UN Public Administration Programme

Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM)
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

DPADM Monthly Update to CEPA Members: October 2012

1. DPADM's IRA Working Group Meeting

As part of the ongoing effort to improve integration of normative and advisory services in the field, DPADM's IRA Working Group met on 25 September, 2012, to discuss and share their experiences about their current projects and how they can work together to service requests that go beyond their individual capacity. The IRA Working Group meets regularly, under close guidance of the Director and the Branch Chiefs to coordinate their work based on DESA's Capacity Development Strategy and Divisional Strategy and Work Plan. It taps into the individual and collective expertise of the group, enabling IRAs to effectively apply themselves as they provide advisory services to their respective projects and Member States' requests.

2. New Development Account Project

DPADM is set to begin implementing a new development account project from November 2012 through to December 2016, titled "Strengthening capacities of the public sector in least developed countries to deliver quality services equitably through the transfer and adaptation of innovative practices". The project aims to contribute towards building public administration capacities in Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by providing quality services to enable the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including MDGs. This will be achieved through training, sharing of knowledge and facilitating the transfer and adaptation of innovative public administration practices discovered through the United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA). The UNPSA programme encourages the collection, reward, dissemination and sharing of knowledge on innovative practices in public administration.

3. International Conference on E-Governance (ICEGOV 2012)

At the International Conference on the theory and practice of e-Governance (ICEGOV), co-organized by DPADM/DESA, United Nations University and University of Albany held in Albany, NY, from 22 to 25, Haiyan Qian highlighted that a Post 2015 global sustainable agenda would require governments, civil society and the private sector to become effective partners, leveraging on the transformative power of e-governance frameworks. In a statement read on her behalf by DAPAM's IRA, Mr. Jonas Rabinovitch, she outlined key global trends such as open government, collaborative government, use of social media for enhanced civic participation and the overall actual and potential impact of e-government policies in addressing the MDGs and SDGs under discussion. Her observations echoed similar trends to those made by conference participants on the various dimensions of e-government development across the world and marked the conclusion of the conference.

4. Global e-Government Forum: Smart e-Government for a Better Future

The Global e-Government Forum: Smart e-Government for a Better Future, jointly organized by DPADM/DESA, Korea's Ministry of Public Administration and Security (MOPAS) and Ministry of Knowledge Economy in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 18 to 19 October resolved to: i) increase knowledge of recent trends and challenges, and sharing of best practices and tools in e-government, the results of which will be shared further through United Nations Public Administration Country

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Studies (UNPACS), DPADM's new online knowledge platform; ii) promote the United Nations e-Government Survey and increase visibility of UNPOG's role in promoting e-government in the Asia Pacific region; iii) increase awareness of the United Nations regional commissions' aid strategies for e-government assistance in their respective regions; iv) raise awareness and promote the global CIO Network as a vehicle for sharing country experiences and developing inter-governmental and cross-sectoral cooperation mechanisms in designing and implementing ICT-enabled public services; and v) adopt the Seoul Communiqué as a guide for requisite follow-up measures to enhance global e-government cooperation among United Nations Member States.

5. Special Visit by Japan's Newly Appointed First-Ever National Government CIO

Japan's newly-appointed first-ever national Government Chief Information Officer (GCIO), Mr. Koichi Endo, paid a special visit to DPADM and met with Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, DPADM, on 16 October 2012.

Mr. Endo, a highly accomplished 40-year veteran in the field of information technologies, was recently appointed by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda of the Japanese Government on 10 August 2012. He expressed great appreciation to DPADM for its efforts in producing the UN E-Government Survey that not only provides well-recognized global benchmarking on e-government development, but also provides insightful knowledge sharing, policy advice and guidance on e-governance.

During the meeting, Ms. Qian and Mr. Endo exchanged views and experiences on e-government development trends including the Japanese experience. A presentation was delivered to DPADM staff on the recent efforts of the Japanese Government particularly in integrating its e-services based on a whole-of-government citizen-centric approach, as well as its m-government services for disaster management, including those co-produced with the citizens through open government data such as energy consumption. Ms. Qian and Mr. Endo agreed to continue to collaborate particularly in the sharing of Japanese's experiences and research data through the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS).

The Japanese delegation was comprised of the following additional officials: Mr. Kazuyohsi Onishi, Deputy Director. Government CIO Office; Mr. Nobuhiro Hikichi, Deputy Director, Government CIO Office; Mr. Masato Yachi, Consul, Consulate General of Japan in New York; and Ms. Reiko Tsukakoshi Farrelly, Interpreter.

6. UNPAN Partners and SADC Member States Meet in South Africa

At a training workshop of the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) Partners and Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Member States in Cape Town, South Africa, from 10 to 12 October 2012, Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, DPADM, delivered welcome remarks and a substantive presentation on "What is Open Data and Open Government Data Around the World" through pre-recorded video messages.

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Participants agreed that : i) an enabling environment is fundamental to the effective implementation and sustainability of Open Government Data (OGD) initiatives and that the initiatives have to start at the top, in the middle, and at the bottom; (ii) creating open processes for design and implementation of OGD initiatives is equally important; (iii) political, legal, organizational, technical, economic and social dimensions should be carefully considered while developing benchmarking frameworks to measure open data progress in countries; (iv) records are fundamental to the effective implementation and sustainability of open government data initiatives in order to provide verifiable, quality sources of information; (v) more research is needed to measure the impact of open government data initiatives.

Participants also discussed the future of the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN), focusing on what the network needs to do differently to stay current and relevant to policy makers, experts and practitioners, particularly in view of deliberations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda which are underway. They also discussed the issues surrounding open government data and reviewed the draft open government data toolkit currently under development by DPADM.

Strong interest was registered by Member States, particularly from Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, and Zambia, to contribute to a global open data portal in the event that the platform is offered by DPADM. Introduction of the Open Government Data Toolkit was found very useful and timely not only by Member States but also by the regional organizations present in the Workshop. The workshop was organized by DPADM in cooperation with the Centre for Public Service Innovation (CPSI) of the Ministry for Public Service and Administration of the Republic of South Africa.

Further information about the workshop can be viewed at http://www.unpan.org/sa2012

7. Preparatory mission for the 7th Internet Governance Forum (IGF), 6-9 November 2012

A preparatory mission to Baku, Azerbaijan , by DPADM/DESA's Senior Governance and Public Administration Officer, Mr. Vyatcheslav Cherkasov on 3 -5 October 2012 discussed various issues related to the forthcoming 7th Internet Governance Forum, including the requirement of signing the Host country Agreement by the host Government.

DPADM and senior government officials discussed and agreed on substantive, administrative, legal, logistical and organizational matters including Mr. Wu's speaking roles at the High-Level Ministerial Forum, IGF's Opening Ceremony as well as his bilateral meetings with the Host Government and different stakeholder groups of the IGF community.

There was also a media briefing conducted by DESA, UNIC Moscow and the Government of Azerbaijan on the ongoing preparations of the Forum in Moscow on 8 October, 2012. The briefing raised awareness among the local media and electronic communications experts and shed light on the United Nations' role with respect to the Forum.

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8. Meeting with Malaysian Delegation

On 19 October 2012, Ms. Haiyan Qian, Director, DPADM met with a delegation from Malaysia comprising Ms. Gayah Gulam Haidar, Head of Public Governance, Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC), and Ms. Suhaizah Salleh, Manager, Public Governance, Multimedia Development Corporation (MDeC). During the meeting the delegation and Ms. Qian exchanged knowledge on latest trends and best practices in the area of e-government. Ms. Haidar thanked Ms. Qian for her insightful advice on e-governance in the year 2005 which helped the Malaysian Government achieve great progress with local government authorities enabling them improve service delivery to citizens. Ms. Qian shared the Divisions' work including research on whole of government approach to citizen centric service delivery through the use of mobile services. Ms. Qian and Ms. Haidar agreed to continue to collaborate particularly in the sharing of Malaysia's experiences and research data through the United Nations Public Administration Country Studies (UNPACS).

9. Workshop on "Harnessing Diversity in the African Public Service: Exploring Policies and Strategies to Enhance Inclusion and Performance"

DPADM/DESA, UNDP/Regional Bureau for Africa (UNDP/RBA), UNECA and Africa Public Sector Human Resource Managers' Network (APS-HRMnet) jointly organized a capacity development workshop on "Harnessing Diversity in the African Public Service: Exploring Policies and Strategies to Enhance Inclusion and Performance" from 11 to 12 October 2012 in Gaborone, Botswana. It provided an opportunity for public service mangers in Africa to discuss effective management of diversity and inclusion so as to improve the performance in Africa's Public Service as well as feed into the Eighth African Governance Forum (AGF VIII) whose theme was on "Democracy, Elections and Management of Diversity in Africa". The workshop underscored that: (i) the public service is an indispensable instrument of state action critical in the process of change and transformation and that it must always reflect the development concerns of all the components of the society it serves, (ii) managing diversity and inclusion in the public service is part of the implementation of the African Charter on Values and Principles of Public Service and Administration, (iii) managing diversity and inclusion becomes difficult if the environment is not endowed with, democracy, justice, equity, and respect for human rights, (iv) diversity must be seen from the perspective of the public servants ability to deliver diverse services as well being able to harness the capacities of diverse groups and to include them effectively in the public service workforce and tap their potential to contribute to improving the delivery of public service.

Ms. Odette Ramsingh, CEPA Member delivered a statement on behalf of Mr. George Yambesi, the President of the Africa Public Sector Human Resource Managers Network (APS-HRMnet) and a Vice President of APS-HRMnet and made a presentation on inclusion of people with disabilities during the Discussion Panel on "Harnessing the Capabilities of People with Disabilities in the Public Service in Africa". Hon. Victoria Diogo, CEPA Member and Minister of Public Service of Mozambique attended the Africa Governance Forum and participated in the discussions on Democracy, Elections and the Management of Diversity in Africa.