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New York Proposal for a Programme of Action

For schools of Public Administration and Partner
Institutions within the MGG Network



New York Proposal for a Programme of Action¹ for Schools of Public Administration (SPAs)² and Partner Institutions within the 'Managing Global Governance' (MGG) Network

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This proposal is put forward by representatives³ of the following institutions:

- Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI),
- CPC Central Committee Party School/Chinese Academy of Governance, China (CPCCCPS/CAG),
- German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE),
- National School of Government, South Africa (NSG),
- National Institute of Public Administration, Indonesia (NIPA/LAN),
- National Institute of Public Administration, Mexico (INAP),
- National School of Public Administration, Brazil (ENAP),
- Shanghai Institutes for International Studies (SIIS),
- United Nations System Staff College Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development (UNSSC).

Introduction and Objective of the Proposed Programme of Action

The objective of this joint proposal for a Programme of Action is to strengthen the capacity of Schools of Public Administration (SPAs) to train civil servants to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. The proposal comprises three elements that build on one another:

- 1) A common understanding of the role of SPAs and civil servants for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- 2) A set of jointly developed core principles of engagement for the training of civil servants.
- 3) A joint proposal for possible activities that strengthen the capacity of SPAs to train civil servants to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda.

1) The Role of SPAs and Civil Servants for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (hereafter '2030 Agenda'), as agreed upon by 193 countries in September 2015 at the United Nations, strives for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive, committing diverse stakeholders to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection. The 2030 Agenda is based on three core principles namely *universality* – it concerns all countries, but must be adapted to national, sub-national and local realities; *integration* - i.e. towards vertical and horizontal policy coherence across the dimensions of sustainable development, avoiding trade-offs, seeking synergies and factoring in spillovers; and *leaving no one behind* - i.e. ensuring that the most vulnerable groups in society are identified and considered and their needs met.

¹ This proposal for a Programme of Action was jointly developed by representatives from the below-mentioned institutions in the framework of a [special side event during the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development \(HLPF\)](#) and a workshop in New York City on July 11-13, 2018. The activities built on the peer-exchange workshop '[Capacity Building for the 2030 Agenda](#)' which took place in Brasilia from February 26 to March 1, 2018 at Brazil's [National School of Public Administration \(ENAP\)](#). All events were organised under the '[Managing Global Governance](#)' (MGG) Programme of the [German Development Institute / Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik \(DIE\)](#).

² For the purpose of this document the notion of 'Schools of Public Administration' (SPAs) refers to all training institutions that are officially mandated to develop training systems and curricula as well as to train civil servants, regardless of their denomination as academies, colleges, schools or other.

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Civil servants play a catalytic role across all dimensions of sustainable development and all core principles of the 2030 Agenda. The programme, therefore, starts from the insight that civil servants increasingly need to act as agents and facilitators for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Civil servants require skills, competencies and mindsets that enable them to work as advocates of transformation towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SPAs are at the forefront of providing the latest knowledge to civil servants. They also play an important role in moulding their thought process and inform practical strategies for achieving the SDGs.

2) Principles of Engagement

Participants of the peer exchange have developed principles of engagement for designing training activities that enable civil servants to implement the 2030 Agenda. The spirit of these principles is universal recognition of the importance of collaboration in learning from each other to devise tailor-made local or domestic solutions. Functionality, legitimacy and attractiveness constitute mutually reinforcing features of the activities (i.e. training offers, events, etc.) that should form the backbone of the proposed Programme of Action.

Functionality refers to the direct applicability and relevance of the content of an activity for the participants. It also implies that the activity is designed in a way that allows to purposefully and effectively address a specific need.

Legitimacy refers to the support for the activity by relevant authorities and the credibility of the offer. It can be derived from different sources, for instance from the reputation of institutions and participants involved or from the fact that the activity is a direct response to needs that were identified by credible experts.

Attractiveness refers to parameters that contribute to the motivation and commitment of the participants in a given activity. Attractiveness is strongly connected to functionality and legitimacy but goes further by including the use of innovative, stimulating working methods or by considering the practical conditions for participation.

In more precise terms, the following principles of engagement are considered suitable to ensure functional, legitimate and attractive activities.

With regard to the methods and content...

- Activities and learning formats should follow a participatory methodology that fosters knowledge sharing and peer learning (*functionality, attractiveness*).
- Activities and learning formats should be based on local or domestic needs in terms of translating the universal character of the 2030 Agenda to local realities (*functionality, legitimacy, attractiveness*).
- Activities and learning formats should work on an applied and hands-on basis by taking into account concrete problems that are directly relevant for the work of SPAs (i.e. faculty) or civil servants (*functionality, legitimacy, attractiveness*).
- Activities and learning formats should include experiential learning and focus on sharing success stories and good practice (*functionality, attractiveness*).
- Activities and learning formats should be mindful of the career progression of the actors involved (*functionality, attractiveness*).
- Activities and learning formats should be organized in collaboration with credible external experts and partner institutions in other countries and the UN system (*functionality, legitimacy, attractiveness*).
- Activities and learning formats should be developed systematically in order to design a learning path with different steps in terms of roll-out of topics and outreach to audiences (*functionality*).

With regard to the composition of the group of participants, whenever possible...

- Activities and learning formats should include formats that replicate a multi-stakeholder environment that enables representatives from the public sector, politics, academia, the private sector, the civil society and international institutions and global forums to learn about the others' respective work and interests (*applicability*).
- Activities should include formats that bring together representatives from national, sub-national and local institutions to foster vertical coherence (*applicability*).
- Activities should include formats that bring together different departments and disciplines to foster horizontal coherence (*applicability*).
- Activities should include formats that engage senior level officials (*applicability, legitimacy*).

3) Specific Proposed Activities

The proposed Programme of Action should evolve into concrete learning solutions and structures. The participants of the peer exchange recommend focusing on activities that ensure institutional and senior level buy-in, strengthen institutional knowledge sharing processes and long-term capacity development to ensure the greatest possible leverage. Based on these considerations, the group agreed to concentrate on formats – and respective preparations – in four main areas:

- Executive Leadership Course,
- Capacity Development for Trainers and Faculty of SPAs,
- Peer Exchange among the SPAs and
- Development and Sharing of Publications related to capacity development and the 2030 Agenda.

3.1 Executive Leadership Course

The activity primarily targets senior officials and political leaders to sensitize them on the 2030 Agenda as well as to build their capacity to lead transformative change on development in general. The target group is particularly relevant to expand the political support necessary for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The support of senior officials is also key to create an enabling institutional environment for further training activities on the 2030 Agenda.

Objectives

- Improve political and institutional support for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,
- Improve collaborative leadership skills of senior officials (needed for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda),
- Increase awareness and ownership of the 2030 Agenda.

Description

- Target group: Political principals, administrative decision-makers or senior officials,
- Duration: 2 to 4 days, depending on the existing leadership training in the respective institution,
- Format: face to face,
- Content & Methods: The 2030 Agenda does not necessarily have to be the main subject, but related content can be integrated in the leadership course. The format should include the work with existing forums and bilateral cooperation agreements, e.g. BRICS.

3.2 Capacity Development for Trainers

The activity is focused on the faculty of the SPAs, who are directly involved in the training of civil servants in the participating institutions. The target group is particularly relevant to substantially internalize the 2030 Agenda in the SPAs. The knowledge, skills and mindsets of trainers is also key to localize the SDGs in relevant training offers and to make use of multiplying effects for the principles of engagement of the proposed Programme of Action.

Objectives

- Train trainers on the vision and principles of the 2030 Agenda
- Provide trainers with the tools to integrate 2030 Agenda into coursework; make trainers 'talk' sustainable development,
- Develop skills of trainers to localize the SDGs in their area of expertise,
- Empower trainers and Schools to internalize the 2030 Agenda into their activities,
- Develop a community of practice – start exchange between trainers,
- Improve skills to design and implement transformative learning formats.

Description

- Target group: Trainers (or human resource development practitioners, e.g. curriculum developers) who are giving sessions or developing materials in the SPAs. The focus should be on a strategic selection of the critical catalytic individuals/positions,
- Duration: 3 to 5 days,
- Format: Face to face,
- Content & Methods: Substance of the 2030 Agenda as well as facilitation skills, ensure high applicability by working with the existing courses and material of the participants.

3.3 Peer Exchange among the Schools of Public Administration

The activity serves the purpose to establish a structured collaborative learning process on a continuing basis to exchange ideas and experiences among the SPAs and share best practices. It builds on the peer-exchange formats initiated among SPAs and further partners in 2018 (February/March in Brasilia, July in New York) and constitutes the central forum to jointly reflect on experiences with relevant activities, both individually implemented and common activities, including the activities of the proposed Programme of Action.

Objectives

- Exchange of experiences, sharing of best practices, co-creation of knowledge between the SPAs in different countries with regards to
- developing innovative capacity-development and outreach activities on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda,
- anchoring capacity-development for the 2030 Agenda in the institutional structure of the SPAs,
- Provide a platform for knowledge creation that includes various stakeholders in line with the principles of engagement,
- Maintain and, if applicable, expand the network of participating SPAs.

Description

- Target group: Faculty of the SPAs as well as other stakeholders from the public sector, civil society, academia, the private sector, international institutions etc.,
- Duration: Half-day to 2 days,
- Format: Regular interactions via skype and webinars on a semi-annual basis, face-to-face meetings on an annual basis,
- Content & Methods: All activities of the proposed Programme of Action and further relevant activities. The annual meeting should combine closed peer-exchange sessions with public events.

3.4 Development and Sharing of Publications and Knowledge Products

The development of joint publications and the sharing of relevant training material supports institutional knowledge sharing processes and is an important element for knowledge management and diffusion. Publications and material can include course material and curricula as well as research papers on the design of capacity building activities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Objectives

- Creation of an easily accessible repository (in particular online) to exchange inter alia relevant material, curricula and concepts for training activities,
- Joint development and provision of relevant research to inform the design of training activities,
- Enable reflection and dissemination of experiences and best practices on training for the 2030 Agenda.

Description

- Target group: Faculty of the SPAs and of other involved institutions,
- Duration: Continuous compilation + 1 to 2 days workshops,
- Format: Easily (online) accessible repository to share publications and course material, workshops on joint research and publication projects,
- Content & Methods: Course material relevant for courses of the proposed Programme of Action and other relevant courses, as well as publication projects on experiences and case studies stemming from the proposed Programme of Action's peer-exchange.

4) Conclusion

The institutions affiliated to the proposed Programme of Action share the conviction that strengthening the capacity of Schools of Public Administration to design training activities, to develop or enrich its curricula as well as to train civil servants on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a promising means towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The representatives involved in the formulation of the proposed Programme of Action are convinced that it is necessary to operationalise and eventually implement concrete activities to achieve this joint objective. In this spirit, the Programme at hand, as jointly developed in New York in July 2018, constitutes a direct contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDG 17.

In order to implement the proposed Programme of Action, the involved representatives agree to examine the possibilities to generate support for it as a whole and the related activities. Beyond that, the group is committed to explore opportunities how relevant activities can be organized together and to take concrete action in line with the agreed principles of engagement.