



“Developing and Sustaining Capacities for Resilience and Effectiveness in Service delivery amidst a crisis: The Call for Human Resource Managers in Public Sector Institutions”

CONCEPT NOTE

**Joint UNDESA and APS-HRMnet Virtual Capacity Building Workshop organized in collaboration with Ministry of public Service-Uganda, African Local Governments Academy of United Cities and Local Governments of Africa (ALGA of UCLG-Africa) and Uganda Public Service Human Resource Managers Network (UPS-HRMnet)
24TH JULY 2020**

Context

Africa ‘s population which currently stands at about 1.3bn, constitutes 16.72% of the global population and this is coupled with an average growth rate of 1.6% annually. A review of the 2018 Ibrahim Forum Report on Public Service in Africa indicates that the average size of public employees for most African countries ranges from 0.5% to 3.9% of their total population. This demographic trajectory definitely places a significant strain on African public services as they implement the 2063 Africa Agenda to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), because implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require effective, inclusive and equitable delivery of Public Services and so does defeating the current COVID-19 pandemic. But given the demographic trajectory, public services in African countries are confronted with a diversity of demands ranging from serving a steadily expanding population to being deliberate about their specific needs; making service delivery decisions that prioritise inclusivity, credible evidence bases, participation of stakeholders at all levels; striving to eliminate violence, exploitation and discrimination; observing the rule of law and justice for all, instituting deliberate interventions to crack down institutional crime, fraud and corruption, enabling access to information, ensuring clarity of processes and systems that deliver these services, as well as instituting crisis management mechanisms that mitigate crises

that threaten sustainability and survival of institutions during and after crises. It is in this context that the virtual workshop on “Developing and Sustaining Capacities for Resilience and Effectiveness in Service delivery amidst a crisis: The Call for Human Resource Managers in Public Sector Institutions” is being organised.

Virtual Capacity Building Workshop on “Developing and Sustaining Capacities for Resilience and Effectiveness in Service delivery amidst a crisis: The Call for Human Resource Managers in Public Sector Institutions”

As demonstrated by the on-going COVID-19, external shocks can severely limit the state’s ability to provide essential services to most of its people, especially to the poor and most vulnerable. The unprecedented pandemic caused massive disruptions in the provision of public services and revealed many flaws and deficiencies in the public service delivery systems in many countries in the world. Hence, there is an urgent need to examine and address the causes that hampered continuous delivery of vital public services during the crisis.

Managing the Public Service is mainly in the hands of the Human resource managers in Public sector Institutions. They need to be abreast with the capacity requirements of the public service to sustain resilience and effectiveness in public service delivery during shocks. Yet, they also need to be aware that the adaptive capacity of public sector institutions can be enhanced as a result of involuntary risks. The current COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented as a challenge and has not only threatened the status quo, but dictated a repositioning of individual and institutional life-styles. Public and Private sector employees are looking out for leadership to give them a sense of security and safety around their needs for now and the future. Managing the human factor in these unprecedented times places the human resource manager in the limelight considering the need for institutional responses grounded in technology, the need to adopting collaborations that go beyond the previously existing boundaries and bringing on board innovative ways of working, while maintaining a human face. Key questions arise after this, but critical to our focus today are the following:

- i. How are the capabilities that must be built out of necessity today (e.g. remote work, working with IT, customer self-service, social media engagement, remote health monitoring, employee motivation among others) going to be built and sustained?
- ii. This pandemic will end, and other crises may occur (e.g. natural disasters, cyber attacks on several digitalised systems, terrorist attacks, institutional scandals, other diseases among others). The key question therefore is, how are public sector institutions prepared to react flexibly and promptly to various forms of crises?

The Africa Public Service Human Resource Managers Network (APS-HRMnet) and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) in collaboration with the African Local Government Academy (ALGA) have found it prudent to host a virtual workshop that will bring the human resource fraternity of Africa, Academicians, Public sector managers and other professionals together to discuss and find answers to some of these questions.

Workshop Theme

The workshop will focus on the theme of “Developing and Sustaining Capacities for Resilience and Effectiveness in Service delivery amidst a crisis: The Call for Human Resource Managers in Public Sector Institutions”

Main objective of the Workshop

The purpose of the workshop is to build capacity of African Public Sector human resource managers to sustain resilience and deliver essential public services during any crisis.

The virtual workshop will provide a platform where ideas can be shared and interventions identified with respect to the role of the human resource managers in public sector institutions in supporting the building of a public sector that is resilient and effective in public service delivery amidst a crisis. In this way the workshop aims to develop the capacity of Human Resource Managers in the Public Service to be able to manage and develop public servants’ competences in managing the delivery of public services during the times of crises and uncertainty. Capacity needs for the individual, team and organizational resilience in the public sector, Leadership for resilient and sustainable institutions, Re-orienting performance management systems in a crisis and Workplace realities in both central and local governments that put resilience and effectiveness at risk during crises and required strategies to address these realities will be targeted during the interactions of the workshop.

It is expected that by the end of the virtual workshop participating Human Resource Managers and other senior Public Servants will have:

- Better understanding of the critical role that the State and the public service play in the delivery of public services in adverse situations;
- Awareness of the need to enhance the resilience of service delivery systems so that they function during and after the crises;

- Understanding that institutional resilience and adaptive capacity are essential for effective and continuous delivery of public services;
- Embraced that inclusion and participation build trust and lead to the shared understanding needed to mobilize and self-organize;
- Shared the key findings and good service delivery strategies derived from experience of different African countries during the on-going pandemic;
- Discussed and internalized that it is important that actions taken at local level complement efforts of the national government to solve the pressing problem;
- Familiarized themselves with and internalized the 11 principles of effective governance developed by the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA);
- Internalized the need for collaboration and partnerships among various actors and stake holders in Public Administration for improved and resilient service delivery.

Date and time:

- i. 24th July 2020
- ii. 2:00-6:00pm East African Time ([UTC+03:00](#))
- iii. To be hosted on a Zoom Platform: (The link will be provided prior to the Workshop)

PANELISTS:



Prof. Margaret Kobia, Secretary for Public Service, Youth and Gender Republic of Kenya, Member of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA)

Applying 11 Principles of Effective Governance in delivering services during a pandemic/crisis



Mr. Neil Reichenberg, Executive Director, International Public Management Association for Human Resources (IPMA-HR)

Observations about HRM practices in the Public Service during and after COVID-19 pandemic



H.E. Ambassador Dr. Arikana Chihombori-Quao, Former African Union Ambassador to the U.S.A. & founder of the African Diaspora Development Institutes

“Capacity needs for the individual, team and organizational resilience in the public sector”



Dr. John Mary Kauzya Chief, Public Service Innovation Branch, UNDESA

“State and Public Service Leadership for resilient and sustainable institutions”



Dr. Zarrouk Najat, Director African Local Governments Academy

“Workplace realities that put resilience and effectiveness at risk during crises and required strategies to address these realities in local Governments”



Ms. Odette Ramsingh, Executive Director, Human Resources, Sefako Makgatho Health Sciences University, South Africa

“Re-orienting performance management systems in a crisis”

AGENDA

2.00- 2.30 pm (Uganda time)	Opening
	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. President APS-HRMnet2. Mr Jean Pierre Elong Mbassi, Secretary General of UCLG-Africa3. PS. Ministry of Public Service Uganda4. Head of Public Service/Secretary to Cabinet, Uganda5. UN Representative6. Hon. Minister of Public Service Uganda7. Rt. Hon Prime Minister of Uganda
2.30 – 3.30	<p>Moderator: Mr. Ansu Tucker Director General Human Resources Management Office, Government of Sierra Leone.</p> <p>Key Note Addresses:</p> <p>1: Prof. Margaret Kobia, Secretary for Public Service, Youth and Gender Republic of Kenya, Member of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA): “Applying 11 Principles of Effective Governance in delivering services during a pandemic/crisis”</p> <p>2: H.E Ambassador Dr. Arikana Chihombori-Quao, Former African Union Ambassador to the U.S.A. & founder of the African Diaspora Development Institutes: “Capacity Needs for the Individual, Team and Organizational resilience in the public sector”</p>

	Plenary Discussion
3.30 – 4.30	<p>Moderator: Dr. Dovhani Mamphiswana Director General ,Public Service Commission Office, South Africa</p> <p>Panel one:</p> <p>1: Najat Zarouk: Workplace realities that put resilience and effectiveness at risk during crises and required strategies to address these realities in local Governments” 2: Odette Ramsingh: Re-orienting performance management systems in a crisis Plenary Discussion</p>
4.30 – 5.30	<p>Moderator: Mr. Ngambo Fondjo Pierre Vincent Commissioner, National Commission for the promotion of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism Yaounde, Cameroon.</p> <p>Panel two:</p> <p>1: John-Mary Kauzya Chief, Public Service Innovation Branch, UNDESA: “State and Public Service Leadership for Resilient and Sustainable Public Sector Institutions” 2: Neil Reichenberg: What have the Covid-19 Pandemic and lockdowns revealed /changed in HRM practices in the Public Service? Plenary discussion</p>
5.30- 6.00	Wrapping it up and take aways.

CONTACT PERSONS:

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