



Ministry of
the Interior and Safety

 Incheon Metropolitan City

Symposium on
“Building Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions and Public
Administration
for Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

5-8 December 2017

Aide Memoire

Songdo Convensia Convention Center
Incheon, Republic of Korea

A. Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions” (A/RES/70/1, para. 35). Goal 16 of the 2030 Agenda specifically calls for effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

The 2030 Agenda also encouraged all United Nations Member States to “develop as soon as practicable ambitious national responses to the overall implementation of this Agenda”. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the commitments contained in the Paris Climate Change Agreement, the SAMOA Pathway, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and other agreements made at the UN are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. They need to be implemented in a complementary and synergistic way. Institutions need new capacities and knowledge to provide integrated support to implementation and to “leave no one behind”.

Many governments in Asia and the Pacific have made good progress in implementing the SDGs since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They have been adapting the SDG targets to their national circumstances and priorities and incorporating them in their policies and development plans where applicable. They are adapting their institutions, engaging local governments, parliaments and other actors in some cases; and identifying follow-up and review structures. The SDGs, as an integrated framework, call for whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches and many countries have been moving in this direction. Good practices, lessons and challenges are already emerging. These were discussed at the United Nations High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2016 when 22 countries carried out the first voluntary national reviews (VNRs). The discussions continued at the HLPF in July 2017 for which 43 countries presented their national review. The 2017 HLPF concluded with the Ministerial Declaration, particularly calling for the need to take appropriate action towards localizing and communicating the SDGs at all levels, from the national to the community and grassroots level.

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) has already organized two regional Symposiums on the theme of equipping public institutions for implementing the 2030 Agenda. The first Symposium on “*Promotion of an inclusive and accountable public administration for sustainable development*”, organized with the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and in collaboration with UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), was held in March 2016 in Cochabamba, Bolivia. The second Symposium on “*Implementing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda in Small Island Developing States (SIDS): Equipping public institutions and mobilizing partnerships*”, hosted by the Government of the Bahamas was held in February 2017 in Bahamas.

The UN-DESA is preparing to organize the third regional Symposium in Africa, entitled “*Governance and Implementation of the Sustainable Development Commitments in Africa*”, organized in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the International Organization of la Francophonie (IOF).

Against this backdrop, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) of the UN-DESA, through its Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), in collaboration with the Republic of Korea and with the support of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) and UNDP, will organize a Symposium from 5 to 8 December 2017 on “*Building Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions and Public Administration for Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*”.

The ultimate goal of the Symposium is to contribute to developing the capacity of governments to address various challenges posed by the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and respond to the SDGs in innovative ways, drawing from the strategies that different countries are implementing and the related successes, challenges and difficulties.

The Symposium will also provide the opportunity to promote international and regional cooperation in implementing the SDGs. It will allow participants to identify good practices and ideas for enhancing cooperation between countries and between central and local governments. This will include actions for localizing the SDGs, improving public services delivery, engaging all stakeholders, particularly civil society organizations and the private sector, enhancing means of implementation, and adapting plans and policies to the SDGs and to national situations. Participants are expected to learn from their peers, be inspired by fresh ideas, and connections and feel empowered to drive change.

B. Objectives

The Symposium aims at the following:

- i. To discuss institutional arrangements, with a focus on strengthening institutional leadership and adopting a whole-of-government (WoG) approach for SDG implementation;
- ii. To discuss how to enhance cooperation between central and local governments including on SDG implementation and localization;
- iii. To learn about how to improve public service delivery and make it more inclusive, notably through leveraging ICTs;
- iv. To discuss how to engage all stakeholders in SDG implementation and renew and follow up at all levels, highlighting successful practices in Asia and the Pacific;
- v. To discuss how to enhance means of implementation and partnership mobilization, underscoring the important roles of public companies, the private sector, NGOs and public-private-partnerships (PPPs); and
- vi. To provide a forum for country participants to strengthen their partnership, particularly through South-South cooperation and working with international organizations to better support countries in their endeavors to advance the 2030 Agenda.

C. Participants

The Symposium will be open to participants from countries in Asia and the Pacific. It is expected that about 300 participants will attend the Symposium. The total number of country participants will be around 70.

The Symposium will be geared towards the needs of governmental officials and civil servants of senior rank, in particular Ministers and public service executives, including institutional leaders, SDG focal points and other participants from the following parts of government:

- National agencies in charge of the implementation of the SDGs, such as the Office of the President or Prime Minister or ministerial entities in charge of national planning;
- Ministries of finance or entities in charge of budget;
- Any other related institution in charge of any aspects of implementing the SDGs from a Whole of Government perspective;

- Line ministries in charge of sustainable development;
- Ministries or other entities in charge of public administration and/or overseeing public service management;
- Local governments
- Other actors such as academia, private sector, NGOs, think tanks, and associations of local governments.

Around 20 officials from international organizations will be invited to contribute to and participate in the Symposium. Aside from international participants, around 100 government officials, academics, think tanks, private sector, NGOs, experts, practitioners and policy makers from Korea will be invited to contribute to and participate in the Symposium as well.

D. Expected Outcomes and Outputs

At the end of the Symposium:

- Participants will have strengthened capacities to design integrated approaches to adapting, planning, budgeting, monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the SDGs;
- Participants from public institutions, including institutions in charge of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, will have a better understanding of the role of public institutions and ways to strengthen institutional and policy coherence and adapt the SDGs through a WoG approach;
- Participants will have enhanced their knowledge and skills required to allocate resources effectively, set and formulate priorities, in order to align their own budgeting processes with SDG-oriented outcomes;
- Participants will have built networks with critical ministries for SDG implementation from their country and other countries; and
- Participants are familiarized with and have improved their skills to take ownership of the national agenda for sustainable development.

A brief Report documenting the key discussions and outcomes of the proceedings will be produced and shared online with Symposium participants, stakeholders, and the wider public.

To ensure the lasting impact of the Symposium, a process to help build partnerships could be launched at the meeting and organizers will follow up and track the implementation of these outcomes. The Symposium's website shall be possibly converted into an interactive knowledge-sharing portal for ongoing support to participating countries linked to the partnerships platforms maintained by DESA.

At the six-month outcome implementation mark, each participating country will be encouraged to share via the portal information on how the acquired knowledge, skills and insights have contributed to their SDG implementation efforts. Participating countries will also be invited to share on the portal lessons learned in implementing the SDGs and issues requiring further collaborative action. The information generated and shared on the portal will serve to guide DPADM in developing and implementing capacity development programmes in Asia and the Pacific, such as study tours, training workshops, and other strategic capacity development initiatives. It will also help DPADM in directing

countries to other organizations and to countries who can offer support.

E. Organization:

UN-DESA (DPADM with support from its Project Office on Governance), UNDP and UNESCAP will be partners to design and deliver the Symposium, working with the Government of the Republic of Korea and the Incheon Metropolitan City Government.

UN-DESA/DPADM has been conducting analytical work, keeping track of progress and building the capacities of member states to implement and review the implementation of the SDGs, including by building the capacity of senior public servants. UN-DESA/DPADM has been focusing on reflecting and supporting public institutions in becoming more effective, inclusive and accountable; and UNPOG under the guidance of UN-DESA/DPADM is mandated to address the strengthening of the capacities of public administration in Asia and the Pacific and Eastern Africa to translate the SDGs and other internationally agreed goals into institutional arrangements, strategies and programmes at country level and organize their institutions.

UNESCAP is assisting in building a resilient Asia and Pacific region founded on shared prosperity, social equity and sustainability and aims to deliver as a comprehensive multilateral platform for promoting cooperation among Member States to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic and social development in Asia and the Pacific. On 26 July 2017, UNESCAP published the *Regional Road Map for Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Asia and the Pacific*, which set the course for transforming the region and delivering inclusive and sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific.

The UNDP Seoul Policy Centre for Global Development Partnerships is part of the United Nations' global development and knowledge network and it advocates for change and connects countries to knowledge, experience and resources to help people build better lives; and UNDP Bangkok Regional Hub provides UNDP Country Offices in Asia and the Pacific with easy access to knowledge through high quality advisory services based on global applied research and UNDP lessons learnt, and build partnerships and promote regional capacity building initiatives.

F. Languages:

The Symposium will be conducted in English.

G. Venue and Dates:

The Symposium will take place at Songdo Convensia Convention Center, Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 5-8 December 2017.

For information please contact:

UN-DESA/DPADM:

Mr. Chae Gun Chung

Head, UN Project Office on Governance
Division for Public Administration and Development Management
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Tel: +82 (2) 756-7576
Email: chaegun.chung@un.org

Ms. Adriana Alberti

Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer
Division for Public Administration and Development Management
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Tel: +1 (212) 963-2299
Email: alberti@un.org

Ms. Yeh-Jin Suh

Programme Assistant
UN Project Office on Governance
Division for Public Administration and Development Management
United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
Tel: +82 (2) 717-4263
Email: suh@un.org