Promoting Professionalism and Ethics in the Public Service

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Workshop on Combating Corruption

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What is professionalism and ethics in the public service?

☞ **Professionalism:**

    – the quest for excellence

    – based on knowledge, competence, and skills

☞ **Ethics:**

    – the proper exercise of judgement and discretion

    – based on accepted values and norms

How can professionalism and ethics prevent corruption?

- ☞ Corruption:
  - – the misuse of public office for private gain
  - – taking advantage of opportunities and weak systems
- ☞ Professionalism and Ethics:
  - – vaccination against corruption
  - – helps honest public servants stay honest

Why is the UN promoting professionalism and ethics?

- ☞ UN System works to:
  - promote respect for human rights and peace
  - protect the environment
  - fight disease
  - promote development and reduce poverty
- ☞ A well-performing public service in Member States is a precondition to all these objectives
- ☞ A well-performing public service is based on its professionalism and integrity

Who in the UN Secretariat is involved?

☞ **Dept. of Economic and Social Affairs**

– promotes a multi-dimensional and integrated approach to development

☞ **Division for Public Economics and Public Administration**

– assists in intergovernmental policy deliberations

– assists Member States in improving public administration and finance systems

– supports capacity-building, including institutional reinforcement and human resources development
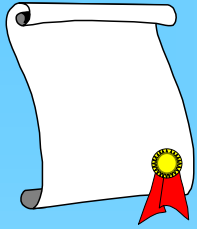
Why is DPEPA involved?

- General AssemblyResolution 50/225

  - Recognizes important link between public administration and development

  - Stresses importance of the public service in development process

  - Sees value in strengthening professionalism and ethics of public servants

What are DPEPA's activities?

- ☞ Regional and policy fora
- ☞ Publications
- ☞ Public Service Charter and Code of Conduct for Africa
- ☞ Information system for public service ethics in Africa
- ☞ Policy advisory services
- ☞ Partnerships with international, national, and non-governmental organizations

Conferences

- Regional conference for Central and Eastern Europe, Greece, 1997 (21 countries)
- National conference for Brazil, 1997
- Regional conference for Africa, 1998 (35 countries)

Publications:
www.un.org/esa/governance

- Professionalism and Ethics in the Public Service (Overview)
- Promoting Ethics in the Public Service (Brazil)
- Public Service in Transition: Ethical Values and Standards (Central & Eastern Europe)
- The Civil Service in Africa: New Challenges, Professionalism and Ethics (forthcoming)

African Public Service Charter and Code of Conduct

* Outcome of the Rabat Declaration, issued at 2nd Pan-African Conference of Civil Service Ministers, 1998

* Working group of Civil Service Ministers drafting document in 1999

* Presentation at the 3rd Pan-African Conference of Civil Service Ministers, 2000

Information System:
Public Sector Ethics in Africa

☞ Joint project with UNDP Africa

☞ Comparative study of 10 African countries

☞ Information on ethics policies, programmes, and institutions

☞ Conceptual framework covers preventive, monitoring, and enforcement efforts

☞ Outputs: regional database and information system and 10 country reports

☞ Anticipated Outcomes: peer review, emergence of gaps and best practices in the region

Participating Countries

1999 / 2000

West Africa:
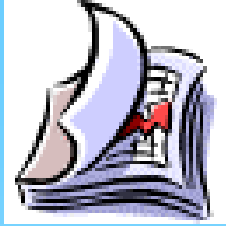Cameroon
Gabon
Ghana
Nigeria
Senegal

East Africa:
Kenya
Uganda

Southern Africa:
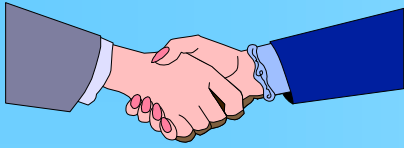Madagascar
Namibia
South Africa

Policy Advice

- Namibia's Promotion of Ethics and Combatting Corruption Conference
- Thailand's International Law Enforcement Academy Seminar for senior officials
- UNDP PACT's assessment mission to Yemen

Partnerships

- International: UNDP, OAU, OECD, CAFRAD,
- National: Brazil, Canada, Greece, Morocco, United States
- Non-governmental: TI, AAPAM, APSA, GCA, IAD

What have we learned? (1)

- Sustainable development depends on good governance
- Good governance counts on a well-performing public service
- A well-performing public service fights corruption and encourages professionalism and ethics

What have we learned? (2)

☞ It is not easy to promote professionalism and ethics when countries face:

- – a lack of countervailing forces to over-centralized states
- – politicization of administrations
- – citizens unaware of their rights and obligations
- – lack of resources due to abject poverty
- – lack of livable public service wages

How do we move from moral exhortation to practical tools? (1)

- Government machinery options: e.g. One centralized anti-corruption agency vs. Better coordination of many agencies?

- Preventive legal and regulatory framework: e.g. Financial assets disclosure system, workable disciplinary procedures, whistle-blower protection, etc.

How do we move from moral exhortation to practical tools? (2)

- ☞ Training Tools: e.g. Ethics training modules, Codes of conduct manuals, etc.

- ☞ Ethics Advice: e.g. for ministers and other high-ranking officials and their staff, ethics advisories for agencies, etc.

- ☞ Partnerships: public service unions, professional associations, training institutes, etc.

UN's future activities in this area?

- ?
- "The UN is your world."
- What would you have us do?

Contact

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