

Webinar 4 on Sound Policy Making and Strategic Foresight to Build Resilient Strategies for Sustainable Development

Wednesday, 31 July 2024

Background

Sound policymaking, one of the eleven principles of effective governance for sustainable development, which were developed by the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), is designed to operationalize effective governance and support decision making. To achieve their intended results, public policies are to be coherent with one another and founded on true or well-established grounds, in full accordance with fact, reason and good sense. This webinar will focus on strategic foresight, one of the eight commonly used strategies for addressing the principle of sound policymaking.

Policymakers are often more comfortable projecting from the past rather than imagining the future, and strategic planning approaches often incorrectly assume that the future will be an incremental iteration of the past or the present. A strategic foresight approach starts by exploring the future, typically beyond the planning horizon, before considering implications for the present. It is defined as an organized, systematic way of looking beyond the expected to engage with uncertainty and complexity.

Foresight methods can be used at all stages of policy and planning cycles in a range of ways to address different kinds of policy outcomes. A foresight-based approach is instrumental in ensuring that strategic policies and plans, such as national strategies, regional-level visions, local development plans, or frameworks for development cooperation, are developed to ensure a more equitable future, and incorporate diverse voices and perspectives. Instead of attempting to provide solutions for current challenges, strategic foresight encourages decision makers to explore the likely nature of future challenges. Strategic foresight emerges as a powerful tool for navigating uncertainties and shaping proactive policies and strategies. This webinar aims to explore the significance of strategic foresight in government planning and provide insights into its practical applications and benefits.

Objectives

- Enhance understanding of strategic planning and foresight sector to address future complex challenges.
- Strengthen capacities on systems thinking and strategic foresight for policy coherence and long-term planning in the public sector.



Guiding questions

1. How can strategic foresight add value in policy making and how does it differ from traditional planning?
2. What are some of the key elements of foresight eco-system in government?
3. What are some of the ways or methods to identify emerging trends and signals of change?
4. How can governments foster acceptance and use of strategic foresight in government?
5. What are some good practices of embedding strategic foresight in governance?

