Capacity Development Event  
on the United Nations Public Service Awards  

*Enhancing Public Service Delivery in the Decade of Action to meet the Sustainable Development Goals*

**6 October 2020**  
**8AM – 10:30AM EDT**

*via Zoom register by 2 October: [https://forms.gle/BndZ3xxLGASSGpzE9](https://forms.gle/BndZ3xxLGASSGpzE9)*

**Background**

The United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) is the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service. It rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions that lead to a more effective and responsive public administration in countries worldwide. Through an annual competition, the UN Public Service Awards promotes the role, professionalism and visibility of public service.

The 2020 United Nations Public Service Awards concluded February 2020 under the following five categories: 1) delivering inclusive and equitable services for all; 2) promoting integrated mechanisms for sustainable development; 3) developing transparent and accountable public institutions; 4) promoting digital transformation in the public sector, and 5) promoting gender responsive public services to achieve the SDGs.

**Seven UNPSA winners were announced on 16 June 2020.** They have been awarded because of their innovative initiatives in their regions, ranging from improving access to health care and school attendance to making land transfers easier for the poor. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the planned UNPSA ceremony to recognize the 2020 winners was cancelled.

Against this backdrop, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG), in collaboration with UN Women, is organizing a capacity development building event on “*Enhancing Public Service Delivery in the Decade of Action to meet the Sustainable Development Goals*”. The event aims to raise awareness of the work of past winners and provide information on the 2021 UNPSA process. It will also enhance the capacity of institutions to submit nominations to the process.
The 2021 UNPSA, launched on 21 September and open for nominations until 18 November 2020, invites nominations in the following four categories:

1: Fostering innovation to deliver inclusive and equitable services for all including through digital transformation
2: Enhancing the effectiveness of public institutions to reach the SDGs
3: Promoting gender-responsive public services to achieve the SDGs
4: Institutional preparedness and response in times of crisis

More details on the context of each category can be found at the end of this document.

The nomination form together submission rules and guidelines in respective languages can be found here: https://publicadministration.un.org/unpsa/en/Rules

Objectives
The objectives of the event are to: (i) showcase the achievements of the UNPSA 2020 winners and enhance knowledge amongst relevant stakeholders; (ii) enhance awareness of the 2021 UNPSA process, categories, and nomination process, and (iii) build capacity of institutions to successfully prepare a nomination to the 2021 UNPSA process.

Format
The event will run for two and a half hours. It will be conducted in English via Zoom.

Targeted Audience
The target audience of the event will include public servants at the national and local levels, permanent missions, and general audience. The event also aims to engage civil society organizations, the private sector, and regional/international organizations that are addressing implementation of the SDGs.

Expected Results
The event aims to:
- Raise awareness of the importance of effective public service delivery to meet the Sustainable Development Goals by showcasing innovative work of the 2020 UNPSA winners.
- Enhance capacities of public sector institutions to apply for the 2021 UNPSA
- Enhance collaboration and cooperation among stakeholders

Methodology
- Showcase session on UNPSA 2020 initiatives with presentations and Q&A
- Information and awareness raising session on 2021 UNPSA process and categories
- Technical session on UNPSA nomination process
Draft agenda (detailed agenda to follow)

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:00 – 8:10</td>
<td>Welcome and Introductionaxes&lt;br&gt;Mr. Juwang Zhu,&lt;br&gt;Director of the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UNDESA</td>
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<td>8:10- 9:20</td>
<td>2020 UNPSA Winners showcase (details to follow)&lt;br&gt;Presentation and Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>9:20- 9:25</td>
<td>Coffee Break</td>
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<td>09:25 – 09:45</td>
<td>UNPSA 2021 Categories&lt;br&gt;Ms. Katherine Gifford&lt;br&gt;Policy Specialist,&lt;br&gt;Governance and National Planning, UN Women&lt;br&gt;Mr. John Mary Kauzya,&lt;br&gt;Chief of the Public Service Innovation Branch,&lt;br&gt;Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UN DESA</td>
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<td>09:45- 10:15</td>
<td>Technical session on nomination form&lt;br&gt;Ms. Elizabeth Niland&lt;br&gt;Programme Management Officer&lt;br&gt;Public Service Innovation Branch,&lt;br&gt;Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, UN DESA</td>
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<td>10:15 – 10:25</td>
<td>Q and A</td>
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Register
Please register here by 2 October:  https://forms.gle/BndZ3xxLGASSGpzE9

UN DESA Focal Point
Ms. Elizabeth Niland  
Programme Management Officer  
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs  nilande@un.org
2021 UNPSA Category Details

Category 1: Fostering innovation to deliver inclusive and equitable services for all including through digital transformation

The category on fostering innovation to deliver inclusive and equitable services for all promotes innovative ways to increase access to quality and affordable public services, especially to those living in poverty and the most vulnerable. Delivering inclusive and equitable services requires many public sector institutions to both reform and transform their service delivery mechanisms so as to enhance effectiveness and efficiency in public service delivery. This can be through use of a digital-by-design approach and/or the promotion of digital transformation which adopts innovative approaches and applications of existing and frontier technologies aimed at enhancing public service delivery and public administration while also taking into consideration affordable access to digital networks. A focus on user needs in public service design and delivery rather than on technology solutions and on inclusion, equity, integration and diversity sits at the heart of delivering people centric services.

Category 2: Enhancing the effectiveness of public institutions to reach the SDGs

The category on enhancing the effectiveness of institutions to reach the SDGs promotes institutional CATEGORIES frameworks that enhance transparency and accountability as well as facilitate harmonization and collaboration in government policies. This category aims to recognize efforts to enhance the effectiveness of institutions in pursuit of the SDGs, underscoring the linkages among many of the SDGs via integrated policies and development plans. The category also focuses on enhancing transparency and accountability of public institutions, including through efforts to enhance open government data approaches, participatory decision making and engagement. Efforts to enhance the effectiveness of institutions to reach the SDGs may also be harnessed through digital transformation which adopts strategic approaches and applications of existing and frontier technologies aimed at enhancing public administration, including through promoting interoperability among institutions and enabling government platforms’ use as communication and consultation tools.

Category 3: Promoting gender-responsive public services to achieve the SDGs

The category on promoting gender-responsive public services to achieve the SDGs promotes innovative public policies and services that address specific priorities and needs of women and girls. Gender responsive public services play a critical role in reducing poverty and inequality and advancing the rights of women and girls. These services require enabling policy and legislative frameworks, institutional structures and administrative capacities for their full implementation. They also require leveraging digital and new technologies to ensure innovation, effectiveness and accessibility as well as building digital literacy and skills. Initiatives should address gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at all stages of planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring and evaluation.
Category 4: Institutional preparedness and response in times of crisis

This category aims to recognize efforts to ensure rapid and effective institutional responses and the continuation and enhancement of public service delivery in times of crisis. Strengthening resilience by ensuring that people, societies, and institutions have the resources, capacities and knowledge to limit, anticipate, absorb and adapt to shocks, underpins all the SDGs. Governments are responsible for pursuing policies to build resilience and assist those most affected. Crisis preparedness is central to ensuring that governments can act quickly and effectively during crisis, such as those brought on by natural disasters, climate change, health pandemics, conflict, economic shocks and more. Ensuring the continuation of public services and the ramping up of service delivery to the most vulnerable in an effective and efficient manner is critical. Preparedness requires strategic planning and forecasting, effective use of new and existing technologies, including through the development and use of artificial intelligence, open data, big data, analytics, blockchains, machine learning, cloud computing and the Internet of Things, and the allocation of appropriate budget and resources. Initiatives should address how institutions have responded to crisis through the provision, enhancement and adaptation of services.