

It means we need to disseminate knowledge and awareness about why 'sound policy making' is crucial, necessary, indispensable for effectiveness. Our (national) schools of government should play a key role in this. This is not just about knowledge, this is also about a culture of reconsidering existing policies, about openness to compare and for bench learning, about reflecting about what works and what doesn't work rather than just 'copy pasting' solutions from the past or from other countries.

It means we need to cascade this 'ownership' down to local government as a part of making 'sound policies'.

It means we need to involve society at large, but certainly our universities and research centres.

*How to translate and import 'sound policy thinking' and making' into new or existing administrative practices?*

One could have a critical look and check the national strategies, specific policy strategies, and organizational strategic plans.

It could mean to check whether sound policy strategies are connected to budgets, and whether these budgets refer to SDG outcomes?

It means we need to look differently at the different ways of implementation and processes, and perhaps have a pilot project to start a new practice.

Next to be convinced (ownership) and have some linking pins with new or changed existing practices, we need to spread this 'sound policy making'.

*How to share, how to spread, how to disseminate useful existing pilots or practices ?*

It could mean to create a platforms for bench-learning where good practices, across levels of government and across policy fields, are shared.

I certainly means to document what works, and what doesn't work, and why, and openly discuss this.

*How to stay motivated and how to keep a focus on improvement and progress?*

Long term results are not just a sequence of quick wins, even if we need some quick wins.

It will be important to reflect about how to establish and reward 'cultures of assessment and feedback' to learn about what works and what doesn't work and why.

Benchlearning platforms could include mechanisms of coaching, of helpdesks, of peer-learning for leadership and for grassroots.

It will be important to show results. Performance has two meanings: it is results, it is also putting something on stage. Sound policy making leads to sound policies, which leads to better delivery.

Sound policy making and sound policies and better delivery should be done, but, even more importantly, should be seen to be done.

That is why this workshop is so important.