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 Generalitat de Catalunya  
Departament d'Interior,  
Relacions Institucionals i Participació  
Secretaria de Relacions Institucionals  
i Participació

## AIDE-MEMOIRE

# **Workshop on Engaging Citizens in Development Management and Public Governance for the Achievement of Millennium Development Goals**

**21 - 23 June 2010**  
**Barcelona**  
**Spain**

### **1. Background**

Citizens' engagement has proven to be an important avenue to foster development by promoting transparency and accountability of public administration, enriching public policies with people's views and enhancing people's ownership of public policies, as well as empowering the poor and the most marginalized groups of people. Today there is a growing recognition that different forms of active participation of citizens has an important role to play in social and economic development in general, and in the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in particular. It has been demonstrated that citizen engagement can bring tangible results in the fight against poverty and hunger, enhancing sustainable development, promoting gender equity, fighting disease and in other priority development areas. At the same time, there is a need to bridge the gap between the rhetorical commitments on citizens' engagement and actual

participation leading to concrete results that benefit development for all, especially the most vulnerable groups.

The value and the potential benefits of citizens' engagement for development are becoming more increasingly recognized, and hence the important question becomes how to initiate, sustain and build capacities for it. For this reason it is of key importance to strengthen the capacity of public administrators as well as representatives of the civil society to initiate and implement successful and sustainable forms of citizens' engagement in development management and public governance. While there are no one-size fits all solutions, it is important to share experiences of successful approaches, strategies and best practices of citizens' engagement.

For this purpose, the Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch (SGMB) of the United Nations Department of Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM/DESA)<sup>1</sup> is organizing an international Workshop on "Engaging Citizens' in Development Management and Public Governance for the Achievement of the Millennium Development Goals" in Barcelona on the 21-23 of June 2010. The Workshop will serve as a platform for an international and multidisciplinary (public officials, academia, civil society and private sector representatives) group of experts to share their experiences and engage in an exchange on forms, approaches and best practices on citizens' engagement, including the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), that have proven viable and brought about lasting development results in different socio-economic and cultural contexts. This will enhance the participants' capacities to design and implement successful programmes and policies in citizens' engagement in different stages of development management (planning and implementation, monitoring

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<sup>1</sup> The Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) under the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) encourages collective action to foster worldwide development with a focus on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by promoting citizens' engagement at national and local levels and in public affairs in general, as well as in the private sector and in civil society. A special focus in DPADM's work is placed on global knowledge sharing among government officials, civil society, academia and the private sector about forms of citizen engagement that have proved viable and useful for the achievement of MDGs, as well as about constraints observed. To further enhance knowledge sharing on public administration and citizens' engagement DPADM is in the process of building an online Knowledge Base on Public Administration and Citizens' Engagement.

and evaluation) and public governance, as well as strengthen and create international networks on citizens' engagement.

The workshop is held in connection with the United Nations Public Service Day – Awards Ceremony and Forum 2010<sup>2</sup> on the theme of “The Role of Public Service in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals: Challenges and Best Practices”, and organized in collaboration with the host of the Public Service Day, Government of Catalonia, Spain. As well as participating in the workshop participants are invited to take part in the Public Service Forum sessions, including a Special Panel on Citizens' Engagement in Europe and Spain organized by the Directorate General for Participation of the Government of Catalonia and a Ministerial Roundtable on Promoting Innovation in Government. Participants of the workshop will also have the unique opportunity to hear presentations by the Winners of the UNPSA 2010 in the Citizens' Engagement category as part of the workshop.

## **2. THEMES**

The theme of the workshop is citizens' engagement in development management for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, with particular emphasis on (a) *Approaches, Trends and Challenges* in Citizens' Engagement for Development Management and Public Governance; (b) *Methodologies and Tools* for Citizens' Engagement in Development Management and Public Governance; and (c) *Innovations, Best Practices and Uses of ICT* for Citizens' Engagement in Development Management and Public Governance.

## **4. OBJECTIVES**

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<sup>2</sup> Since 2003 UNDESA has celebrated annually the United Nations Public Service Day (23rd of June) by organizing the United Nations Public Service Awards Ceremony and a Capacity Development Workshop to recognize and learn from world-wide public organizations that have improved the quality of life of citizens through innovative practices. It rewards the creative achievements and contributions of public service institutions to a more effective and responsive public administration in countries worldwide. Through an annual competition, the United Nations Public Service Awards Programme promotes the role, professionalism and visibility of public service. It encourages exemplary public service and recognizes that democracy and successful governance are built on a competent civil service.

The workshop will explore policies, strategies, best practices and tools to promote the engagement of citizens in development management and public governance for the achievement of the MDGs. The goal of the workshop is to enhance the knowledge and build shared understanding among participants on how citizens can be engaged in different stages of strategy and policy making (planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation), as well as in public service delivery, with a view of promoting efficient and transparent public management and inclusive social and economic development. The workshop will provide presentations by key international experts, as well as group discussions on innovative approaches, methodologies and tools, including the use of ICT-tools, in citizens' engagement in development management and public governance. Key findings of the workshop deliberations will be reflected in a set of recommendations. The workshop will also lead to innovative networking among participants and to the construction of an online knowledge base on public administration and citizens' engagement developed by the Division for Public Administration and Development management (DPADM/UNDESA).

The immediate objectives of the workshop are to:

1. Strengthen the participants' capacity on policy and programme formulation and implementation on citizens' engagement to achieve the MDGs by assessing the needs and priorities in development management and public governance policies and programmes at local and national levels from a citizens' engagement perspective;
2. Provide participants with conceptual frameworks, strategies and tools to engage citizens' in development management, strategy and policy making (planning and implementation, monitoring and evaluation), including the use of ICT tools;
3. Identify and share best practices and lessons learnt in citizens' engagement in development management and public governance, including through the presentations of the 2010 UNPSA Winners on citizens' engagement, as well obstacles and key challenges;

4. Create and strengthen South-South and South-North networks of experts and practitioners in development management and public governance to enhance participatory practices around the world, as well as to cooperate with DPADM in the population of the online knowledge base on Public Administration and Citizens' Engagement;
5. Identify needs and opportunities for new technical cooperation project funding proposals on citizens' engagement in development management;
6. Identify needs and opportunities for research proposals on citizens' engagement in development management.
7. Produce an outline for a possible online training course on public governance for development.

## **5. EXPECTED RESULTS**

The workshop is expected to achieve the following results:

- Increased knowledge among participants and other key stakeholders of the policies and strategies, best practices and tools that can be adopted to enhance citizens' engagement in development management and public governance.
- Strengthened capacity of participants to:
  - Assess the needs and priorities in development management and public governance policies and programmes at local and national levels from a citizens' engagement perspective;
  - Apply the presented best practices and lessons learnt on citizens' engagement in policy and programming formulation and implementation;
- A comprehensive report outlining major findings, recommendations and case studies resulting from the workshop.

- Enhanced cooperation and new networks among practitioners on citizens' engagement that will enhance knowledge sharing, including by contributing in the DPADM Knowledge Base on Public Administration and Citizens' Engagement.

## **6. THEMES FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES**

The Workshop will consist of three panel sessions over two days with presentations by key experts from different regions of the world followed by open discussion with all participants. After the plenary sessions the participants will be divided into three separate roundtable groups by their own professional background and interest to discuss in more depth the respective themes of the plenary sessions. Gender issues and the engagement of the most vulnerable groups of people will be discussed in each working group as cross-cutting themes. A jointly selected drafting committee with representatives from each working group will then meet to prepare workshop recommendations to be presented as part of the Forum Recommendations and Declaration at the Public Service Awards the next day.

### **The themes of the workshop sessions are as follows:**

SESSION I: *Approaches, Trends and Challenges* in Citizens' Engagement for Development Management and Public Governance

SESSION II: *Methodologies and Tools* for Citizens' Engagement in Development Management and Public Governance

SESSION III: *Innovations, Best Practices and Uses of ICT* for Citizens' Engagement in Development Management and Governance

The Workshop is held in connection with the UN Public Service Day and Forum 2010. Workshop participants are invited to participate also in the Public Service Day and Forum sessions, held immediately before and after the workshop as follows:

- United Nations Public Service Forum including a Plenary Session on Citizen Engagement in Europe and Spain on the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup> of June;
- United Nations Public Service Awards Ceremony and a Ministerial Round-table on Promoting Innovation in Government on the morning of the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June.

## **7. ORGANIZATION**

### **7.1. Participants**

The number of participants expected at the Workshop is approximately 50, as follows:

- Key citizens' engagement and public governance experts from the academia and research institutions
- Senior government and public administration officials
- Civil society and private sector representatives
- United Nations and its network of agencies staff

### **7.2. Official languages**

The Workshop will be conducted in English and Spanish.

### **7.3. Electronic documentation**

All the documents of the Workshop will be posted on the Online Global Network on Public Administration and Finance at: <http://www.unpan.org/unpsa>

## **8. Contact information**

Ms. Anni Haataja (Workshop Coordinator)

Associate Expert

Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch

DPADM/DESA

Tel: (+1) 917-367-3028

[haatajaa@un.org](mailto:haatajaa@un.org)

Ms. Elvira Cachola (Workshop Administrator)

Socio-Economic Governance and Management Branch

DPADM/DESA

Tel: (+1) 212-963-1477

[cachola@un.org](mailto:cachola@un.org)