



2008 UNITED NATIONS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS  
WORKSHOP ON  
“INNOVATIONS IN THE DELIVERY OF PUBLIC SERVICES”

**AIDE MEMOIRE**

23 June 2008

United Nations, New York  
Conference Room 2

10.00 am to 6.00 pm

## **1. SPONSORSHIP AND PURPOSE**

The United Nations Public Service Awards Workshop on "Innovations in Governance and Public Administration", which will take place on 23 June 2008 at the United Nations in New York, is organized by the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The objective of the Workshop is to enhance the capacity of public servants to innovate and improve performance in the public sector. This is done through the dissemination of the winning cases: discussion of the approaches, methodologies, and techniques used to initiate and implement successful innovation. The sharing of these experiences demystifies the process of innovations in the public service and encourages public servants to engage in innovations for public service performance improvement.

The accomplishments of Public Service Awards recipients will serve as examples to others in their countries, in their regions and worldwide. They represent successful practices in public administration, which should be shared and disseminated. The winners of the United Nations Public Service Awards will present their outstanding experiences in public administration that were distinguished by the United Nations in the year of 2008. They will examine innovations and successful practices in public administration, as well as lead discussions on how those practices can be replicated and tailored to the specific circumstances of other countries.

Over 200 participants, including high-level government officials, international experts, and other organizations working in the field of governance from around the world are expected to take part in this high-level event. The Vice-President of the United Nations General Assembly, the Deputy-Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Under-Secretary-General for Social and Economic Affairs have been invited to deliver statements at the United Nations Public Service Awards Ceremony which will take place in the morning of June 23, 2008. Delegates from the 192 Permanent Missions to the United Nations, as well as many innovative leaders whose institutions have won the United Nations Public Service Awards (UNPSA) in the past years will attend together with the 2008 UNPSA winners who will share their accomplishments during the Workshop. As this year marks the Sixtieth Anniversary of the United Nations Programme on Public Administration, a number of initiatives are being organized for this occasion.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

In the recent trend of thinking and discourse on, as well as practice of, managing public affairs there has been a cumulative paradigm movement from public administration to governance via public management. It is observable that following these trends and paradigm shifts there have been complementarities among the three concepts and practices (public administration, public management and governance). This cumulative paradigm movement is traceable in the innovations that have been going on in the various parts of the world for public administration as an institution, a structural organization, a set of practices and a domain of values and principles through which the State prepares, makes, implements, monitors, controls and evaluates its decisions and policies as well as its performance of the full range of its functions including the delivery of services that are critical to human development. Innovation in governance and Public administration is critical for

performance improvement in the Public sector.

The quest for innovations in the public sector has been on-going for quite sometime, but with the need for the world to achieve the commitments made by its leaders in the Millennium Declaration, the 2005 World Summit and many other global and regional conferences, it has attained a level of urgency. The global consensus on the urgency of reinventing government is not only manifested in the research efforts that are focusing on how to improve the performance of governance and public administration institutions. It is also seen in the innovators' readiness to come together to share information and knowledge about their innovations to minimize wastage of resources and time in re-inventing the wheel. It has dawned on most people concerned with the improvement of performance in the public sector that although innovations in government are circumscribed in scope, they have the potential to trigger a bigger process of transformation of the State and produce general positive benefits to citizens through improved service delivery.

In order for public administration to be responsive to the needs of the poor and accountable to the population, innovation is required in how it is organized, in its practices and capacities, and in the way public administration mobilizes, deploys and utilizes the human, material, information, technological and financial resources for service delivery. The search for innovations in governance and public administration has been on-going for sometime especially since the United Nations Millennium Summit. Its declaration stated that the Millennium Development Goals would not be achieved without good governance. One of the ways through which the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs is facilitating the search for innovations in governance and public administration is through the United Nations Public Service Awards Programme.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 57/277, designated 23 June as United Nations Public Service Day for the purpose of celebrating the value and virtue of service to the community at the local, national and global levels, with prizes to be awarded to public sector organizations for contributions made to the cause of enhancing the role, prestige and visibility of public service.

Following the above resolution, the Division for Public Administration and Development Management of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs has established an Awards programme for granting Public Service Awards to public institutions as a symbolic recognition of the achievements attained in improving public service and good governance. The United Nations Public Service Awards Programme (UNPSA) is the most prestigious international recognition of excellence in public service. Through an annual competition, it recognizes institutional efforts to design, provide, and expand services to citizens in a cost effective manner while promoting peoples' participation in the delivery of services and the definition of their needs in order to alleviate poverty and as a step forward to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The purpose of the United Nations Public Service Awards Programme is:

- a) To reward service to citizens and motivate public servants worldwide to sustain the momentum of innovation and the improvement of the delivery of public services;
- b) To collect and disseminate successful practices and experiences in public administration in order to support efforts for improvements in country level public service delivery;
- c) Through success stories to counterbalance any negative image of public administration, raise the image and prestige of public servants and revitalize public administration as a noble discipline on which development greatly depends;

- d) To enhance professionalism in the public service in rewarding the successful experiences in innovations and excellence in the public service.

In brief, the Awards aim to discover innovations in governance; reward excellence in the public sector; motivate public servants to further promote innovation; enhance professionalism in the public service; raise the image of public service; enhance trust in government; and collect and disseminate successful practices for possible replication.

The process that starts from soliciting and receiving nominations<sup>1</sup>, going through assessing and verifying them and culminating in the award ceremony has proved a very effective tool for gathering experiences in revitalizing public administration through innovations that improve public services, the quality of its processes, radical departures from routine, applying information and communication technology in Government.

All Public organizations/agencies at national and sub-national levels, as well as public/private partnerships and organizations performing outsourced public service functions, are eligible for nomination. The United Nations Public Service Awards Programme takes into consideration a geographical distribution of five regions. In order to level the playing field for nominations received from countries with varying levels of development and income, the following five regions have been established:

- Africa;
- Asia and the Pacific;
- Europe and North America;
- Latin America and the Caribbean; and
- Western Asia.

In 2008, the United Nations Public Service Awards are given in the following three categories:

- Improving transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in the Public Service;
- Improving the delivery of services; and
- Fostering participation in policy-making decisions through innovative mechanisms (e. g. utilizing ICT, participatory budgeting, participatory/ social auditing and monitoring, and others).

### **3. OBJECTIVES**

The Workshop will provide an opportunity for participants to:

- Share experiences and innovations in public administration from around the world who have won the 2008 United Nations Public Service Awards;
- Discuss practical challenges and opportunities in innovation in the public sector; and
- Enhance co-operation among governments who wish to introduce and/or adapt innovative practices in public administration.

One of the outputs of the Workshop will be a Report regarding the innovations in the delivery of

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<sup>1</sup> In order to apply, nominations should be submitted on-line at: [www.unpan.org/dpepa\\_Psaward.asp](http://www.unpan.org/dpepa_Psaward.asp)

public services based on the presentations and discussions. The report will place special emphasis on the impact, sustainability and transferability of successful practices as well as the factors that facilitate innovations in the public service.

#### **4. THEMES FOR DISCUSSION**

The winners of the 2008 UNPSA will make presentations about their respective innovations according to the three themes of the competition as follows.

##### **Theme 1: Improving Transparency, Accountability, and Responsiveness in the Public Service**

- **Ubudehe**, Common Development Fund, Kigali, RWANDA
- **Home Ownership Policy**, Housing and Development Board, SINGAPORE
- **Juvenile Delinquency Domestic Violence and Family Violence Court**, State of California Superior Court for the County of Santa Clara, San Jose, California, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
- **Projeto Oficina-Escola de Artes e Ofícios de Santana de Parnaíba**, Prefeitura Municipal de Santana de Parnaíba, Santana de Parnaíba, Sao Paulo, BRAZIL

##### **Theme 2: Improving the Delivery of Services**

- **Phelopepa Health Care Train**, Public-Private Partnership, Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA
- **Job Access for Disabled**, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Canberra, AUSTRALIA
- **Library 2007**, City of Umeå, SWEDEN
- **SADAD Payment System**, Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency, Riyadh, SAUDI ARABIA

##### **Theme 3: Fostering participation in policy-making decisions through innovative mechanisms**

- **Orientation universitaire en ligne**, Direction général des affaires estudiantines, Tunis, TUNISIA
- **Programme of Communitization of Public Institutions and Services**, Government of Nagaland India, New Delhi, INDIA
- **Participation in policy-making decisions in Catalunya**, Barcelona, SPAIN
- **Family Planning**, Higher Population Council, Amman, JORDAN

## **5. ORGANIZATION**

### **5.1. Participants**

Participants will include ministers and other senior policy makers, experts, practitioners, and representatives of international, regional and sub-regional institutions. Moreover, the following will be invited:

- ❑ Winners of the United Nations Public Service Awards 2008
- ❑ Past winners of the UNPSA
- ❑ Members of Permanent Missions to the United Nations
- ❑ UNPAN members
- ❑ Heads of UNDP regional Bureaus (Africa, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, Latin America and the Caribbean)
- ❑ DESA Directors of Division
- ❑ Media institutions
- ❑ Institutes of public administration
- ❑ Regional Organizations
- ❑ Accredited NGO representatives
- ❑ Secretariat staff

### **5.2. Official languages**

The official language of the Meeting will be Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

### **5.3. Electronic networking**

Electronic communication will be utilized to encourage wide and representative participation in discussions. All the documents of the Meeting will be posted on the Online Global Network on Public Administration and Finance (<http://www.unpan.org>) or for direct access to the UNPSA page, please go to: <http://www.unpan.org/Events/PublicServiceDayAwards/tabid/92/Default.aspx>.

### **5.4 Format of the Meeting**

The Meeting will be conducted in a Plenary Session and will be devoted to the presentation of innovative experiences in public administration that have won the 2008 United Nations Public Service Awards. In making presentations about the innovative practices, it would be advisable to follow a similar format and briefly respond to the following questions:

- What issue/problem (or condition) did the government agency want to address when they implemented this innovative practice in the first place?
- What were the key results or benefits resulting from that practice?
- What are the objectives of the practice?
- What are the key implementation steps?
- Who are the main stakeholders who need to be involved?
- Can the innovation be replicated and is it sustainable?

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For substantive questions related to this event, please contact:

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