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# COMMISSION for SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

United Nations Headquarters, New York

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**United Nations**

Department of  
Economic and  
Social Affairs



주유엔대한민국대표부  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea  
to the United Nations



**59th Session of the Commission for Social Development  
SIDE EVENT**

## **Innovating Public Governance and Leveraging Digital Technologies for Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups**

**Tuesday 16 February 2021  
8:45 – 10:00 AM (EST New York, GMT-5)**

**via Zoom**

**Co-organized by**

United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA)  
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG)  
United Nations Project Office on Governance (UNPOG)  
&  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations

**In collaboration with**

Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation

### **Context**

Ensuring no one is left behind is the overarching principle of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As highlighted by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres, leaving no one behind means “listening to the views and guidance of people living in poverty and acting together with them”.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are linked to the delivery of inclusive and equitable public services, which are especially critical for vulnerable groups. Vulnerable groups, particularly those experiencing multiple dimensions of vulnerability and limited by their social condition and position in society, have difficulties in accessing some basic services – education, healthcare, water and sanitation. The

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.un.org/press/en/2017/sgsm18753.doc.htm>

COVID-19 pandemic has further marginalized vulnerable groups and exacerbated their vulnerabilities. Inclusive and participatory governance and building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions are essential to address these challenges and achieve the SDGs, as also highlighted in the Principles of Effective Governance for Sustainable Development endorsed by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 2018<sup>2</sup>. Improving service delivery and engaging vulnerable groups in policy designing, implementation and monitoring and review is critical to leaving no one behind. Empowerment is essential to support vulnerable groups in contributing to the socio-economic development of their country and to be engaged in meaningful employment.

Many UN Member States have acknowledged, in their Voluntary National Reviews, the need to move from business-as-usual governance to innovation for inclusiveness of vulnerable groups. However, countries still face difficulties in empowering vulnerable groups and involving them in decision-making, building local leadership, and enhancing collaboration among government, civil society organizations, local communities, and vulnerable groups.

These challenges call for innovation in public governance. They require new ideas, concepts and innovative approaches in policy design and service delivery. They also require a transformation in institutional mechanisms for collaboration and participation, more responsive organizational structures, processes, and innovative strategies and practices. Capacities, skills, transformational leadership and new mindsets of government officials at all levels and at societal level are needed to foster governance innovation and to create an enabling ecosystem for inclusion of vulnerable groups. Particularly, government innovation requires a paradigm shift in governance towards inclusive and participatory governance, which fosters the inclusiveness and empowerment of vulnerable groups.

Digital government can provide an effective means to promote government innovation for social inclusion of vulnerable groups, including in public service delivery. Digital technologies can also provide platforms for and facilitate engagement and participation of vulnerable groups in policy design, implementation, monitoring and review processes. However, half of the world is still not connected to the Internet and digital divides persist, especially in least developed countries. It is crucial that governments take steps to close the digital divides and promote digital inclusion of all by working together with ICT businesses, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders.

## Purpose and the Structure

UN DESA, through its Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government (DPIDG) and the UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), and the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations, in collaboration with the Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation, are organizing a Side Event during the 59th Session of the Commission for Social Development to present an online Training Toolkit on “Government Innovation for Social Inclusion of Vulnerable Groups”, which is part of the *Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs* developed by DPIDG/UN DESA. The [Toolkit](#) aims to build capacities of public servants to promote government innovation for social inclusion of vulnerable groups by introducing diverse innovative approaches, strategies and experiences. It also highlights the importance of empowering vulnerable groups and engaging them in policy design, implementation and monitoring processes, as agents of change.

The Toolkit directly contributes to the SDGs 10 and 16 and is aligned with the Priority Theme of the 59th Session of the Commission for Social Development on “Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all”.

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<sup>2</sup> E/2018/44-E/C.16/2018/8, para. 31 available at <https://publicadministration.un.org/en/Intergovernmental-Support/CEPA/Principles-of-Effective-Governance>

The Toolkit will support the government innovation of Member States, particularly in innovating public governance and leveraging digital technologies for social inclusion of vulnerable groups. Through a set of 15 comprehensive modules under five thematic clusters, the Toolkit provides a useful tool for government officials and other relevant stakeholders to: i) improve the understanding of the progress, status and challenges in government innovation for social inclusion of vulnerable groups, ii) apply innovative approaches, strategies and experiences based on the context and needs of each country/organization; and iii) strengthen capacities to foster inclusive mindsets of government officials and other relevant stakeholders, leading to more inclusive societies through the empowerment and engagement of vulnerable groups.

Thus, this Side Event will feature an overview of the Curriculum on Governance for the SDGs and one thematic presentation of the Toolkit as well as a panel discussion. Panelists will share their knowledge and experiences on fostering innovation for building inclusive governance and enhancing public governance capacities for social inclusion, promoting digital inclusion and leveraging digital technologies for addressing impacts of COVID-19, and building an integrated strategy for social protection at country and regional levels. Panelists will also discuss the opportunities and challenges when leveraging digital technologies for social inclusion of vulnerable groups, and in particular how to accelerate the pace of digital transformation and promote digital inclusion in response to the principles of “leave no one behind” and “reaching those furthest behind first”.

## Agenda

Time (EST, GMT-5)	Agenda
08:45-08:55 AM	<p><b>Moderator: Mr. Bokyun Shim</b>, Head of UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Opening Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms. Maria-Francesca Spatolisano</b>, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN DESA (5 mins)</li> <li>- <b>H.E. Ambassador Cho Hyun</b>, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations (5 mins)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
08:55-09:43 AM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Panel Discussion</b> (7 mins for each panelist)</li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator: Ms. Mi Kyoung Park</b>, Governance and Public Administration Officer, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Ms. Adriana Alberti</b>, Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit, DPIDG/UN DESA &amp; <b>Ms. Mi Kyoung Park</b>, Governance and Public Administration Officer, UNPOG/DPIDG/UN DESA</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Louis Meuleman</b>, Vice-Chair, UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration</li> <li>- <b>H.E. Mr. Sam Heng Boros</b>, Secretary of State, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans and Youth Rehabilitation, Cambodia</li> <li>- <b>Dr. Sumitra Nair</b>, Vice President and Head of Digital Skills and Jobs, Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation</li> <li>- <b>Ms. Junny Kim</b>, Director, Division for Innovation Planning, Ministry of the Interior and Safety, Republic of Korea</li> <li>- <b>Mr. Mohammad Naciri</b>, Regional Director, UN Women Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Discussant: Ms. Isabelle Deganis</b>, Social Affairs Officer, Social Policy Analysis Section, Global Dialogue for Social Development Branch, DISD/UN DESA (5 mins)</li> </ul>
<b>09:43-09:58 AM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interactive Session / Q&amp;A</b></li> </ul>
<b>09:58-10:00 AM</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Summary and Closing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Mr. Bokyun Shim</b>, Head of UN Project Office on Governance (UNPOG), DPIDG/UN DESA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**For information please contact:**

**Ms. Adriana Alberti**

Chief, Programme Management and Capacity Development Unit  
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government  
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
[alberti@un.org](mailto:alberti@un.org)

**Ms. Mi Kyoung Park**

Governance and Public Administration Officer  
UN Project Office on Governance  
Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government  
UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
[mikyoung.park@un.org](mailto:mikyoung.park@un.org)

**Mr. Bangmoo Lee**

Counsellor  
Permanent Mission of the Republic of Korea to the United Nations  
[bangmoolee@mofa.go.kr](mailto:bangmoolee@mofa.go.kr)